

**Uffculme Parish Council**  
**Minutes of meeting held**  
**Thursday 3 September 2020 on Google Meet**

**Chairman:** P Blackman

**Present:** R Kingdom      J Gardner      M Pollard      J Nash      P Cornish  
D Wells      I Duncan      T Pointing      T Verona

**20.09.01 Apologies for Absence**

E Hagelstein – family

P Mackian – holiday

S Kidd – holiday

R Chesterton - holiday

**20.09.02 To Approve the Minutes of the meeting held 2 July 2020**

The minutes were approved as an official Council record.

**20.09.03 County Councillors Report**

Councillor Radford had submitted an e mail to the Clerk prior to the meeting, which had been circulated to the Councillors, no queries were raised in respect of the report and it was agreed to attach that to the minutes.

**20.07.04 District Councillors Report**

Councillor Warren advised that the financial budget for MDDC was being reworked for 2020-21 due to lost income through closed leisure centres and car parks, due to Covid-19. The Government has a proposal to build some 300,000 new homes which would undoubtedly have an impact across the district.

MDDC has seen a Cabinet change with Liberal Democrat members leaving the cabinet and Councillors Evans and Chesterton taking on the Housing and Planning portfolios, respectively.

**20.09.05 Finance**

**20.09.05.01 To Approve the July Financial Statement**

The July financial statement was approved as official Council minutes.

**20.09.05.02 To Approve the August Financial Statement**

The August financial statement was approved as official Council minutes.

**20.09.05.03 Coldharbour Mill**

The Clerk had not received any details with regards to funding requests from the Mill, therefore this item was carried forward.

**20.09.05.04 Uffculme Village Hall**

Councillor Cornish advised that there was still no progress with regards to gaining quotes for the proposed works at the hall, and therefore this item was carried forward.

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**20.09.05.05 Uffculme Mens Club**

Councillor Kingdom advised that there had been no further requests for funding however, the Committee was still awaiting the structural survey.

**20.09.05.06 Skatepark**

The Clerk was able to update that progress was being made with the Skatepark, and that there would be a Consultation with the local neighbours, with construction planned to start within the next couple of months.

**20.09.05.07 Gazebo for Children's Groups**

The Clerk confirmed that following the decision made in July 2020, a gazebo had been purchased for £499.98 + VAT, which was within the £500 budget agreed at the July meeting. The Clerk had discussed gazebos with Claire Nichols, and it was decided that a gazebo which had replaceable parts would be a better long-term investment for use by Community groups, in and around the village. At the time of the meeting the gazebo had not been delivered however, it was expected shortly, and the Clerk would liaise with Claire to publicise the availability of the gazebo.

**20.09.05.08 Bus Stop**

The Clerk advised the meeting that she had been presented with costings from the Green Team to upgrade the bus shelter in the square. The costings detailed galvanised steel sheets and Perspex. It was also understood that Coldharbour Mill were keen on arranging their logo across the revamped bus stop and some initial designs had been presented to the Clerk, and these were shared during the meeting.

The Council in principal supported the idea of revamping the bus shelter however, Councillors felt that the information available at the meeting was not clear as to the overall design of the bus shelter, and felt that additional considerations should be placed upon surfaces that would not easily become victim to graffiti, given the most recent spate of activity. It was agreed that Councillor Kingdom would pass the Council's comments back to the Green Team and ask that an updated proposal be submitted for consideration, prior to final designs being signed off.

**20.09.05.09 Pond Lease**

The Clerk advised that she had been contacting a number of local Solicitors firms and Staggs regarding the review of the lease for the pond. At the meeting, the Clerk advised that Staggs had suggested the use of a Solicitor, and the Clerk had contacted 3 firms – Dunn and Baker, Ashfords and Hole and Pugsley. At the meeting, the Clerk had only received one response from Dunn and Baker with a cost estimate of £850 + VAT + disbursements, for the review of the lease. The meeting agreed that the Clerk would instruct Dunn and Baker to act on the Council's behalf on this matter.

