

UPWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council, duly convened on Monday, 12th May 2008 at Upwell village hall. Commenced at 7.30 pm with Councillor Neil Morgan in the chair.

Attending:

Cllr. David Barnard
Cllr. Jill Gooch
Cllr. Andrew Harrison
Cllr. Keith Harrison
Cllr. Frank Humm
Cllr. Prue Lester
Cllr. Neil Morgan
Cllr. David Pope
Cllr. Chris Robinson
Cllr. Sylvie Short
Cllr. Ros Shorting

Clerk – Kate Cobley
Assistant Clerk - Kate Bennett

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Crofts, Cllr. Mungham, Borough Councillor Spikings and County Councillor Humphrey.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

3. Public Forum

No member of the public availed themselves of the opportunity to address the Council.

4. Report from Council Surgery

No one attended the Council Surgery this month.

5. Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on April 14th 2008

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrew Harrison, seconded by Cllr. Robinson, the minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on April 14th 2008

On a proposal by Cllr. Gooch, seconded by Cllr. Humm, the minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes (information only)

Item 11.0 Correspondence. Cllr. Shot asked for an update on the situation with regard to the complaints about traffic through the village. The Clerk advised that the complainants had now been written to explaining the situation and current Council work.

Item 15.0 Report by Cllr. Crofts. The Clerk was asked to make sure this item appeared on next month's agenda due to Cllr. Crofts unavailability at this meeting.

8. Report of the Finance Committee.

The report of the May Finance meeting had been previously circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Pope, seconded by Cllr. Andrew Harrison, the finance report was accepted.

It was noted that Cllr. Short did not attend the meeting to ensure that it was quorate but was standing in for Cllr. Mungham, who could not attend.

9. Report from the Planning Committee.

The report of the April Planning & Transportation Committee meeting had previously been circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Andrew Harrison, seconded by Cllr. Shorting, the report was accepted.

Cllr. Pope raised the issue of a hedge, newly planted, at the former Baptist Chapel on Croft Road in Upwell. He was concerned that it had been planted too close to the footpath and would overgrow onto the path in the coming years, causing problems for users. Cllr. Harrison offered to speak to the owners about this issue.

ACTION: Cllr. Andrew Harrison to speak to the owners of the former Baptist Chapel regarding the hedge planting.

Report on Planning Investigation by Cllr. Barnard.

Cllr. Barnard circulated a report detailing the reasons for the recent investigation into some aspects of the Planning Committee's work.

There was as discussion about the claims made in the report. Cllr. Gooch asked for a full explanation of the part relating to her family in particular. Cllr. Barnard explained that these were complaints he had received and were not his views. He went on to clarify that the issues raised had been laid to rest by examination of the relevant paperwork and the work that had been recently carried out relating to the Declaration of Interests by councillors. There was further discussion about the claims made and Cllr. Gooch asked whether a letter could be written to the complainants explaining that the issues had been resolved and informing them of the Register of Interests.

ACTION: Cllr. Barnard to provide complainants details to the Clerk.
ACTION: Clerk to write to complainants explaining the resolved situation.

10. Report from the Environment & Leisure Committee.

The report of the March Environment & Leisure Committee meeting had previously been circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Lester, seconded by Cllr. Short, the report was accepted.

Item 19.0 Litter. Cllr. Robinson reported that he had investigated the litter thought to be coming from Kevley Marketing but was satisfied that this was unlikely and so would not be speaking to Mr Curson about this matter.

Item 8.0 Park Keeper Hours. Cllr. Short expressed disappointment that the Finance Committee had not agreed to pay for Mr Gray to work an extra hour a week to carry out litter picking. Cllr. Lester asked whether, due to the £3k surplus in Council funds at the end of the last financial period, whether the matter couldn't be looked at again?

There was a general discussion about the Park Keeper's hours and duties and Cllr. Morgan suggested that the Environment & Leisure Committee undertake a full review of the Park Keeper's hours and duties and report back to Council next month.

ACTION: Asst. Clerk to add to next E&L agenda.

Item 16.0 Cycling on Footpaths. Cllr. Lester voiced concern about this practice. Cllr. Morgan asked her to write an article for the next newsletter on this issue.

ACTION: Cllr. Lester to write article regarding cycling on footpaths to be submitted by mid-June.

11. Report from the Village Halls.

A report from Upwell had previously been circulated.

Cllr. Humm gave a verbal report from Three Holes.

12. Correspondence

The Clerk drew members' attention to a number of items received and reminded them to look at the correspondence folder for information about activities.

Item a Special Expenses. A letter had been received from the Borough Council regarding the special expenses it was charging residents of Upwell for as part of its Council Tax this year. It was suggested that this information be published in the Newsletter for residents information.

ACTION: Clerk to prepare for Newsletter.

Item b Letter from Mrs Yusef.

The Clerk read out a letter received from Mrs Yusef of Small Lode, Upwell. The correspondent asked whether it was possible to buy or rent a parcel of land from the Council at the rear of her property with the expectation of being able to extend her garden.

There was a general discussion about this issue. The agreed opinion of the meeting was that this would not be possible for the following reasons:

- The land was currently mortgaged and therefore could not easily be partitioned for sale.
- The land was currently rented to a farmer who had a contract for the whole area. Changing this contract would result in lower rents and likely problems for the farmer in terms of the practical use of the land.
- The land is currently agricultural. There is a general condition that does not allow for agricultural land to be used for gardens. Even if the Council did sell or lease the land to Mrs Yusef, she could not use it as garden.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Mrs Yusef explaining the situation.

13. Health and Safety Issues.

Cllr. Morgan gave a verbal report on a meeting held with Mr Mike Kelly regarding the Council's Health & Safety documentation and procedures. He proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Kelly for his efforts, which the meeting heartily complied with.

ACTION: Clerk to write a letter of thanks to Mr Kelly.

14. Internal Council issues.

Item a Finance Officer Post. Cllr. Morgan reported that the Clerk had now taken over the role of Finance Officer although Paula Hainey would remain on staff until the end of the month to assist in year end accounts and completion of outstanding work.

Item b Report by Cllr. Crofts. This item was deferred until the next meeting due to Cllr. Crofts inattendance.

15. Parish Affairs.

Item a Town Street Railings. Cllr. Barnard reported that the Middle Level are having no better luck than the Parish Council in ascertaining ownership or responsibility for the railings on Town Street. Cllr. Shorting suggested that Christchurch Parish Council be contacted to see whether they had any similar problems or experience as they were part of the Isle of Ely Council when it was disbanded.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Christchurch Parish Council and investigate.

08/19

Item b Community Speed Watch. The Clerk introduced the Community Speed Watch scheme to the meeting and asked the Council whether it wanted to support this project, adding that it would cost the Council a £10 fee to include the equipment on it's insurance.

Proposal: To support the introduction of a Community Speed Watch Scheme in the parish.

Proposed By: Cllr. Andrew Harrison
Seconded By: Cllr. Humm

All Agreed.

ACTION: Cllr. Humm to complete the necessary paperwork and report back at the next meeting.

16. Agenda items for the next meeting.

- Town Street Railings
- Cllr. Crofts report on planning complaints procedures
- Community Speed Watch

17. Date and time of the next meeting.

Monday, 9th June 2008. Commencing at 7.30pm at Upwell village hall.

Signed as a true record of the meeting: _____

Date: _____