

Uffculme Parish Council
Minutes of meeting held
6 October 2016 at The Square Corner

Chairman: E Hagelstein

Present: P Cornish P Disley T Emms G Evans
P Golding M Pollard D Wells

Apologies: P Mackian – Holiday J Gardner – Work Commitments
P Blackman – Unwell R Chesterton – Holiday

Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2016 Approved and signed as a correct record.

Finance:

September Financial Statement

APPROVED as official Council Minutes

Lloyds Bank online access

The Clerk reported that with the new online access there is a facility to make payments online to recipients. The Clerk was still finalising how this would work alongside the other signatories on the bank account.

Cllr Wells requested the details for the online access to be emailed to him so that he could register.

Defibrillator

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting we have received a very generous donation of £250. The donor wished to remain anonymous although it was noted that they did not live within the parish but had strong links to the village and parish in general.

We are still waiting to hear from the Co-Op Head Office as to their decision for the siting of the defibrillator on the external wall. It was hoped that this would be received shortly and following confirmation that it was ok to position the defibrillator outside the Co-Op, we would then go on and make the purchase accordingly.

Ashill Defibrillator Contribution

At the last meeting Cllr Blackman requested that Uffculme Parish Council make a donation to the Ashill Village Hall Committee Fund, to top up the shortfall of the £400 that was necessary to gain the British Heart Foundation defibrillator. The Village Hall Committee had raised in the region of £150 towards the defibrillator themselves and the meeting considered whether to top up this payment to the £400. As Cllr Blackman was not in attendance at the meeting we did not have the exact figures and it was proposed that the contribution made by Uffculme Parish Council would top up the funds to £400, and be no more than £270. This was proposed by Cllr D Evans and seconded by Cllr D Wells. The whole meeting was in agreement.

Noticeboard

As above with the defibrillator we are still waiting to hear back from the Co-Op Head Office that the new noticeboard will meet their approval, and they would be happy for us to position this on the external wall of the Co-Op.

The Clerk reported that we have now received the electronic map from Devon Country Council, following the licence being granted by Ordnance Survey. The Clerk has since forwarded the electronic copy of the map from Devon County Council to Ken White Signs, so they have this to be able to prepare a non-fade map once we have confirmation of the noticeboard being approved.

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TAP Fund Monies

The Clerk reported that the TAP fund application that was originally submitted in June was being considered by Cllr Ray Radford on Monday 11 October 2016. It was hoped that Ray would allocate the funds to the project; our initial application was for £1,250. This money would be used towards the defibrillator at the Co-Op and when looking at getting one for Magelake.

The Clerk had also received a request to support a TAP fund application for the basketball team that is based at the Secondary school at Uffculme. Based upon the information provided, the basketball team is aimed at women, and is generally very well attended by people from the local area. Culm Valley Comets Basketball have asked for a £960 grant from the TAP fund allocation towards developing girls basketball in the area. It was discussed whether the TAP fund was the most appropriate source of funding for this scheme given that there were many other funds available to support sporting activities within Devon, Active Devon and Exeter City Community Outreach being two that were discussed. Hemyock Parish Council has supported the Culm Valley Comets Basketball TAP fund application as it is understood several participants reside in Hemyock.

Picnic Tables for Play Area

The Clerk has looked into the costs for picnic tables in the Play Area and it was discussed that the recycled plastic tables would in fact be better than traditional wooden tables. The recycled plastic requires no ongoing maintenance, compared to the wooden tables which obviously would require treating annually. In addition, the plastic tables would have a greater lifespan and would be made from recycled material. The price that the Clerk has sourced suggests they would cost in the region of £400 a table and it was thought that two within the recreation ground would be appropriate. The Clerk has also been contacted by Sovereign Play and Design, the company who supplied and installed the new equipment at the rec, they are keen to see whether they can provide any further equipment within the village therefore the Clerk will go back to Sovereign, and discuss our requirements in line with Pathfields Play Area (see below).

Remembrance Wreath

The Clerk asked the meeting whether it would like to make a donation towards the Poppy Appeal for a Remembrance Wreath on behalf of the Parish Council. Last year the donation made was £45. Cllr Cornish proposed that the donation for 2016 was £50, this was seconded by Cllr Emms and the meeting was in agreement.