**20.09.06 Business Arising**

**20.09.06.01 Mid Devon Local Plan**

As advised at the July meeting, the Mid Devon Local Plan had been fully reviewed by the Inspector and had been presented to MDDC both at Cabinet and Full Council and had been adopted.

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**20.09.06.02 Hillhead / Broadpath**

Councillor Hagelstein was not at the meeting and therefore there was no update however the Clerk advised that a planning application had been made by Aggregate Industries in respect of the Asphalt plant being relocated from Burlescombe to Hillhead. It was agreed that this would be considered at Planning.

**20.09.06.03 ABN Feed Mill**

As Councillor Hagelstein was not in attendance there was no update.

**20.09.06.04 Uffculme Mens Club**

Councillor Kingdom advised that the club remains closed and the Committee are continuing with the refurbishment. As above they are awaiting the structural survey regarding the building.

**20.09.06.05 Uffculme Bowling Club**

As Councillor Hagelstein was not in attendance there was no update.

**20.09.06.06 Green Team**

Following the request in July for posters, the Clerk had arranged quotes to get the posters made from a long-term sustainable material. The cost of 10 A3 posters would be £35, being constructed from a similar material to For Sale signs. The Council agreed to purchase the posters for the Green Team to display.

The litter pick usually scheduled for September, had been redesigned to take place over a week, rather than on one Saturday, in light of Covid-19.

The Clerk had been contacted by MDDC regarding a proposal to change all bins within the district to Dual Use Bins, split half a bin for General Waste and half for Recycling. The Green Team had also asked the Council to consider Solar Compactor bins, and it was agreed that the Council would await a response from MDDC regarding the dual use bins and make a decision thereon.

**20.09.06.07 Allotments**

Councillor Duncan advised that the allotments are in a healthy state having had a good growing year. Thanks, were provided for the £200.00 donation towards the cost of the Water project, which was gratefully received by the Committee and members alike. There are currently 7 people on the waiting list, and it is being considered by the Committee whether those who have less tended allotments are asked to move on to make room for those on the waiting list.

Both the Chair of the Allotment Committee and the Secretary had given notice of their intention to resign their positions with effect from Spring 2021, and therefore Councillor Duncan encouraged Councillors to put forward anybody who had an interest.

**20.09.06.08 BMX Track/Skatepark**

The Clerk advised that the sticking point for the project, generally, was finding a suitable way to consult with those residents closest to the proposed park. Previous plans to hold an open morning in the Bowling Club, alongside Maverick, are no longer possible due to Covid-19 and therefore the only way the Council could consult with those residents closest, the bungalows at the bottom of Highland Terrace, would be to do a leaflet drop through residents' doors inviting them to call or e-mail with any thoughts or concerns on the project. It was agreed that Councillor Pollard would field the calls, and the Clerk would arrange a leaflet drop.

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**20.09.06.09 Parish Maintenance Update, Commercial Road**

Councillor Pollard put forward a proposal for Jess to carry out additional works, clearing the weeds, cutting the grass, cutting back the overgrown bushes that border the footpath along Commercial Road. It was agreed that as DCC and MDDC were not maintaining areas as they had previously, that to arrange for these areas to be cleared the Parish Council would need to cover the cost. It was agreed that Jess and Phil would schedule these works together.

**20.09.06.10 Uffculme Pond Lease**

As above, the Clerk advised the progress in respect of appointing a Solicitor, and that one aspect included within the lease was liaising with Westwood Housing over any tree works proposed and the Clerk had noted that one tree within the area, looks to have a TPO. This will need to be investigated alongside the schedule of planned works once the lease is set up.

**20.09.06.11 Re-opening of Play Areas & Public Toilet**

The Clerk advised that following the July meeting and confirmation from insurers that the play areas had been reopened.

The public toilet remained closed at this time and the Clerk had contacted the previous cleaning company to request a quote for the toilet to be cleaned twice weekly. This was their maximum availability as to when they were in the area. Two cleans per week would cost £24.00. It was agreed that the public toilet would remain closed for now.

