

DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 12th April 2017 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Mottram (DM - Chairman), Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Day (GD), Hill (TH), Stephens (AS) and Chapman (JC)

Planning Administrator: Johnston (SJ)

Councillor for Urchfont & The Cannings: Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Richard Hawkins, Maria & Richard Kemp, Ian Johnston, Malcolm Smith, David Stevens

1. **Welcome by the Chairman**
2. **Apologies:** Clerk to the Council Lunn (BL)
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None Declared
4. **Minutes of the Council meeting held on 8th March 2017**

| Proposal | Proposed | Seconded | Decision |
|--|----------|----------|--------------------|
| To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true record of the meeting. | TH | NM | Unanimously agreed |

5. **Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2017** – see agenda item 12b below

6. **Finance** – BL had circulated the Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2017, this showed a closing reserve of £13.85k (excluding carry forwards) which is almost £800 more than at the same time last year. BD considered the accounts accurate and sensible. No clarification was requested.

7. **Councillors Written Reports** – None submitted

8. **Neighbourhood Plan**

a. **Are we ready for the Referendum?** – DM indicated that it is intended to distribute a flyer to all households over the Easter weekend. Posters will include contact details for anyone requiring assistance to the polling station. Posters are to be over-marked 'Vote Tomorrow' on 19th April and 'Vote Today' on 20th April. BD asked whether banners would be utilised, DM responded that the decision had been taken not to use banners.

b. **To discuss points raised in email from Richard Hawkins on 8th March 2017 and the Chairman's proposed response**

The Chairman closed the meeting for Public Participation

Richard Hawkins reiterated the main issues raised in his email dated 8th March (copy attached to the minutes of the FC meeting on 8th March 2017 – website only), namely lack of transparency for the public regarding comments made by the independent examiner in relation to the views at Uphill and Wildman's Garage site. In addition, having spoken to some members of the UWLNP Steering Group, he raised concerns that not all members of that Group appear to have been kept informed of the examiners comments and responses given.

The Chairman reopened the Council meeting

The Chairman read from his proposed response to Mr Hawkins email which he had circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting (copy attached on website only). Discussion concluded that lessons could and should be learned from the way Steering Group activities had been conducted throughout the long preparation and

examination period of the Plan, but nevertheless a very comprehensive Plan affording substantial benefits for the Community when made had been finalised following significant public consultation. The Council agreed that the Plan should be fully supported and the public encouraged to vote 'YES' at the Referendum on 20th April.

9. Parish Council Election – DM confirmed that there will be an election on 4th May 2017 as 15 candidates have been nominated. Noting that AS is not standing for re-election, DM thanked him for his contribution to UPC.

Chairman closed meeting for public participation

Richard Hawkins asked about publicity on candidates, would this be distributed to all households? He indicated a willingness to help distribution.

Chairman re-opened Council meeting

DM advised that BL was preparing a publicity leaflet to be published post the UWLNP Referendum to avoid confusion, it had been decided not to distribute the leaflet to all households but he was happy to reconsider this decision. NM expressed the view that the leaflet should be delivered to all households in view of the number of new candidates and the need to give them maximum exposure to the electorate. Debate concluded with the decision to distribute to all households, BL to finalise printing and distribution on his return.

ACTION: FC/20/17 – BL

10. Parish Meeting 24th March – DM commented that speaker presentations were well received, he was surprised at the lack of questions. SJ expressed disappointment that the numbers attending were less than in previous years.

11. UPC Procedures

a. To ratify email decision on revised Pond Green Policy – The revised policy had been circulated and gained majority approval under the email vote process. BD sought clarification regarding electricity facilities, DM read out the revised clauses in the Policy.

| Proposal | Proposed | Seconded | Decision |
|--|----------|----------|--------------------|
| To ratify the email decision and approve the revised Pond Green Policy without change. | NM | GD | Unanimously agreed |

b. To consider and approve proposed revisions to Planning Policy & Procedures – DM reported that whilst the proposed changes had been considered in some detail, revised wording of the Policy and Procedures document had not yet been finalised. This will be circulated for approval at a subsequent meeting.

OUTSTANDING ACTION: FC/15/17 – DM/BL

12. Best Kept Village – JC confirmed that the formal entry application had been submitted promptly, as a result UB has been awarded a bag of compost. He confirmed that the first formal round of judging will be in mid-May to mid-June, local judges will carry out a review shortly to identify and resolve shortcomings. DM thanked JC for submitting the application and co-ordinating WP activity.

13. Email Decision Process – The process was originally put in place to deal with the need for urgent decisions when it is not possible to wait for the next meeting or arrange an interim meeting. All decisions taken using this process must be ratified at the next full council meeting. AS expressed the view that the

process is basically flawed because there is no debate, no evidence of pre-determination and the issue is not transparent to the public. RT expressed the view that the process has been useful when a timely meeting cannot be utilised, but maybe it has been used on occasions when not absolutely necessary. It was agreed that the process should be reviewed by the new Council post the May election.

ACTION: FC/21/17 - BL

14. Update on Current Parish Issues not covered by above agenda items

a. Scarecrow Weekend - Church Flower Arrangements – DM stated that organisations in the Village, including UPC, had been asked if they would be prepared to provide a flower arrangement in St Michaels Church over the Scarecrow Weekend. On the basis that most if not all councillors are fully committed on other tasks for the Scarecrow weekend, it was decided that UPC should decline this invitation.

b. Urchfont Playground Site – BD had visited the site and thought that the new equipment was excellent. However, he expressed some concern that the rubber matting and some surrounding grass areas appeared very uneven and could be a trip / safety hazard. It was agreed that BL should pursue this with the installation company.