Business Arising

Uffculme Central

Cllr Emms advised the meeting that the sub committee, agreed at the September Parish Council meeting, met on Wednesday 5 October and discussed the plans that were prepared by Reed Holland a number of years ago, to redevelop the Square and Ayshford Green. The Committee felt that support from the parish was lacking and therefore to continue with the design as it was, without the financial support from Viridor of c. £100,000, the project was not viable. Although monies have been set aside in the precept to part fund this during the 2016-17 financial year, the Parish Council needed to make a decision as to a way forward. As a result of the meeting on Wednesday 5 October it was agreed that a meeting would be set up with Reed Holland, the designers of the scheme, to discuss ways in which the development would gain the same result, although on a reduced cost basis.

Cllr Emms had prepared notes of the meeting and the Clerk will forward these to all Councillors for their perusal.

Mid Devon Local Plan Review 2013 – 2033 – Update

Cllr B Evans advised the meeting that Cabinet were scheduled to meet on 10 October. Full Council would then meet on 21 November, Cllr Evans was unsure as to the benefit of these two meetings given that the local plan would not be in a position to move forward. These meetings were originally set when it was anticipated the

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reports on Jct.28 for the environment agency would be available and the Council would be able to make a decision as to how it wished to proceed. Since then the Council has obviously, at its September meeting, agreed to go out to consultation given the land allocation at Jct.27. It is expected that a consultation period will be for a minimum of 6 weeks. There is a possibility that consultation will take place during November and some of December, however this will leave the District Council very little time to prepare for the consultation process. Cllr Wells advised the meeting that Cllr Chesterton had that morning advised that the consultation period was in fact likely to be January/February as the support for breaking the consultation period either side of Christmas was not supported. The meeting was concerned that the consultation period falling in January/February would give the Council very little time to review the responses received, consolidate and deal with any follow up work prior to the local plan being in a position to be submitted before 31 March 2017. The meeting was made aware of the potential issues of no local plan being submitted to Central Government ahead of the deadline of 31 March 2017, including a plan being imposed by Central Government or special measures being imposed on the District Council. The meeting was all in agreement that delaying the consultation process until after Christmas would potentially give rise to additional issues.

J27 Feasibility Report – inclusion of land at Jct.27 Consultation

As above the District Council had had a vote on the inclusion of land at Jct.27 and as a result of this vote it was agreed. Thursday 22 September 2016 was the date of the Mid Devon District Council meeting that agreed the inclusion of Jct.27 in the local plan.

Devon Minerals Plan – Update

The inspector that was appointed to conduct the enquiry into the Devon Minerals Plan earlier this year is expected to prepare his final report by the end of October 2016. It is expected that the Minerals Plan will be implemented by December 2016 and this timescale is very much still what everybody is working towards.

Landfill site at Broadpath

At the last Uffculme Parish Council meeting Cllr Bob Evans advised he had a meeting scheduled with Laurie Quinn to discuss Aggregate Industries' activities at Broadpath. This meeting was cancelled as Laurie Quinn was no longer in his post, Aggregate Industries were yet to appoint someone new into Laurie's position. Cllr Evans had requested that the meeting continued, although with a different representative of Aggregate Industries. He received no response to this.

It is expected that we hear before Christmas whether the widening of Clay Lane as suggested within the modifications of the Devon Minerals Plan are likely. Although it would take some time for the work to be actioned, it would be encouraging to know that agreement had been reached to carry out these works.

It is expected that the landfill site will still close before 2020, and potentially as early as 2018, this is an estimate at this time.

The Clerk reported that within the Spotlight magazine for October the Green Team are promoting that they have a tour of the landfill site booked for 26 October 2016, and the Clerk encouraged anyone who had not previously visited the site and wished to gain a greater understanding to attend this visit.

Since the September meeting, Cllr B Evans had directly reported an issue of the site smelling to Mary Reeves of the Environment Agency. This was thought to be caused due to some cover removed and gas being present, which was not expected. The Environment Agency encouraged all issues with regards to smells from the landfill being reported to their Smells Telephone Line which is included on the back of the Spotlight for reference.

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ABN Feed Mill

The meeting discussed recent lorry movement issues, namely speeding vehicles through the village and other ancillary roads. It was noted that the issues are not only with agency drivers, as previously suggested by ABN, and is in fact the green lorries that are causing issue.

