

UPPER CLATFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm 8th January 2025

King Edward VII Memorial Hall Upper Clatford Hampshire

Council Members Present

Cllr Peter Heslop, Chair, (PH)
Karin Bennett Clerk (KB)
Cllr Richard Bennett (RB)
Cllr Gerry Dawson (GD)
Cllr Liz Dawson (LD) (Apologies)
Cllr Charles Eyre (CE)
Cllr Nigel Freemantle (NF)
Cllr Robert Hawkins (RHk)
Cllr Richard Hydes (RH)
Cllr Patrick Littlehales (PL)
Cllr Cynthia Williams (CW)

TVBC & HCC

Cllr Maureen Flood TVBC (MF) (Apologies)
Cllr Susanne Hasselmann TVBC (SH)
Cllr David Drew HCC (DD)

- 1) **Welcome, Declarations of Interest and Public Participation –**
 - a. Chairmans welcome.
 - b. Apologies for absence from Cllr L Dawson and TVBC Cllr Susanne Flood.
 - c. Cllr CW declared an interest in the planning matter item 6 below. No other declarations of interest were raised.
 - d. The members of the public present were invited to speak and declined.
- 2) **Minutes of the December meeting** were agreed and physically signed by PH.
- 3) **County Councillor's Update** – Cllr DD provided an update on a number of HCC initiatives relating to sustainability: the success of the HCC Solar Together Scheme, the Repair Café saving c 50 tonnes of carbon, collaboration with partners to deliver 62 zero emission buses in Hampshire, encouraging and supporting younger people to support climate action initiatives and the technology enabled care programme reducing the need for journeys. Cllr DD also covered the national devolution proposals currently being mooted by HCC and that a decision would be made 9th January as to the option for devolution that HCC would be taking.
- 4) **Borough Councillor's Update** – Cllr SH commented on the devolution proposals, and the recent NPPF changes (National Planning Policy Framework) which are still being assessed by TVBC in terms of the impact these will have on planning in the borough. She also encouraged reading the TVBC greenhouse gas and climate action report.

Cllr RB asked what the impact of the devolution proposals might be on parish councils. Cllrs SH and DD agreed that it was too early to assess this.
- 5) **Clerk's Update** – KB went through Annex A, Clerks Report, seeking agreement to an increase to 15 hours per week due to the work demands of the role and the purchase of a telephone. Also notifying the cllrs of the likely cost of pension contributions. All items were agreed. KB provided updates in relation to the provision of a defibrillator, the appointment of an internal auditor and the lengthsmen scheme – citing that more information was needed and will be brought to the February council meeting if available. KB noted the offer of a first aid course by a suitably qualified resident, this was

supported by all present, KB agreed to liaise with village hall committee regarding arrangements.

- 6) **Planning** – Cllr RH provided a brief summary of the current single planning permission being sought and that there was no objection to the application.
- 7) **Financial Statement** – Clerk presented current financial statement (Appendix B), accepted and agreed by all present. Signed by PH
- 8) **Budget FY 25/26 Discussion** – KB provided the draft budget which had been previously circulated amongst the parish cllrs together with a comprehensive narrative in relation to each item on the budget expenditure line. Pre-meeting cllrs had fed in comments which were reflected in budget. Cllr CE ran cllrs through the budget. All proposed budget amounts were agreed bar the amount for the Chalk Pit maintain line which it was agreed should be increased to include VAT on the demolition estimate – see below.

Specific Items Discussed :

- a. the **grounds maintenance** budget figure which Cllr GD has asked to be increased to cover annual increase plus an increase in the provision, amounting to an increase of 10%. There was a general agreement that there needs to be more granularity in what is being delivered under this contract. Cllr GD agreed to provide an update so that a decision can be made on the provision at the March meeting.
- b. Cllr CE asked for separate lines in relation to items which are fully recoverable and those which aren't in relation to the pavilion expenditure some of which is recovered and some which isn't. KB agreed to review this but commented that there had been insufficient time to introduce a new budget format prior to the meeting.
- c. **Play equipment**, Cllr CW noted that the set aside for this item had been ongoing for some years and was to cover the wet pore surface however CW did not foresee the requirement for it to be replaced in the next FY.
- d. **Chalk Pit maintain costs** – following agreement (December 24 meeting) to differentiate between maintain costs and new project costs which was reflected in the budget Cllr CE put forward the case for the demolition costs to be met under the maintain line as demolition it has been agreed is now the most cost effective solution for the building, reducing running costs pending redevelopment. This was agreed by all cllrs present. Cllr GD asked whether VAT had been factored into the demolition estimate- it had not – Clerk 9KB) noted an adjustment to include VAT thus increasing the forecast budget by a further £4,000, NB. there would also be a corresponding increase in the VAT reclaimed.
- e. **Chalk Pit Project** – Cllr CE stated that a donation of funds for the project was due to be paid soon by the solar farm owners. This would be paid in this FY (24/25). KB made clear that if paid in this FY (24/25) then it wouldn't form part of the forecast receipts for FY 25/26 however it would form part of the reserves in the bank which would be represented in the financial picture (financial statement) and in the general accounts. It was agreed by all present that there would be no expenditure on the project paid from precept funds, Cllr CE stated that the intent is for the project to be self-funding. Cllr CE has set up a separate bank account, under the parish council, to receive future funding for this project and aid the separation. Noted that the *project* owes funds (net) to the central UCPC fund (treasurers ac) which has met the cost of some project related

works, ie. architects drawings, and assessments which have been over and above the funds already received in relation to this project.

- f. Clerk (KB) sought agreement to the precept requirement, noting that the demolition was the biggest forecast cost, which with the addition of the VAT amount added was bringing the forecast budget expenditure total to £75, 192. The total forecast receipts is £53,117.03. This left an approx. delta of expenditure over income for fy 25/26 of c £22,000. This was based on an assumed 5% increase in the precept to c£42,000.
 - g. Cllrs unanimously agreed the figures presented and that given the amount of money currently held in reserves, and the reluctance to raise the precept too much, Cllr G D proposed and it was unanimously agreed that £20,000 of the estimated demolition cost would be met from reserve funding and a reserve fund should be earmarked accordingly. **Action:** Clerk to note the earmark funds in the accounts, and to recirculate the final budget sheet.
- 9) **Next meeting** - the internal auditor appointment to be finalised, defibrillator update, and lengthmen update.

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