

Uffculme Parish Council
Minutes of meeting held
Tuesday 7th September 2021 at Ashill Village Hall

Chairman: P Blackman

Present: R Kingdom M Pollard T Pointing J Gardener

21.09.01: Apologies for Absence

S Kidd – Holiday P Cornish – Illness I Duncan – Work Commitments

J Nash - Work Commitments T Verona – Family

21.09.02 To Approve the Minutes of the meeting held 5th July 2021

The minutes were approved as an official Council record.

21.09.03 County Councillors Report

Councillor Radford offered his apologies as he was not able to attend the meeting, however, Councillor Radford had circulated an email report in advance which is appended to the minutes.

21.09.04 District Councillors Report

Councillor Chesterton offered his apologies.

Councillor Warren offered his apologies.

Councillor Evans advised the meeting that MDDC had received a number of enquiries and 3 offers for accommodation of Afghan Refugees. MDDC were looking into the practicalities of this however, with previous rehoused Syrian Refugees there had been issues in terms of locating them in rural parts of the County due to no infrastructure or support in terms of their religion and/or language. It is not anticipated that MDDC will be asked to rehouse any of the Afghan Refugees.

An email forwarded to the Clerk was discussed in that a new broadband company had been in contact with MDCC about bringing further broadband to the district. Following the email exchange, it is anticipated that they will begin works within the area for Uffculme and Willand in quarter one of 2024. The email exchange suggests that they will make direct contact with Mid Devon during 2022 and will also make contact with households and businesses. The meeting agreed that we would await further information from the company and look to engage in meaningful discussions when timeframes and the scope of work was clearer.

Although not directly related to MDDC, Councillor Evans is involved in the Uffculme Show, organised by the Exe Valley Rotary Club. The show had been a huge success and the committee was very pleased. The proceeds from the show for the charitable organisations was anticipated to be significantly higher than previous years. Discussions have already begun around holding the show again next year at Bridwell Park.

Councillor Evans had been involved in a number of discussions regarding the footpath running parallel to Chapel Hill and the issue with the farmer cutting back his hedge. It was discussed and agreed that this had now been remedied.

Councillor Evans reiterated the pressures that MDDC is facing, along with many other businesses, due to COVID. Many of the issues were related to staffing and to date although there were pressures of members of staff attending work they had still managed to make all of the regular refuse collections with 5 drivers short.

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The 3 weekly waste collection trial was going well and was continuing to be reviewed. The addition of collecting small electrical items within the recycling box was also having a very positive impact.

The widening of Clay Lane which had been granted by DCC would be done at the same time as the tree cutting which was scheduled for late summer/ early autumn.

21.09.05 Parish Councillor Vacancies

The Council has advertised the vacancies, however, to date no applications have been received. The vacancies will continue to be advertised.

21.09.06 Finance

21.09.06.01 To Approve the July Financial Statement

The July financial statement was approved as official Council minutes.

21.09.06.02 To Approve the August Financial Statement

The August financial statement was approved as official Council minutes.

21.09.06.03 Coldharbour Mill

The Clerk confirmed that the cherry picker had been paid for from the Council funds from July, with the donation from Coldharbour Mill being received within the same month. This was the last amount of pre-allocated Coldharbour Mill funds and therefore any future requests should be considered along with the budget in January.

21.09.06.04 Uffculme Men's Club

The meeting discussed the proposal of the funding towards the roof repairs as previously discussed. The structural report on the building had been received and reviewed by councillors and the committee. The report highlighted a number of red areas which needed action immediately and many of these were covered by the works that were included in the quotes prepared previously. The meeting agreed to fund the previous quoted works from SW Led in full.

The meeting agreed that the committee of the Men's Club should be asked to look at the other items that had been reported as needing attention and ensure that these were scheduled to action all relevant points.

21.09.06.05 Bus Stop

Councillor Kingdom updated the meeting that the bus stop works weren't able to progress as there had been an issue with acquiring the reinforce safety glass due to general supply issues within the building trade.

21.09.06.06 Pond Regeneration

There has been no progress in terms of financial matters on the pond regeneration.

21.09.06.07 Leat Repairs

Councillor Pollard was awaiting a final date for the works which were scheduled to take place during September.