The meeting noted that there are still issues with regard to the site smelling. Cllr Hagelstein to contact ABN to discuss this. It was expected that the cyclones were due to be replaced and this would have a positive impact on the smells from within the village. The meeting was advised that there were a number of residents who keep a diary of when the smells from the feed mill are particularly strong, Cllr Emms agreed to keep a diary of smells from his home.

Willand - Proposed Boundary Change

The meeting agreed that the Clerk should arrange to meet with Willand Parish Council on a Thursday evening to discuss the proposed boundary change. The Parish Council had previously considered the suggestion from Willand Parish Council and Uffculme had no immediate concerns as to how Willand had proposed the boundary be amended. The Clerk will go back to those concerned directly.

Commercial Road Footpath

Cllr Ray Radford had been in contact with Tom Vaughan; DCC Officer for Highways, with regards to what action was needed to reinstate a footpath, of some description, along Commercial Road by The George. Cllr Radford has been in contact with Cllr Emms regarding this matter and they had agreed a meeting with Tom Vaughan to attend the site and discuss options. Cllr Ray Radford thought that nothing would happen unless a Traffic Order was granted, and we would then find ourselves in a similar situation as to the issues surrounding the Ashill 30mph. It was agreed this would be progressed and we would await the outcome of the DCC Officer.

Cllr Hagelstein suggested that it may be possible, and a lot cheaper, to have the footpath as a demarcation on the road using coloured tarmac, much like they have in Halberton, it was agreed that this would be discussed on site when the meeting was arranged.

Planning Appeal – Kerrells, Burllescombe (15/01775/CLU)

The meeting was advised that the applicant for the siting of a caravan at Kerrells, the property next door to the Fergusons' former home, had gone to appeal. The appeal will have been registered with the Secretary of State and the District Council would await the decision.

Highway Matters/Road and Traffic

Ashill 30 MPH

No progress has been made on the introduction of a 30mph limit at Ashill. It was noted that the 60 mph signs were remaining and the Clerk would contact Devon County Council Highways to see if these can be removed in an attempt to help the situation.

Correspondence

Other Correspondence

The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by the Uffculme Parochial Church Committee to advise that they have been approached to have a mobile phone mast within the spire of St. Mary's in Uffculme. The church has made no decision of whether to proceed with this and was holding a meeting in early November where people could gain more information about this project. The Clerk advises this meeting she will attend this information evening and will be able to feed back at the November meeting as an Agenda item, and the Council can formulate a response.

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Cllr B Evans advised he had been contacted as the Ward Councillor for the District Council as to any comments they had in respect of the application. The Clerk advised she was supposed to have been contacted with regards to this and will respond accordingly following Cllr Evans forwarding the email.

Clerk's Report

Pathfields Play Area

The Clerk reported that she and Cllr Hagelstein had met with Mid Devon District Council Officer on site at Pathfields the previous week, and it was felt that a lease for the land going forward would be a good option to ensure that the play area remained open and available for use by local children. Whilst in attendance at the play area a local resident approached the Clerk and asked whether the play area was closing, they felt the meeting was to discuss this, the Clerk reassured the local resident the Parish Council was doing all it could to ensure that the play area remained open and available to be used. In principal a lease would be able to be put in place for the parcel of land prior to Spring 2017 and therefore the meeting was all in agreement that the Clerk should contact the District Council to get the ball rolling with the lease. The Clerk would also arrange to gain some quotes for replacement equipment. It was felt the swings were of adequate quality and the standard of repair to remain, although the climbing frame and walking boards needed replacing relatively quickly.

Snow Wardens

The Clerk reported that she had received contact from one member of the parish with regards to storing salt for the poor weather. It was hoped that many more residents would come forward and offer a small storage space and spreading should we have a period of bad weather. It was agreed the Clerk would keep the contact details of these local residents and Cllr Pollard would go back to them in due course.

New Councillors

The Clerk made the meeting aware of Dave Lupton's application to join the Parish Council. The Clerk read Dave's letter giving a brief rundown of his involvement in the village and Parish activities, as well as his skills that could be well used within the Parish Council. The meeting discussed the possibility of appointing Dave Lupton and it was proposed by Cllr Pollard and seconded by Cllr Cornish. The meeting was in agreement.

