

UPPER CLATFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm 12th February 2025

King Edward VII Memorial Hall Upper Clatford Hampshire

Council Members Present

Cllr Peter Heslop, Chair, (PH)
Karin Bennett Clerk & RFO (KB)
Cllr Richard Bennett (RB) (Apologies)
Cllr Gerry Dawson (GD) (Apologies)
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)
Cllr Susanne Hasselmann TVBC (SH) (Apologies)
Cllr David Drew HCC (DD)

- 1) **Welcome, Declarations of Interest and Public Participation –**
 - a. Chairmans welcome.
 - b. Apologies for absence from Cllrs L Dawson, G Dawson, R Bennett and TVBC Cllr Susanne Hasselmann.
 - c. Cllr RH declared an interest in item 10 on the agenda – reparation to Balksbury Bridge Playing field. No other declarations of interest were raised.
 - d. The members of the public present were invited to speak and declined.
- 2) **Borough Councillor's Update** – Cllr MF provided an update on the food waste scheme which will be starting in October 2025, food waste bins will be delivered to all houses. MF highlighted the next resilience forum taking place in March and the that funding (up to £500) was available to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE day if any organisations wish to apply. MF raised issue of the Bury Hill Meadows brown road signs which she was aware had been a subject of concern locally, directing traffic through residential areas of Anna Valley and Upper Clatford rather than via the less populated route. UCPC councillors raised a number of concerns with Cllr CE pointing out that this had been a specific point raised in the original planning permission for the meadows site. MF suggested that UCPC provide evidence of increased traffic volume, for example, and raise it through her to TVBC. **Action: UCPC Cllrs to write to TVBC.** MF said TVBC were deeply concerned about the new housing requirement being imposed by central government.
- 3) **County Councillor's Update** – Cllr DD noted the Bury Hill Meadows signage issue. DD said that HCC had not been allowed by central government to raise their council tax charges above the threshold permitted. He commented on the impact of local government reform on the management of adult care and the growing cost of social care being borne by HCC. There is new scheme being run by HCC, 'Lane Rental' which will bring in income to HCC requiring anyone digging up roads to lay cables to pay.
- 4) **Minutes of the January meeting** were agreed and physically signed by PH.
- 5) **Clerk's Update**, KB, ran through the update – Annex A. Regarding the request for allotments Cllr PH asked for a record to be kept of allotment requests, **action Clerk.**

Also noted that UCPC very supportive of running first aid courses. **Action on Clerk to monitor requirement.**

- 6) **Finance** – the financial statement for January (Annex B) was run through by the Clerk. The appointment of the financial auditor was unanimously approved. The establishment of direct debits for HMRC and NEST to pay pension contributions and income tax was unanimously agreed and the Clerk was authorised to proceed. It was agreed that improved financial policy was needed for the council to facilitate modern electronic banking practices and improve efficiency. Clerk agreed to provide a draft revised policy based on the NALC template for all councillors to review with the intent of adopting it in the next council meeting. **Action: Clerk to circulate draft financial policy.** Agreed by all present that the council should proceed with the purchase of accounting software to aid council business and bring efficiencies. **Action: Clerk to seek pricing from three suppliers and advise council on recommended route for approval next meeting.** Cllr CE provided an update on the funding promised from the solar farm which has been earmarked to cover the costs of preliminary work for the Chalk Pit project, he had been assured the funding would be incoming soon. Cllr CE was thanked for all the work he has done to seek this funding. Cllr CE also noted that he expected a further injection of funding for the Chalk Pit Project from the Winter Lectures.
- 7) **Planning** – there were no active planning applications in the UCPC area to discuss.
- 8) **Playing Fields** - Cllr CW noted that all play equipment was in good order and that some hedge cutting had happened. The matter of rectifying a dip in Balksbury Playing field was discussed, Cllr RH provided an outline cost of c £150 for the soil with the provision that the May Fayre committee will fund the work. It was agreed (RH abstaining) that the council would fund the soil for the reparation. **Action: Cllr RH to liaise with Cllr RB and Clerk to get the work done in time for the May Fayre.** Cllr RHk reported that repair of the track at the UCPC football playing field had now taken place and the bill would be sent to the clerk to pay. The work having been previously authorised. RHk had been advised by users (UCYFC) that there were some issues with the toilets in the pavilion but that they were content to engage in some self -help to repair it. **Action: Cllr RHk will need to review the situation to check that the pavilion is ok to use.** RH noted that there had been a break-in at the ground to the container but nothing was stolen. Concerns were expressed about the UCPC property stored at this location, mainly records, and the need for improved security as well as the suggestion that alternatives should be looked for. **Action: Cllr RHk to source an additional lock for the garage, advise Clerk and Clerk to enquire of Village Hall re storage.** It was noted that the damaged bench had been made safe by Cllr RB – thanks were noted. RHk commented on the high price of the electricity standing charge for the pavilion and asked the clerk to look into alternative suppliers. **Action: clerk to research alternatives.** RHk also noted the requirement for the gas meter to have a new cover, having a looked into it he has asked if the Clerk can organise the payment and replacement work - **action Clerk.**
- 9) **Grounds Maintenance** – the work undertaken by Cllr GD to review the provision of service was commended and thanked by all. It was agreed that the council will proceed to competitive tender for this work. Cllr RH stated that UCYFC were content with the current contractor and the quote for grounds work on the football pitches however they would like this aspect to be included in any tender. It was noted that there might be a gap in provision due to the time to seek tenders and agree all present were content to accept this risk. **Action: Cllr GD to liaise with Cllr RB and Clerk to establish requirement for work and obtain tenders from three providers.**

