



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 19th October 2016 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Mottram (DM – Chairman), Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Day (GD), Stephens (AS), Gibb (HG), Baker (PB) and Hill (TH)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL) **Planning Administrator:** Johnston (SJ)

Councillor for Urchfont & The Cannings: Philip Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): John Knight, Gill Hill, Jane Steadman

1. Welcome by the Chairman – The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting

2. Statement regarding meetings held on 14th September 2016 – The Chairman made the following statement:

"As many of you are aware, at our planning meeting on 14th September, 2 councillors declared an interest in agenda item 5a) 16/07268/VAR - Councillor Stephens non-pecuniary, and Councillor Holt pecuniary. Councillor Holt then chose to speak during the Council discussion despite not having dispensation to do so. Unfortunately, neither the Parish Clerk nor myself alerted Councillor Holt or others present to this breach of regulations at the time. Since the meeting the Parish Clerk and I have satisfied ourselves that this breach did not affect the Council's decision. Notwithstanding this, I wish to apologise for the oversight.

Furthermore, I am aware that in chairing the meetings on 14th September I became rather exasperated. I apologise for any offence my behaviour caused."

3. Apologies: Cllr Chapman (JC)

4. Councillor Resignation – The Chairman thanked Simon Holt on behalf of the Council for his valuable contribution to the Parish Council over the past seven years, in particular his advice and expertise in relation to planning matters.

BL confirmed that he had notified WC Electoral Services of the resignation and then outlined the way forward to fill the vacancy:

- Notice of Vacancy was published on notice boards and the web site on 14th October inviting electors to write and request an election
- If 10 or more electors write then an election will be held not later than 11th January 2017 at a significant cost to the Parish Council and community
- If less than 10 electors write in then the Parish Council will be authorised to co-opt a member

Whatever the way forward, there are currently no 'expressions of interest' on the table to fill the vacancy. The Parish Council article in the November issue of Redhorn News will include an invite to electors to 'express an interest' or ask for further information. Councillors are urged to try and encourage electors in the community to take up this invite with the view to being able to fill this vacancy and /or identify potential candidates for the full council elections to be held in May 2017.

ACTION: FC/75/16 - ALL

5. Declarations of Interest: None Declared

6. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports

There being no external reports, **the Chairman Closed the Meeting for Public Participation**

Mr John Knight requested an update on the additional allotment gate to the Cemetery from The Croft – BL confirmed that at last the Council had received a response from Aster Legal Department rejecting the proposal for a second gate but suggesting an alternative option of a gate and fencing within the allotment grounds. This had been discussed with Joyce Organ and it had been agreed that this would be implemented. Although BL had gained a

quotation for the original plan, it would be necessary to visit the site to brief the contractor and ascertain whether additional costs are involved. This meeting will be facilitated shortly and a start date agreed.

The Chairman re-opened the Council Meeting

7. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14th September 2016

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

8. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2016 – DM reviewed the list of outstanding actions, most of which are ongoing and some are updated later in the minutes. BD reported on Action FC/45/16 – Bikes on Salisbury Plain – he had emailed the regulatory authority and awaits a reply.

9. Finance

a. To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 30th September 2016 – BL confirmed that these documents had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Assuming that all budgeted funds are spent, the financial statement currently indicates an end of year reserve of £10,814. Accounts had been successfully reconciled with bank statements and all internet banking payments in September are shown on page 2 of the reconciliation.

BL had circulated an email from Jane Scott (WC) on 20th September regarding the DCLG technical consultation on **the 2017/18 local government finance settlement**. Whilst the 2017/18 precept referendum proposals do not impact Urchfont Parish Council because the Parish falls below the stated criteria, potential application of referendum requirements for all Parish and Town Councils post 2017/18 would have a significant impact. If this occurs then the cost of mounting a referendum could surpass any benefit from permitted increases in precept. On this basis BL recommended that the Council should respond to the consultation opposing any referendum changes post 2017/18. PW confirmed this potential situation and strongly urged the Council to respond to the consultation objecting to the potential proposals.

Proposal	Proposed	Seconded	Decision
BL to respond to the Consultation document on behalf of the Council opposing potential precept referendum changes post 2017/18	DM	RT	Unanimously agreed

ACTION: FC/76/16 – BL

b. Report on progress of annual audit(s) – BL confirmed that he had received the report from the external auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, without comment on the accounts. One comment was made about the timing of approval of the accounts and governance statement which appeared to contradict what had been said in the previous year, BL will be querying this with the auditor.

c. Refund of partial grant from St Michaels Project – BL reported that a refund of £236.78 had been received from this Project which is now in the process of dissolution; the Project Board had decided to distribute unspent funds to those organisations which originally contributed.

10. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (attached on website)

a. Urchfont Pond and Surrounds – RT added that he is in the process of getting additional quotes (Action FC/67/16) for Phase 3 of the electricity project, he is scheduled to meet with a second contractor shortly to discuss the specified work. DM confirmed that he will collect the Christmas tree. BD confirmed that the Scarecrow contribution to Phase 3 is being facilitated through the Parish Trust, he asked that BL talk to Peter Cook in this respect.

ACTION: FC/77/16 – BL

b. Clerks Report – BL stated that he had nothing to add, some topics are covered later in agenda.

11. Section 106 Playground Project – Council thanks go to Geoff Potter who carried out precursor works to remove the mound / slide and swings, this was more complex than originally thought due to the amount of buried concrete footings. BL reported that installation works on the new playground began on 17th October, it is hoped that work will be completed in around two weeks dependent on the weather. The site is fenced for mainly H&S reasons, especially while the School is operational. BL and Emma Beaumont are overseeing the works on a day to day basis to ensure that any issues are resolved quickly; for example the fact that new base plate / anchoring parts are required for the existing rocker which will be moved to a new location and the requirement for more turf than quoted for. BL pointed out that the wooden shelter had again been damaged by persons unknown, a large portion of slats had been kicked out. TH had also noted this and offered to undertake repairs.

ACTION: FC/78/16 – TH

12. Liaison with Urchfont School – NM referred to a letter from the School which had recently been circulated to all councillors announcing collaboration between five schools locally, this provides a solid base for keeping independence and gives some assurance that Urchfont Primary will not become an academy in the foreseeable future unless Government policy changes. NM then spoke about preliminary proposals to make a small extension (647 sq ft) to the School to provide 3 additional classrooms and reposition other facilities within the School. Funding appears to be an issue at present. The extension will encroach on the car park, but alternative arrangements are being considered which would not compromise the PROW pathway if deemed necessary. The PROW was not discussed, but we are aware that the Head wrote to Richard Broadhead (WC) to seek an update on the expected progress meeting; his response indicated that expects to address the matter later in October.

13. Scarecrow Festival Committee – BD made councillors aware of an article which will be going into Redhorn News highlighting the fact that a number of committee members and other volunteers are leaving. Whilst a reduced size of the committee is being considered, it is the availability of volunteers to prepare for and run the festival on the ground in May that is causing most concern. If sufficient new volunteers cannot be found then the 2018 Festival may be cancelled and the event may be only run every two years in future.

14. Playing Field (Eastern End) – BL reminded councillors that they had decided at an earlier meeting not to pursue ownership of the eastern end of the playing field until the western end had been secured; now is the time to decide the way forward. The objective of ownership was and still is protection of this green space for the community in perpetuity, the community have used it for many years as a recreational area. BL suggested that three potential options could be considered, PW added a fourth at 'd' below:

- a. Take no further action, leave WC to decide what the field is used for and when
- b. Pursue ownership of the whole of the eastern end of the playing field but establish legal criteria for the School to continue to use the field
- c. Pursue ownership of the whole field except for the area determined to be to meet Education Dept. requirements for School use – shown on an earlier plan outlined in red
- d. Seek a legal arrangement with WC to secure Parish Council ownership of the whole playing field if and when the School ceases to exist

GD suggested that the Council should stand by its earlier objective to pursue ownership of the whole field (Option b), this was echoed by other councillors. It was agreed that Option 'a' is not appropriate; it does not satisfy the Council prime objective of protection for community use in perpetuity. Recognising potential resistance, risk and likelihood of Secretary of State involvement, the following proposal was made. BL sought advice from PW as to who the best non officer level contact would be in WC to address such an issue to. PW confirmed that any proposals should be addressed to him, he could then facilitate with other senior members in WC.

Proposal	Proposed	Seconded	Decision
BL to re-initiate negotiations with WC in consultation with the UPC Solicitor to secure the best option available to meet the Council prime objective. BL to report progress on a regular basis.	DM	BD	Unanimously agreed

ACTION: FC/79/16 – BL

15. Farmers Field – TH reported that the management plan activity being undertaken by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust will commence in November. BD outlined and recommended acceptance of the proposal received from Phil Milanes to level land around the pond which had been quoted at £360 + VAT by Bodman’s. GD asked whether this work will be included in the Management Plan Phase 1 proposals, if this can be confirmed then the Council should consider funding. TH was asked to seek this confirmation for a decision on funding at the next meeting.