We still have one further vacancy on the Parish Council and it was agreed that the Clerk would arrange another advert be placed in the Spotlight to try and gain interest in joining the Parish Council. The Clerk had also reported she had contacted the Primary School to see whether if it was an option to include the notice in a forthcoming newsletter, as the relationship that Cllr Little had established with the Primary School was invaluable, given that the Parish Council is here not only for adult residents but also for children within the Parish.

Use of Social Media

The Clerk advised the meeting that she had looked into the 'Love Uffculme' Facebook page which is managed by Jim Clancy. The Clerk asked the meeting to consider whether posting notices on the Love Uffculme Facebook page would be a good way of sharing what the Parish Council was doing and involved in, to the wider community that perhaps don't receive updates from the Spotlight. The Clerk also mentioned that this would hopefully appeal to younger members of the Parish. The Facebook page was displayed at the meeting and it was discussed that we would not engage in posting comments on other pages and/or inviting people to comment on a page specifically for the Parish Council; however, the Clerk would e-mail PDF images to Jim Clancy when it was felt appropriate. An example of this would be the current vacancies for Councillors in the hope this may appeal to a wider spectrum of people. The whole meeting felt that this would be a good way to promote the Parish Council to the wider community. The use of social media will be trialled and Cllr Wells proposed this and the meeting was all in agreement.

This will be considered within 6 months as to whether this a good option for the Parish Council or not.

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Flag for Remembrance Day

Cllr Pollard advised the meeting that he would be unable to raise and lower the flag for the various Remembrance services on and around 11 November, and therefore would ask if there was somebody else within the Parish Council that could deal with this for this year on his behalf. Cllr Emms said he would be able to raise and lower the flag and it was agreed that Cllrs Emms and Pollard would arrange between themselves to run through what was required.

Meetings

The Clerk reiterated the change of meetings following the email circulated after the September Parish Council meeting, and was encouraged by the positive response from Councillors to move the meetings to start at 7pm, and that the Planning meetings would now take place on an alternative evening.

The planning meetings will now take place on the second Thursday of the month or the Thursday following the full Parish Council meeting. Scheduling the meetings in this way would mean that the public would have the ability to attend the Parish Council meeting and raise any concerns regarding planning matters, that then the Planning Committee could then consider at their meeting the following week.

This will remain under review and the Clerk will produce a summary of meeting dates for 2017 and this will be circulated in due course.

Grass Cutting

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the previously circulated grass cutting maps that had been received from Mid Devon District Council. During 2015 the District Council and Devon County Council advised that they would be scaling back the number of grass cuts that are carried out during the year. At the time the Parish Council agreed to the new proposal with no cost associated with it that the verges would be cut 1 metre from the edge. When it was initially reviewed, the Parish Council felt that there were very few places in fact wider than the 1m edge cutting that was proposed, and we would therefore trial the new option during 2016. The meeting agreed that the planning committee would review the maps in detail when they met on Thursday 13 October, and they would feed back to the meeting at the beginning of November as to what course of action the recommended for 2017.

County Councillor's Report (Cllr Radford)

Cllr Radford again reiterated the discussions he had had with Cllr Emms regarding the footpath outside The George, along Commercial Road. Cllr Radford agreed that he would progress matters with Cllr Emms and an update would follow as and when it was available. Cllr Radford had also been contacted by the Clerk regarding some trees along Uffculme Road that had begun to block the street lights, which meant that certain parts of the road were particularly dark when using the footpath. He had been in contact with Andy Ware, who is responsible for street lighting, and they had suggested that there was no safety issue, although this would be further investigated and if necessary the land owner contacted regarding cutting back the trees.

Cllr Radford wanted to reiterate that he did not support the Jct.27 proposal by Eden Westwood, and he did not vote for the inclusion of this parcel of land within the Mid Devon local plan. Ray reported that he has had certain people contact him following a piece on the television which suggested he supported the development; this is not the case.

Cllr Radford advised the meeting that two thirds of the street lights within Devon were now on a part-nightly scheme, which had seen a saving in the region of 23 million KWh, representing a financial saving of £600,000.