It was agreed that the dog waste provision quote from TVBC would be accepted and proceeded with for the next FY. **Action: Clerk to advise TVBC**

- 10) **Footpaths and Highways** – Clerk read out an update from Cllr RB on the work to remediate the footpath into Bury Hill Meadows and past the Old Chalk Pit. HCC had said they will help with the work to the entrance to the meadows noting it was in need but asked Cllr RB to seek alternative support to rectify the poor state of the other footpath . Cllr RB is now liaising with TVBC and also proposing the UC Conservation (Volunteer) Group will help with repairing. The matter of the Bury Hill Meadow signage was covered under item 2 - see above. Cllr RH noted that white lines had now been added to Watery Lane to improve vehicle safety and that the Red Rice Road road sign was due to be repaired. Cllr PH asked for the repair of the salt bin on Watery Lane to be looked into. **Action Cllr RH.**
- 11) **Chalk Pit Demolition** – it was unanimously agreed by all councillors that the quote from Wessex Demolition would be accepted and the council proceed with the demolition. Noted that this will be subject to a decision on the provision for the electricity meter/supply to be resolved before demolition can occur. **Action: Clerk to notify bidders of result. Cllrs RB, PH to finalise electricity supply location. Cllr GD to proceed with managing the demolition process accordingly.**
- 12) **Lengsthmen** – as per the Clerk’s update. It was agreed that the timing to take part in such a scheme was not ideal given pending devolution plans, the Clerk did not have spare capacity at this point to take on the work that might flow out from this and there was no obvious benefit for the community at this point. Agreed this will not be proceeded with.
- 13) **Defibrillator** – following on from the Clerk’s update it was noted in the first instance that the council were extremely grateful for the offer by resident Mr Diplock for his church (the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church) to kindly offer to support the purchase of a new defibrillator for the community. At this point it has been decided though to proceed with the existing defibrillator supported with regular check regime. **Action: Cllr PL to engage with Mr K Francis who as a SQEP (suitably qualified and experienced person) has offered to carry out the regular checks and agree a check regime – advise Clerk** accordingly. Clerk stated that any requirements for new parts should be submitted to the Clerk. It was noted that XXX had done an amazing job managing the defibrillator with regular checks to date, the council would like to express their gratitude to xxx for all her hard work.
- 14) **New information board-** Cllr RH was proposing a new information board to advise the public about Bury Hill Fort and is seeking the land owners permission. No further action. Note: Clerk has added some information on the site to the UCPC website.
- 15) **Proposal to dispose of land** – following discussion it was agreed there is no requirement to dispose of land.
- 16) **Next meeting** - councillors were advised to let the clerk know of any matters they wish to be discussed at the next meeting.