ACTION: FC/80/16 - TH

16. Neighbourhood Plan (UWLNP)

a. To ratify the email decision on the Fact Check response – DM summarised an email from Richard Hawkins which had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting; in this he objected to the fact that yet another email decision had been taken on this important subject when public consultation should have been undertaken on the Fact Check report. AS commented that every councillor had been given the opportunity to comment on the Fact Check report to the Steering Group despite the very short timescale given for the response to WC. DM made the point that at this stage of the process no changes, fundamental or otherwise, have been made to the Plan. Consensus indicated that the correct process had been followed and that public consultation was not warranted, justified or practical in the timeframe. It was, however, agreed that the public should be informed when changes have actually been made to the Plan following the independent examiner and WC review stage.

Proposal	Proposed	Seconded	Decision
To ratify the email decision taken to submit the agreed response to WC within the deadline.	GD	RT	Unanimously agreed

b. To receive an update on responsibilities – DM explained the process as follows; when the independent examiner and WC have completed their review, the Plan will be updated by the Steering Group taking account of the final version of the Fact Check report. When this is complete the Plan will be submitted to the Parish Council for approval and the Steering Group will be disbanded. From that point the Parish Council will need to take ownership of the Plan and be responsible for taking it forward to referendum utilising various forms of publicity to ensure that the public are fully aware of the Plan contents and the importance of casting their vote to safeguard the future of the Community. TH requested that notes be produced for subsequent Steering Group meetings and circulated to Council members to keep them fully informed on progress, DM agreed to facilitate this.

ACTION: FC/81/16 - DM

17. Teambuilding / Training Event in November – BL confirmed that it is intended to hold this event in November to discuss lessons learned, preparing for the May 2017 election, improving the reputation of the Council and reviewing councillor lead roles. BL thanked councillors for provision of availability data, he is now seeking a date and social venue based on when he can get the majority if not all members of the Council together. Details will be circulated as soon as possible.

ACTION: FC/82/16 - BL

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

a. John Snook improvement proposals to WC Highways – DM outlined the proposals regarding Lydeaway Junction and the B3098 around Witchell Lane which had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. GD was of the view that there is a need to better understand the proposals before the Parish Council could support / facilitate any approach to CATG. It was agreed that GD and TH should discuss this further with Mr Snook.

ACTION: FC/83/16 – GD/TH

b. SATNav / GPS Errors – DM pointed out that there are at least two areas in the Parish that are plagued by vehicles taking wrong routes due primarily to satnav/GPS errors, in particular delivery vehicles.

- i. Firstly in The Bottom where the situation is exacerbated by the fact that 'No Through Road' signage is not visible in all directions and is almost contradicted by an arrow sign. PW suggested that this could be reported to Highways using the 'My Wiltshire App' if signage is at fault or inadequate. DM to consider further and report if necessary.
- ii. The Cartway in Wedhampton, a no through road, is being wrongly used as a way through to Chirton. To make matters worse, the 'No Through Road' signs were removed and not replaced when the road was recently resurfaced. PW recommended use of the 'My Wiltshire App' to report this to WC Highways. BD to action.

ACTION: FC/84/16 – DM/BD

c. Wedhampton Manor – BD reported that a Wedhampton resident had expressed the view that the owners of Wedhampton Manor were installing additional kitchens in their property to rent out self-contained accommodation. Having visited the owner, BD confirmed that this is not the case; kitchens are not being installed for this purpose but rooms are being rented out within the house which is still occupied by the owners. BD to update the concerned resident.

ACTION: FC/85/16 - BD

d. Fly Tipping – BL reported that this appears to be increasing within the Parish, he had received a number of reports recently and had noted one site himself on Urchfont Footpath 34 where a significant amount of furniture has been dumped. He is encouraging people to report instances using the 'My Wiltshire' App as he has done in the case of the Footpath 34 issue. Councillors commented that increasing restrictions at local household re-cycling sites such as reduced opening hours and the need to register trailers may be contributing to this trend. PW commented that most cases investigated in Wiltshire are down to unlicensed contractors who charge owners to remove items and then just dump the goods to avoid charges themselves. Culprits have and will be prosecuted if they can be identified, as will the owners of the discarded goods if they have not checked that a contractor has the appropriate licence.

e. Urchfont Players – BD commented that the recent murder mystery had been very successful. The Players are now looking to mount a pantomime in January 2017 but are desperate for volunteers to take part because some existing members are finding it necessary to leave. If anyone is aware of somebody who might be interested, please get them to contact BD as soon as possible.

ACTION: FC/86/16 – ALL

f. Defibrillators – BD alerted the Council to a flaw with these machines originally installed because ambulance and paramedic response times are generally not as good in rural areas as elsewhere. Basically they are of little use to anyone living alone or even as a couple, because there is no way that they can access the machine unless someone else can be contacted to do it for them in the event of an emergency. On the other hand they are

good in places where people tend to gather together, such as the Village Hall. BD highlighted the fact that there is a service available to identify first responders in the case of such an emergency, it was agreed that NM should investigate this further.