**20.09.06.12 Future Meeting format**

Following a request from Councillors, the Clerk had considered reverting meetings back to face-to-face within Magelake versus online meetings. The Clerk had circulated with the meeting pack some notes in respect of guidance available and the NALC (National Association of Local Councils) advice was to hold meetings remotely where possible, this was further endorsed by a letter from Simon Clarke MP, who suggested that all meetings should be held remotely. The cost of holding face-to-face meetings would be £30.00 per meeting, to take account of setup and cleaning at Magelake.

Following discussion and acknowledgment of the current Government guidance available to local Councils, the meeting agreed to hold meetings electronically via Google Meet, to be reviewed monthly in line with Government guidance.

**20.09.06.13 Use of Social Media**

Councillor Verona advised that the Facebook page now has some 262 followers and has been a good tool in giving Parishioners another way to contact the Council. We have received reports of barbed wire, broken glass and the most positive has been Damien from Clear Surface offering his services to clean the graffiti from the bus shelter. Other items posted on social media have been updates for the play parks and this has generally been well received.

The meeting agreed the use of Social Media was a useful tool in promoting the Council's activities and it was agreed that we would create posts regarding speeding, the cleaning up of the footpath and useful information from MDDC and DCC when it becomes available. It was also agreed a brief summary would be prepared and published on Facebook of our meetings; the same piece would also be forwarded to Spotlight for publishing.

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**20.09.07 Police Report**

Councillor Pointing had circulated a table of statistics from the Police with regards to reported crime and the outcomes. The meeting briefly discussed the report and agreed that whilst any crime was disappointing, it was a very useful tool in keeping an eye on matters. The table is appended to these minutes.

**20.09.08 Clerks Report**

**20.09.08.01 Water Fountain**

Due to Covid-19 there has never been an unveiling of the water fountain. Unfortunately, this remains the case for the time being.

**20.09.08.02 Parish Council Coronavirus Support**

The Clerk advised that in line with the Government's advice regarding shielding ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> July, the support package that had been managed for residents of the village had stopped at this time. Prior to the scheme stopping we had advised all residents in good time to make alternative plans.

**20.09.08.02 DCC & MDDC Grass Cutting**

The Clerk had been contacted by residents who were disappointed that DCC had cut the large patch of grass opposite Culm Valley Way, as this had been requested not to be cut for this growing season due to a survey of wild flowers and insects in the area. As this area had been cut, the residents, supported by the Green Team, were considering a different patch of grass down at Culm Valley Way, and were seeking the Parish Council's permission to use this area as a wild flower / wildlife area. The meeting discussed the proposal and generally supported the idea however this area was maintained by MDDC and therefore permission would need to be sought from them.

**20.09.08.04 Chapel Hill Footpath Maintenance**

The Clerk advised that the fence was being repaired to be safer and these works were being carried out by DCC.

**20.09.08.05 Reopening Public Toilet**

As above, the meeting had agreed to keep the public toilet closed for the time being due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**20.09.08.06 Village Traffic and speeding issues – signage**

The Clerk had been contacted by a concerned resident, who also participated in the public session of this meeting. Concerns were raised with regards to speeding of traffic, between the two traffic calming measures along Commercial Road. One of the main concerns was the seeming lack of speed notices and the Clerk shared with the meeting details of some 'flashy traffic signs' that cost in the region of £2000.00 per sign. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact PC Legg regarding speeding in the village, and whether a Community Speed Watch can be set up. It was agreed that the resident would be kept up to date with regards to progress however we should be mindful, of the restrictions implied by Covid-19.

**20.09.08.07 Removal/pruning of tree in The Square**

The Clerk advised she had received requests to either remove or significantly prune the tree in The Square, as there had been a number of reports of the leaves becoming slippery on the bricks around the flag pole, and that the leaves clog the drains.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact an Arborologist to recommend pruning or removal and Councillor Pointing recommended Alan Miller from Appledore.