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21.09.07 Business Arising

21.09.07.01 Hill Head / Broadpath

Councillor Evans advised that Trevor Emms had attended the last meeting at the end of July on behalf of the Parish Council. There had been a recent discussion with regards to the widening of the road and the impact this will have on the site as a whole. This should see any vehicle leaving via Broadpath while works are ongoing. Councillor Evans is looking to write to the site manager, Duncan Macintosh, to discuss the reduced activity at the bagging plant, the closure of the blockworks and to ascertain what the future plans are in this respect. Viridor continue to restore the former landfill site and they are continuing to extract leachate.

In terms of future quarrying works they are carrying out preliminary drilling at Penslade Cross and they have indicated that as and when they start developing the site this is likely to be from the Uffculme side and then moving out towards the A38. This is anticipated to begin active works within the next 5-6 years. Houndall is currently still an active site and is in phase 6 of 8 of permitted development.

21.09.07.02 ABN Feed Mill

There was no report available.

21.09.07.03 Uffculme Men's Club

There was no update from the Men's Club directly however, the clerk had raised that a local resident had contacted her with a noise complaint following excess music being played from the building on Saturday evening until after 2am Sunday morning. This had been reported to MDDC who ultimately will be responsible for any issues relating to the noise from the site and also in regards to the licensing of the property, the meeting agreed that this issue was best left with MDDC.

21.09.07.04 Uffculme Bowling Club

No report was available.

21.09.07.05 Green Team

Councillor Kingdom advised that the green team are very keen to arrange an unveiling/ opening ceremony for the water drinking station that was sited in the square in early 2020.

The green team committee is trying to organise a pop-up hub on Ayshford Green with a Gazebo to see what interest there is within the local community for a permanent information point for members of the village and community to gain access about green credentials in and around the village and how they can adapt their lifestyles.

The community will be celebrating great big green week during the week commencing the 18th of September 2021.

The Central Stores, at the bottom of Highland Terrace, have recently agreed to include a Co-operative wrap recycling bin within their store which they hope will help promote recycling of soft plastics around the village.

The committee continues to be involved in collecting waste food from the local stores and also the manufacturing plant within Hitchcock's for distribution between those most in need of additional food support.

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21.09.07.06 Allotments

As Councillor Duncan was away no report was available.

21.09.07.07 Parish Maintenance Update

Councillor Pollard raised the issue about trees within the village needing pruning and the Clerk confirmed that she has been liaising the tree surgeon to carry out a review of a number of areas which have been identified, rather than one tree at a time.

There had been complaints raised about the excess ivy and green foliage which was growing over the bridge between the feed mill and Magelake and whether this could be cut back. The Clerk advised the meeting that any works that were carried out on the public highway would require correct signage in line with Chapter 8 training as this was a public highway. The meeting agreed that this was the best course of action.

The finger sign within the square needed replacement works and these have been quoted at £242 + VAT to replace and it was agreed that this would be replaced by the maintenance budget.

The square tree was discussed and MDDC had been chased by the tree surgeon as to action getting this pruned.

As previously discussed, the Chapel Hill footpath had been arranged to be cleared, however, the meeting discussed the issues, we have had in the past with school children not being able to pass and it was agreed that the clerk would contact the new highway officer Daniel Wood to ensure this was on his radar go forward.

The cutting back of the hedge behind the mugger was scheduled to take place within the next couple of weeks and the works at Ashill would be scheduled.

21.09.07.08 Uffculme Pond Lease

The Clerk was able to update the meeting that Westwood had been invited to attend an on-site meeting to try and adopt a more practical and more proactive approach to the issues surrounding access over the land that the council was looking to acquire. No date had been set, nor confirmation of attendance by Westwood.

The meeting discussed whether advising the public of a separate update in addition to the minutes was the best course of action and it was agreed that given the issues encountered to date it would be better to wait and see if Westwood would attend a meeting to try and move thing forward. Without any practical improvement on the Westwood side the lease was in question.

21.09.07.09 Social Media/ Website Report

As Councillor Verona was not at the meeting no report was available.

21.09.07.10 Traffic Speeding Issues/ Community Speed Watch

Councillor Pointing had updated the meeting on the recent social media post which had attracted a lot of interest however only 5 people had come forward to be part of a community group. Councillor Pointing had advised all those interested that the group would need to be able to put forward ideas and proposals and the council would work with them the best it could to implement these.

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21.09.07.11 Schools Update

Councillor Nash had provided an update by email to advise that the children had returned to school and that emails had been sent to the nurseries in respect of bulb planting within the square.