ACTION: FC/87/16 - NM

g. Trees at Lydeaway – DM reported that an email request had been received from Mrs Diz Plank for the Council to consider whether a grant could be made towards the upkeep of trees planted on either side of the 'C' road from Lydeaway Junction to the B3098 some 10 years ago as part of a National Planting Scheme (along with a lot of other trees and shrubs in the area). Debate concluded that as these trees would have now passed into the ownership of the landowner (Mr & Mrs Plank) under the terms of the scheme and as such it would not be appropriate for the Council to approve a grant; to do so would set a precedent for all other trees planted under the same or similar scheme(s). BL said that he spoken with Phil Milanese who had planted the trees in question; he is prepared to undertake any remedial works considered necessary in consultation with Mrs Plank. It was agreed that BL should respond to Mrs Plank as above.

ACTION: FC/88/16 - BL

19. External Meetings

a. Claire Perry Surgery – BD reported that he met with Claire Parry and updated her on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan which she was pleased to hear. She also took note of the suggestion that a generic neighbourhood plan template should be devised by Government to assist councils trying to develop their own plans; not an easy or quick task as the UWLNP Steering Group can confirm.

b. Hobbit House, Wedhampton – BD reported that this house is being used as a care home by a company called Esland for one child supported by round the clock carers; the child goes to school in Swindon. A similar situation has been identified in Easterton, as a result BD and a representative from Easterton Council went to a recent Area Board meeting to update WC on a potentially serious issue which they were not fully aware of. WC is responsible for care in the community of all children in Wiltshire, but were not fully aware of this situation possibly because the children involved are from out of the County. WC is investigating further. A certificate of use for the house is not held in the name of the Company, but in the name of one of its directors; is this deliberate to deceive? Some disturbances have occurred recently in the house, as a result a meeting between the owners and Wedhampton residents is being arranged. BD agreed to keep the Council informed.

ACTION: FC/89/16 - BD

20. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda – None identified

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 9th November 2016 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm

Meeting closed at 10.05pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council 20th October 2016

WRITTEN REPORTS – OCTOBER 2016

1. Urchfont Pond and Surrounds

Installation of the electrical pillar and underground ducting to the Christmas tree location should now start w/c 24 October. This will be followed by the electrical work, with the aim of completion in time for the Christmas lights.

If no significant rain falls in the next few weeks, the pond water level will be topped up by using a standpipe hired from Wessex Water.

Please note an advance request for volunteers to make themselves known to assist with collection of the Christmas tree from Dauntsey's school at end of term and putting up the Christmas lights. It is hoped that once the issue of repair and ownership of the pond wall is settled and the Management Company has been formed, the residents of Manor Farm Yard might like to take over putting up the lights on the pond wall for Christmas 2017.

Royston Thomas

2. Clerks Report – October 2016

- i. **Playing Field Proposal (Eastern End)** – As agreed at the May 2016 meeting, further consideration on this proposal was put on hold until the CAT of the western end had been finalised. As this has now been achieved, this is now on the agenda for discussion.
- ii. **Playground Upgrading** – The contract for the new playground to be funded by Section 106 funding was placed on 22nd August 2016. WC transferred the first phase funding (Excluding VAT) to UPC on 1st October and the first payment of £34,551.17 (Including VAT which will be recoverable) was made to Playdale on 5th October. Pre-requisite works to remove the slide mound and other play equipment has been completed by Geoff Potter. The company have indicated a start date of 17th October 2016 and estimated completion within four weeks dependent on weather. The School have been notified of this work with a request to keep all children clear of the works site which will be fenced for H&S purposes.
- iii. **Councillor Vacancy** – Following the resignation of Simon Holt, I have made the required notifications to WC Electoral Services. A 'Notice of Vacancy' will be posted on all Notice Boards on Friday 14th October requiring electors to indicate whether they require an election to fill the vacancy. It has been confirmed to me that if 10 or more electors request an election, then this will have to be held as the vacancy occurred outside the 'six month rule' applying to Full Council elections which will be held in May 2017 (note: costs of this local election would be charged to the Parish Council). If less than 10 electors indicate the requirement for an election within the specified deadline, then the Council will be free to co-opt a new member.
- iv. **Lease for Urchfont Picnic Site** – thank you for your views on the offer from MOD to discuss this lease further, as a result I will be arranging a meeting shortly and may invite the UPC solicitor to attend. No progress has yet been made on this due to other more pressing issues.
- v. **Tree Shredding / Chipping Service** – I would remind you that this annual service will be provided in the Playing Field (old BMX area) on Monday 24th October 2016, material can be deposited over the weekend 22nd/23rd October.

Bob Lunn