ACTION: FC/22/17 – BL

c. Defibrillators – NM reported that all FIVE defibrillators had now been installed externally, are available 24/7 and are registered with the Wiltshire Ambulance Service. 45 people had attended the free CPR training sessions. DM expressed thanks to NM, Alison Taylor, Clare Milanese and Anthea Donald for all their efforts in this respect.

15. External Meetings – DM reported that he had met with RT and PW on Pond Green to discuss water pooling in the track by the Duck House which causes problems for No 1 Manor Farmyard. It is clear that the problem is caused by water running off the surrounding land and roadways, the latter road surfaces being generally in poor condition. Further investigation is required to identify land/road ownership and potential solutions.

ACTION: FC/23/17 – DM/PW

16. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda

a. Tree Survey – RT reported that arrangements are being made for the agreed tree survey by Mr Astil to take place in May. The resulting report will be submitted to the new Council who will need to determine what action to take.

b. Channel 4 2017 Village of the Year Competition – Approaches had been received for Urchfont to take part in this competition which involves a visit by Penelope Keith and a film crew. Applications have to be submitted by 14th May. Discussion concluded that Urchfont should not take part.

17. End of Meeting – DM concluded this 'end of Council term' meeting by saying that on the basis that there are 15 candidates nominated for the 11 seats available at the election on 4th May, at least 5 of the current councillors will undoubtedly be re-elected. DM thanked all councillors for their contribution to Council activities and achievements. NM proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk and Planning Administrator which was unanimously agreed by all present.

Meeting Closed at 9.25pm.

In the absence of the Clerk, notes of the meeting were taken by Councillor Whitehead and have subsequently been transcribed to UPC minute format by the Clerk.

Date of Next Meeting: 1st meeting of the newly elected Council following elections on 4th May - Wednesday 10th May 2017 (AGM) in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – DM PROPOSED RESPONSE TO RICHARD HAWKINS EMAIL DATED 8TH MARCH – see agenda item 8b above.

Richard Hawkins question: *I am particularly concerned regarding the 'Important View at Uphill'*

The examiners clarification question:

'Important views are shown on Figure 6.1. One seems to be in the same vicinity as one of the proposed site allocations, land at Uphill. Is this correct or a discrepancy? Are the two designations compatible?'

Wiltshire Council's reply:

This is correct. It is considered that the two designations are compatible

DM response for UPC to consider:

The impact that the proposed development will have on the view from various parts of Uphill will not be known until detailed plans are submitted. At that stage members of the public will be able to make representations which will be taken into account during the planning process (we have already seen this procedure protecting the interests of residents at the Beeches).

RH Question: *The apparent loss of 'Wildman's garage as a protected employment site' under policy LB1. The public had specifically said that 'existing employment sites should be protected from changes of use' and the statement was written into the examination copy of the plan with specific reference to Wildman's Garage.*

The examiners clarification question:

The supporting text to Policy LB1 (Protecting Existing Employment Facilities) refers to Wildman's Garage amongst other sites, but this site is also allocated for housing development under Policy H1. I would welcome your comment on this apparent contradiction in the Plan. It should of course be noted that if Wildman's Garage site were intended to be subject to Policy LB1, then this would affect the provision of housing numbers under Policy H1.

Wiltshire Council reply:

It is unlikely that the site of Wildman's garage has a long-term future as a garage. Hopefully the business will relocate elsewhere in the Parish – ideally at Planks where vehicle access etc. will be much easier. The existing site would therefore be available for redevelopment, without contravening policy LB1.

The examiner's report states:

'7. Local Economy and Enterprise

Policy LB1 Protecting Existing Employment Facilities

Existing employment land and buildings are protected by this policy unless it can be shown that the uses are no longer viable for employment purposes and have been marketed for at least six months. I consider this provides an appropriate balance

between safeguarding employment uses and flexibility should such sites no longer be appropriate and needed and takes its lead from the CS. The policy is clearly worded and meets the basic conditions.

There does seem to me however to be an internal conflict between the supporting text that identifies Wildman's Garage for employment purposes and reports that the community view was to retain this and the allocation of this site for housing under Policy H1. Therefore, I have queried this with the Parish Council and I am informed that it is unlikely that Wildman's Garage has a long-term future as a garage and the hope is that the business will relocate elsewhere in the Parish. Therefore, the site would be available for development without being contrary to Policy LB1. I do not agree; if the site is allocated for housing under Policy H1, then it does not have to meet the criteria in Policy LB1. Therefore, references to Wildman's Garage should be removed from this section and the policy revised to make it clear that this site does not fall within the scope of this policy.

! Remove references to Wildman's Garage from Section 7 of the Plan'

DM response for UPC to consider:

Wildman's Garage was included in the list of potential development sites because the steering group felt that it was unlikely to still be trading on that site for another 10 years. The recent experience of Lydeaway Garage closing and not finding a buyer to continue using it as a garage gave weight to this argument. Another option would be for Wildman's to relocate to Planks Farm, this would enable the business to continue within the Parish and free up the current site for development. Wildman's do not own the site, and the steering group were not in a position to explore the relationship between landlord and tenant. If the garage is still trading at the end of the UWLNP's 10-year life, then there is no problem with this change. If the garage ceases to trade, the owners are unlikely to find another similar business to continue on the site (again the Lydeaway Garage experience would support this argument) and the only realistic option would be for residential development – hence its inclusion in the plan, which is also borne out by the support given by the public during the consultation stages.