21.09.08 Police Report

Councillor Pointing discussed the reports that had been prepared and circulated in advance of the meeting and these will be appended to the minutes.

21.09.09 Clerks Report

21.09.09.01 Water Fountain

The meeting discussed that following the relaxation of COVID guidance the council should look towards unveiling the water fountain to the wider public. It was agreed that the clerk would contact Simon from the Osler to agree some signage promoting the water fountain and once we had this, we could lease with the green team to arrange and opening ceremony.

The next meeting of the council will be held on Monday the 4th of October 2021 subject for confirmation by the clerk.

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Verity Aldridge <clerk@uffculmeparishcouncil.gov.uk>

FW: Sept Report.

1 message

Councillor Ray Radford <ray.radford@devon.gov.uk>

Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 11:39 AM

To: Verity Aldridge - Uffculme PC <uffculmeparishclerk@btinternet.com>

Dear Verity.

Pleased you are feeling much better.

I have another meeting of the MDDC Environment PDG, so will have to give my apologies please.

Please see my Sept Report.

Coronavirus in Devon, the government has this announced that Devon, Plymouth, Torbay, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, are designated as an 'enhanced response area'. This is in response to the very high case rates of coronavirus in these five authority areas. With that designation comes additional support to those areas from the government in terms of testing, vaccination, and comms support.

Devon County Council has recognised that much of the decision processes on highway maintenance is made centrally, and has begun the process of allocating more spending to a local level. We have always encouraged Parish Council to bring issues to their local Neighbourhood Highways Officer, and this is part of the process, along with highway inspections reports from our road condition survey vehicles, that allows the local neighbourhood team to establish community priorities. It is intended that Parish Councils will be formally consulted on maintenance priorities in their areas in the future, but there are well over one hundred parish councils in our Western team area alone and this means that this consultation will have to be phased in over time, as we establish an effective method for doing this.

In order to target funding where it can be most effective it is inevitable that more funding will be spent on higher category roads, which carry more traffic. Outside of this we also try to apply asset management principles to the work that we do. This is why you have noted that some roads are prioritised when there are others in a worse condition. In practise this means that the life of some roads can be extended by the timely intervention of treatments such as surface dressing, whereas other roads that may be in worse condition will need more expensive interventions, such as reconstruction, and will need to wait until funding is available for that work.

The Parish Council are asking why a dead end road has had repairs done to it, while the widely used roads at Station Road, Fore Street and High Street are still waiting to be repaired". This helps to explain why, at a Hemyock Doing what matters meeting where the top 3 roads were brought up, station road being the last on the list of 3, the other 2 were not mentioned.

Around £730,000 has been awarded to a scheme to help update farmers and landowners in Devon and Somerset on upcoming changes to funding support.

Devon County Council is one of 19 organisations across the country to receive a share of The Future Farming Resilience Fund from Defra.

The funding support is in preparation for the Agricultural Transition Period which runs up to the end of 2027 as the government phases out EU funded Direct Payments and introduces a new system.

It will provide more than 770 farmers with the opportunity to attend information workshops.

Any farmer or land manager currently in receipt of Direct Payments is eligible to apply.

Defra will be evaluating these projects and others around the country as it looks to scale-up a national scheme which is due to be launched in April 2022.

Anyone who wants to find out more about the programme in the Heart of the South West area contact farmingresilience@devon.gov.uk

You can find out more about events near you or register your details here: <https://businessinfopoint.co.uk/ffr/>

CDS ONE ABOUT THE MOBILE BOOST SCHEME

A scheme to improve mobile phone coverage in rural parts of Devon and Somerset is being expanded.

Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) has announced that its Mobile Boost Programme, which aims to upgrade indoor 4G coverage in "not-spot" areas, now includes a greater choice of equipment.

The initiative, which is being funded through the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership's (HotSWLEP) Growth Deal, aims to improve the quality of mobile phone calls and connectivity. It's targeting small businesses and households in rural communities who currently have inadequate coverage, or have access to only one provider and are currently struggling with connectivity.

Businesses and households can apply for a voucher of up to £1,200 towards the cost of a mobile signal booster from a registered supplier. The value of the voucher will be dependent on the type of technology most suitable for the premises.

Businesses and residents applying through the scheme need to complete a form self-certifying that they cannot receive an adequate indoor 4G mobile signal. Applicants will be emailed a voucher code which can be used with one of the registered scheme suppliers.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need to, by email or my mobile, 079 0000 3050.

Regards,

Ray