
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 11th November 2024, 7pm

Committee Members: Cllr Aston (Chair), Cllr Gooch, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Lester, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Carr, Cllr Judd, Cllr Fairbrother (Vice Chair).

Those Present: Cllr Lester, Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Carr, Cllr Fairbrother, Cllr Gooch, BCllr Spikings, BCllr Rose, M Hilton Clerk.

Public: one

Apologies: Cllr Aston, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Dawson.

MINUTES

- Welcome & opening remarks.** Cllrs Lester and Fairbrother wished to give thanks to Sally Fawkes who organised the Remembrance Parade. This was a great success and attended by around one hundred people.
- To consider and approve apologies for absence:** these were approved.
- To declare any conflicts and pecuniary interests on any items on this month's agenda:** Cllr Shorting for Upwell Playing Field.
- To approve the Minutes from the last meeting:** to change item 10vii from Borough Council to County Council. These were then approved and signed by the Chair.
- Public Forum (ten minutes only):**
 - BCllr Rose said he and BCllr Spikings were meeting with the Chief Executive on the 12th December and visiting Upwell. He also said a seven-year-old had raised £3K for the RNLI Charity.
 - A Parishioner said there is a young man who is being very offensive to other parishioners, walking around the Small Lode area and in the village. He also said he had seen rats opposite the church in the road. The Well Creek Trust and the Environmental Agency (EA) have been notified.
- To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:**
 - Takeover of the cemetery from the Borough Council: the EA have completed their survey. A meeting will be held with them on Friday 15th November.
 - Top of Pius Drove barriers/ signage: this is now completed.
 - Repairs to footbridge opposite Rav's Fish and Chips: an emergency repair had been completed last week. Thanks to Cllr Judd. Cllr Carr has volunteered to replace the plank that was dangerous, this item can then be removed from the action log.
- To discuss the Car Park Contract at Upwell Playing Field:** Cllr Aston emailed the Council and said
 - There needs to be one contract for the Parish Council and not a separate one for the hall committee as it is one entity for this purpose.
 - The question was posed about who has priority in the event that all entities (hall, playing field and bowls club), need use of the car parks on the same day? Should those paying rent not have priority?
 - Charging a penalty to the hall in the event a hirer does not shut the main gate. This has been a discussion point with the hall for some time and is difficult to police and probably unmanageable.

All the above needs resolution before the actual financial request can be considered. Cllr Fairbrother suggested a meeting with himself, and Cllrs Shorting and Aston, to discuss further.

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8. **To approve the 2025 meeting dates:** these were approved.

9. **Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk**

i. **To approve Planning applications decisions:** *Cllr Harrison*

- Planning Application Consultation 24/01803/F. Replacement windows and installation of photovoltaic array on hall roof at Upwell Methodist Church 94 Town Street Upwell Wisbech PE14 9DF. The Upwell Planning Group supports this application, providing the window are white as specified in the application which will be in keeping with the building. There will be no impact on the Conservation Area.
- Planning Application Consultation 24/01833/F. Alterations to conservatory to form sun lounge with canopy roof covered area, and rear extension to garage at Bridges Pius Drove Upwell Wisbech PE14 9AL. The Upwell Planning Group supports this application. There are no Material Grounds for refusal as the replacement is much similar to what exists.

The Council approved the decisions made.

- ii. **To discuss GTAA 24:** Cllr Lester said Upwell and Outwell are going to put forward a joint report with the main point of discussion being Primrose Farm. Cllrs Fairbrother, Lester and Aston will meet and discuss further.
- iii. **To discuss issues with Prow Upwell 2:** Cllr Lester said two people had contacted her regarding Upwell 2 (Broad Drove to Green Road). In brief an electric fence has been installed that will be used if/when the land behind it is used to graze ponies. The landowners have followed Norfolk County Council's (NCC) advice.
- Cllr Carr asked Cllr Lester for an update on the tree growing across the PRow at Workhouse Lane/ School Road. Cllr Lester has reported this to NCC. Cllr Robinson said he would look and see what can be done to remove the branch.

iv. **To note reports from Cemetery, allotment, finance, Upwell Village Hall.**

Allotment Report.

There is currently one plot still vacant. Clearance work has stalled on Plot 5D as the Community Payback Team (CS) is currently in disarray, with no confirmed date of return, if at all. Unfortunately, despite been given a list of work they have been asked to complete, the CS don't appear to have any reasonable or logical approach to undertaking jobs. As a result, they start numerous jobs at once which leaves various things to be done to tidy the plot. That being said, their assistance to date has been appreciated. There is still some clearance work to be done, and when the plot is suitable for takeover it will be split in half. One existing tenant and one new tenant have expressed an interest in taking on each newly formed plot.

There is still the issue of disposal of rubbish etc. to consider: - tyres, rubber conveyor belt and general stuff predominantly from Plot 5D. Cllr K Harrison can probably take away any wood suitable as firewood when time permits.

In creating a new piped culvert to their piece of land off Stonehouse Road, a parishioner was required to provide a mitigation site for displaced water voles. This was achieved by excavating the bottom of the dyke alongside the 'waste' area of the allotment site. In order to gain access, most of the overgrown vegetation was removed from the site, it is noted that a small area remains, but most of the site was cleared. Hopefully we can keep the rubbish under control here from now on, if the manpower to do it exists!