As previously advised, the South West Highways contract was up for renewal and as it stood at the meeting on 6 October, South West Highways were due to be replaced by a new contractor. The new contractor will be SKANSKA and this will be implemented in April 2017. The other contractors that put forward bids to maintain

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Devon's roads have until 5pm on 7 October 2016 to lodge any objections to the new contractor. It was not anticipated at this time that there would be any objections received, although objections from South West Highways would not be completely unexpected given they have lost the contract. If there were any objections lodged to the new contractor, there would be a period of investigation into the objections and this would likely result in a delay of 12mths in the implementation of the new contractor. Cllr Radford advised he would let the Clerk know if any objections were lodged and therefore if we hear nothing, we expect the new contractor to take over in April 2017.

Cllr Radford said that Devon County Council had been carrying out a spotlight review into the Highway Asset Management. This has highlighted that £102 million is needed per year to adequately maintain the County's roads. Due to budget cuts DCC only has £46 million available in its actual budget. It is hoped that a further £7 million is received from Central Government in an attempt to upgrade the County's roads. The meeting was advised that 80% of the County's traffic travels on 20% of its roads.

Cllr Radford is currently chairing an Environmental group that is looking at the underperformance of road repairs by utility companies after works that have been carried out. An example of this would be whereby a telecoms provider needed to install a new line and as such dug a trench, the trench was not filled correctly and resulted in excessive amounts of potholes appearing in a short period of time.

The Council has seen savings in the region of £244 million in the last 4 years. This is due to further budget cuts from Central Government and also that the Council has made redundancies to some 1723 employees, taking the number of employees at Devon County Council to 3621. The Council has also managed to reduce its debt by £106 million, and this is likely to have come as a result of selling buildings that are no longer required, this has generated income of c. £40 million.

District Councillors' Reports (Cllrs Doe and Evans)

Cllr Doe reported that the District Council was making available some social media training to Parishes if they wish. She agreed that she would forward the details of this training to the Clerk, and this could then be forwarded on to Councillors.

Cllr Doe also mentioned that the District Council is looking at providing Chapter 8 training. The meeting was advised that Chapter 8 training is a practical skill that can be used for example to replace the signs on sign posts, to ensure that this is done correctly and safely. Again as and when information becomes available from the District Council, Cllr Doe will make this available to the Parish.

The District Council is also setting up some training for planning and the associated regulations surrounding this. The District Council is aiming this training particularly at Clerks and those Councillors who are involved in discussing planning applications. The Clerk advised the meeting that she would attend the training and also make the details available to all those on the planning committee should they wish to attend.

Cllr Evans advised that the management structure at the District Council has seen a change over the recent weeks. There is a move towards people becoming more of a board structure and we have seen Andrew Jarrett remain responsible for finance, although Amy Tregellas will be leaving the Council on 28 October 2016. The meeting agreed that seeing Amy's departure was disappointing given her excellent interaction with the Parish in the past. Amy is also currently the Monitoring Officer for the Council and we await an update as to who will be responsible for this going forward.

The meeting was advised that the previous application within Willand for 42 houses had now been amended to increase the number from 42 to in excess of 260 new homes. This parcel of land would effectively be on the right hand side as you leave Willand towards Cullompton before you reach the Esso Garage, stretching down towards

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to Motorway. There are serious concerns with regards to transport and access to the site, although given the recent Harvesters appeal the land agent seems to be proceeding with the application and even if this is refused by the District Council, is likely to go to appeal and the decision will lay with an inspector much as it did with Harvester's.

Cllr Evans reported that he had conducted an estates walk around with officers of the Council for areas within the Parish, including Ashley Close, Ayshford, Highland Terrace and Russet Close. Cllr Evans was awaiting further action points for these walk rounds and it was hoped that some of the proposed changes were implemented in the short term. At the next audit committee meeting, which Cllr Evans chairs, Stephen Walford the Chief Executive of Mid Devon District Council will be in attendance. Cllr Evans has requested this meeting with Stephen Walford to discuss the sick rates within the District Council. As of now the normal sick rates stand at 2%, however the District Council's target rate is 8%, somewhat in excess of the norm. Cllr Evans is keen to understand what action Stephen Walford will take with the information he will provide him with and he will report back to the Parish Council in due course.

The next meeting will be Thursday 3 November 2016, 7.00pm at The Square Corner