Signed,

ANNEX A

Summary of Clerks Update February Meeting

- **The precept requirement has been submitted.**
- **Chalk Pit Insurance** – confirmation from main insurers Hiscox that third party liability cover is in place for all council assets.
- **HALC Training** - Clerk has undertaken finance training .
- **Accounting Software** – proposed that a soft ware accounting package be purchased..
Agreement sought to proceed with purchase – agenda item 8.5
- **Mobile phone** now operational- number: 0735 605 5907
- **Clerk Salary**- clerk has now received back pay for Nov, Dec, and paid for January. The payment of PAYE to be resolved subject to **setting up of DD with HMRC to be agreed** - agenda point 8.3 .
- **Internal auditor appointment** - recommending the appointment of Eleanor Greene (Do the Numbers Ltd) at a cost of £350 (no VAT applicable) this will be a recurring appointment for the next three years, ratified by the council each year. **Agenda point 8.2**
- **Donations** were made from the Chairman’s fund to the charities nominated by the family in memory of Sylvia Kennedy. See financial statement.
- **Grounds maintenance** –recommendation from Cllr GD is to seek three new quotes.
Agenda item 11
- **Dog Waste Bins - 7 bins agreement sought for** contract to be proceeded with. In accordance with para 11.1 a)ii of our current financial policy. **Agenda item 11.3**
- **Parish Online Mapping Tool** – All councillors have been invited to make use of the Parish Online mapping tool.
- **Chalk Pit demolition** – three tenders received. **Agreement is needed to the acceptance of one quote. Agenda item 13**
- **The topographical report** on the Chalk Pit has been received and distributed, the fee of £750 paid. As previously authorised by the council (Dec 24).
- **Financial policy review** - recommendation that it be replaced with the updated NALC version tailored to UCPC.
- **Pension contributions** for clerk - this will be effective from Feb. Authority sought to set up DD to manage payments into the scheme. **Item 8.3 on agenda**
- **Allotments** – note there have been a couple of requests for allotments this month from residents in Anna Valley.
- **Defibrillator** : Clerk can confirm that the machinery is covered under the council’s insurance policy in terms of damage to the equipment and third party liability. Recommended that a regular inspection is carried out by someone suitably qualified. together with a process for maintenance and replacement of parts. Agenda item 15.
- **First aid course** – local pub is running some courses led by Mr Francis who is a qualified paramedic.
- **Lengthsmen scheme.** With devolution pending this decision should be parked to see what the outcome of the devolution plans are. Speculation that parish councils could have the potential/be expected to have a greater roles in the future which will place greater burden on staffing. Agenda item 14.

ANNEX B

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – End of Jan 2025

Balance brought forward from 31 Dec £73,819.86

INCOME JANUARY		
Business Ac interest	17.81	
Hugo Fox Refund	143.86	
Total	£161.67	£73,981.53
EXPENDITURE JANUARY		
TVBC - Grounds Maintenance*	807.15	
HugoFox Website DD*	143.86	
Clerk Salary - Nov	413.08	
Spusu - Mobile Phone contract*	2.90	
John Lewis - Mobile Phone*	69.99	
Clerk Salary - Dec	650.58	
Donation -in memory of Sylvia Kennedy	25.00	
Donation -in memory of Sylvia Kennedy	25.00	
SSE Energy -Pavillion*	85.69	
HALC Training Course*	57.60	
Topographical Report - Chalk Pit*	750.00	
Clerk Salary - Jan	812.89	
Total	£3,843.74	£70,137.79
Bank Reconciliation - Jan 31st		
Community Account	4,151.59	
Business Account	20,986.20	
Fix Term Deposit	45,000.00	
Chalk Pit Project	-	
Total	70,137.79	

* VAT reclaimable

Forecast payments Jan 2025

Village Hall	11x £36	£396.00
Training Courses	x 2 @£48 + VAT	£115.20 (est)
TVBC Grounds Maintenance		£807.15
Clerk Salary	Plus travel costs for course Jan	£1012
SSE Chalk Pit		£554 (est)
SSE Electricity Pavillion		
Safety signs		£20 (est)