**Verity Aldridge**  
**Clerk to Uffculme Parish Council**  
**29 September 2020**

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**20.09.08.08 Long Shrubbery footpath issues**

The Clerk had received a number of complaints regarding the debris that runs down the footpath during heavy rainfall, and the issues that properties opposite the path experience in terms of the flooding. The Clerk had liaised with the Highways contact for the area and it is not a Highways issue however, it has been passed to Public Rights of Way within DCC to be looked into, as to what long term plan could be implemented to prevent future flooding and debris on the road. The meeting also discussed who owns the footpath, and it was agreed the Clerk would contact the School.

**20.09.08.09 Council Committees**

The meeting discussed the circulated list of Committees and working groups, and the memberships of each working group as agreed at the meeting. These are appended to the minutes.

**The next meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October via Google Meet.**

**From:** Councillor Ray Radford <ray.radford@devon.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 September 2020 11:30  
**To:** 'Verity Aldridge'  
**Subject:** FW: Sept Report.

Dear Verity.

Many thanks for the agenda, I have included a report, just in case I do not make your meeting, I want to zoom in on the MDDC Cabinet meeting.

Dear Councillors.

Not much to report this month, Aug is always a quite month, if you have any issues, by all means let me know.

I have met with Phil Morgan over the doing what matters, he has now put together a plan of your three most needed roads for attention, although you were not able to supply your three most wanted choices, he has included three. This now will be considered by the asset management team, because there will not be enough funds available to complete all the schemes of every Parish in this next year.

There is a Government white paper due out later this month concerning changes to the structure of local government and a move to unitary council system. County Council Network have produced a document analysing the possible savings in expenditure on a yearly basis of each County being allowed to become a unitary council on existing boundaries. There is a document been produced on this, it is 70 pages long, but I have not read it yet.

The document talks about unitaries being between 300 to 600+ electorate, this will have to be taken into consideration if change is made in Devon because of Plymouth and Torbay, being relatively small unitaries. One of the criteria, is that all unitaries must have whole district areas, such as the whole of Mid Devon being part of a unitary. It would look like Devon would have two unitaries at least because of the numbers. I think the white paper is heavy on creating unitary councils as opposed to two tier councils. A number of Counties have already been having early conversations with Government with a request to change to unitaries. Most Counties have had counter proposals being put forward by Districts, grouping themselves into smaller units by claiming to be reflecting to be better needs of the residents. We will have to watch this space. I think this is what has brought about GESP, which has been rejected by East Devon and now Mid Devon.

As the schools are now back from their lockdown and holidays, I have not heard of any issues within our area, just hope it stays that way.

Covid is still with us, but not to the degree a few months ago, I do get a regular update from County, which I pass on to all the Parish Clerks, some of it is interesting, some of it not so interesting.

Any problems/concerns, you know where I am.

Regards,  
Ray

Ray Radford  
Devon County Councillor  
Willand & Uffculme Division  
Email: [ray.radford@devon.gov.uk](mailto:ray.radford@devon.gov.uk)

2020 Uffculme Parish Crime Statistics

	ASB	Burglary	Violence and Sexual Offences	Vehicle Crime	Criminal Damage and Arson	Public Order	Total for Uffculme	Culmstock	Hemyock	Other	
December	1	1	3				5	2	5		
January	2	1	5		1		9		7	1	
February		1	4				5		7	2	
March	5		4			1	10	2	2	2	
April	1	1			1	1	4	1	9	1	
May	3	3	2	2	1	1	12		1	1	
June	2		7	1			10	4			
July	2	3	2				7	2	4		
August											
September											
November											
December											
<b>Outcomes 12:</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Unable to Prosecute</b>	<b>No Suspect</b>	<b>Awaiting Court Outcome</b>	<b>Offender Given Caution</b>	<b>No Status</b>	<b>Local Resolution</b>	<b>Court Result Unavailable</b>	<b>Formal Action is not in Public Interest</b>	<b>Under Investigation</b>	<b>% Total</b>
<b>Year to Date</b>	23.4	29	26.2	3.3	0.9	10.7	1.4	3.3	0.5	1.9	100.6
<b>June 2020</b>	28.6	42.9	14.3							14.3	100.1