It's not expected to see much activity on the site now, until the Spring, when Cllr Harrison will undertake random inspections, and issue notices to tenants that don't appear to be cultivating their plots.

Cemetery Report

Cllr Shorting walked around late yesterday pm Monday 4th November; she has arranged for the grass to be cut again before Christmas.

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The trees immediately on the right near fence, a branch had broken off some time ago, water is now getting into middle of tree. The large flat tree needs removing to allow light into entrance, other trees need attention or removing as too overcrowded to allow trees to grow to full potential.

As previously reported tree roots have cracked the tarmac at entrance and further down on the right path. Both could become a problem a problem for pedestrians if the weather is severe this winter.

Cllr Shorting has contacted two tree surgeons for advice and prices.

Tarmac by Brighty's land on the bottom left side is cracked as previously reported. Again a problem if weather is severe.

Leaves from all trees hopefully cleared this week as a large quantity in all areas.

Finance Report

The Finance group met on Monday 22nd October to set and agree the budget for the next fiscal year. They agreed the following points.

- To not increase the parish precept
- To increase the Hall cleaners hourly recompense by £2 an hour, bank holidays and Sundays to remain the same.
- To increase the Hall Events & Booking Manager's hourly recompense to match Hall cleaner.

Upwell Hall Refurbishment

The finance group discussed funding re-decoration of the hall and then discussion was had regarding the historic damp course problem on the road facing wall and replacement of the heating system.

The Finance Group has allocated £50k for these hall refurbishments, the hall will be expected to contribute something towards this but no more than £10k. Specifically resolving the damp course issues on the roadside wall, replacing all old radiators and pipe work in the main hall and making good/decorating. This is a Parish Council project and a working group had been set up of Cllr's Aston, Lester, A. Harrison, Carr, Fairbrother and Shorting. Cllr's Fairbrother, Carr and A Harrison, will draw up the specification for the works, and issue for tenders to appropriate contractors. The aim is to have all this work completed in January 2025 when the hall use is at its minimum.

- Any regular hall hirers will be advised once the working group has confirmed dates. They will be offered, at no cost to themselves, to temporarily move their sessions to one of the other halls in the parish, or to be refunded if they postpone.
- Cllr Aston advised that the finance group had also increased the £500 limit whereby three tenders are required and Parish Council approval to £1,000 which will make future upkeep/refurbishment easier.
- A CIL grant could be applied for to help the refurbishment costs. It was decided it could if the three quotes were received in December, otherwise it would be too late for the proposed timeframe.

10. To note any Health and Safety issues: None reported

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11. Finance

i. **To note payments made since last meeting:** these were noted.

Payments for November 2024 Authorisation

Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP <small>electronic payment /direct debit</small>	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	34.84	0.83	35.67	EP	HMRC allowance for home working , mileage to Three Holes, 2025 Diary
Salaries	3403.42	0.00	3403.42		
Melanie Hilton				EP	107Hours, Clerk 0 hours cemetery, 10 hours village hall
Charlotte Hilton				EP	36 Village Hall cleaner hours
HMRC	1230.66	0.00	1230.66	EP	Month 7
Nest Pension Scheme	119.63	0.00	119.63	DD	Clerks pension
Tim Dewdney				EP	66 Groundsman Hours
Kelvin Judd				EP	garden cemetery
Nurture	317.13	63.43	380.56	EP	Cemetery grass cutting 26/9/24 and 18/10/24
Lakesend Village Hall	40.00	0.00	40.00	EP	Hall hire 14/10/24 (pd 21/10/24)
Limetree	848.34	0.00	848.34	EP	Autumn edition printing
Trim and Clear	1055.00	0.00	1055.00	EP	Prow cutting 2024
All Pests Controlled	120.00	24.00	144.00	EP	Mole catching at cemetery
Upwell Village Hall	44.00	0.00	44.00	EP	9th Sept and 21 Oct meeting
ASB	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Window Cleaning Bus stops
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
WAVE	17.63	0.00	17.63	DD	Water for Cemetery
Veolia	155.72	31.14	186.86	DD	Waste disposal
SSE	299.81	20.20	320.01	DD	Street Light Energy
TOTAL	7,824.18	161.20	7,985.38		

- ii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled from the previous month:** these were noted.
- iii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled for the Village Hall account:** these were noted.
- iv. **To approve the internal auditor 24/25:** Robin Goreham was approved as the internal auditor.
- v. **To note the budget and Precept for 2025_26.** See Finance report above.
- vi. **To approve opening a savings account with Hinckley and Rugby Building Society:** this was approved.
- vii. **To discuss Village Hall roofing quotes.** One quote has so far been received. The scaffolding quotes was £840.00. No further quotes received.
- viii. **To discuss the purchase of defib pads for Lakes End Village Hall:** this was agreed.

12. To propose any items for the next agenda: please advise the Clerk at least a week before the next meeting date.

- To discuss a donation to the SAM2 operator.
- To discuss setting up a Youth Club
- To discuss installing a defib at Fountain Foods

13. To note the date of the next parish council meeting – To note the date of the next meeting – 9th December at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.

14. Close: the meeting closed at 19.39pm

Signed by the Chair **Date**

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