



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held in Urchfont Village Hall on Wednesday 12th February 2025

Present: Councillor's: Moscrop (PM – Chair), Bamber (SB – Vice Chair), Hill (TH), Waddell (JW), Stephens (AS), Rotherford (JR), Harding (RC) and Chadwick (RC)

Councillor for Urchfont & Bishops Cannings: Philip Whitehead (PW)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Catharine Symington, Jason Wildman, A L Gordon

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome by the Chair – PM welcomed all to the meeting

2. Apologies Cllr: Shears (SS)

3. Devizes Gateway – Catharine Symington representing Devizes Town Council outlined the current position and key actions:

- Priority is to get communications out and continue to build the case for the Gateway.
- Strategy Outline Business case in 2021
- Network Rail reported in November 2024 that their interim flexibility case concluded that Devizes should be looked at further.
- Stage 1 – Network Rail with more funding making progress on going ahead with Westbury improvements, this will make Devizes more viable.
- A number of working groups are being set up to make sure that Devizes Gateway is not lost in wider regional debate – Catharine will be involved with these groups.

PM welcomed the update to this complex activity and stated that UPC will support in any way that they can.

B. PLANNING – See Separate Minutes

C. FEBRUARY FULL COUNCIL MEETING

1. Councillor Declarations of Interest - None

2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports - None

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 8th January 2025

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting	PM	JW	AGREED with one abstention due to absence

4. Outstanding Action List Status Review and Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2025 – the latest listing was displayed:

24/69 -TH advised that he had spoken to Derek Cook and action is complete.

25/8 - AS advised that potholes in the road to Redhorn Vidette are scheduled to be repaired soon.

25/8 – RH reported that he had some initial investigation, WC are about to sign off the LTP4 transport plan

which sets a strategic framework, he will investigate further.

SB reported that power washing of the Recreation Ground equipment will be completed when the ground is more stable to take heavy transport.

5. Finance

i. **Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 2025** – BL confirmed that the financial summary and bank reconciliation as at 31st January 2025 had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. Some concerns were expressed about the potential to eat into the if UPC keeps spending. BL explained that this will not happen, firstly because the approved reserve amount is not included in the budget breakdown figures, secondly because he manages spend against the budget / proposed expenditure and thirdly because the predicted surplus at year end is well in excess of the approved reserve.

ii. Financial Spend Items during January 2025

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve the spend details recorded on the bank reconciliation statement	PM	JW	AGREED unanimously

iii. **Contribution to Redhorn News for 2025 (see Appendix II on website version only)** – PM commented that a lot of Parish residents are not tech savvy and or do not use social media, the hard copy of Redhorn serves the Parish well. She believed that the requested £1600 is worth it to distribute news, information, advertisements etc. JW agreed, she uses it a lot for reference purposes. RH commented that it gets the UPC and wider Parish messages out well, much better than other local Parishes. JR pointed out that this funding is only up until the middle of 2025, Redhorn should be encouraged to put in a claim much earlier for 25/26.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To contribute £1600 to Redhorn News	PM	JR	AGREED unanimously

6. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (see Appendix I on website version only) – to consider

- a. **Clerks Report** – Nothing further to add or clarify
- b. **Councillor reports**

- **Urchfont Pond** - Nothing further to add or clarify
- **First Responders** – JW hopes to recruit an additional responder soon, maybe we should include purchase of a further kit bag in the 25/26 budget.
ACTION: FC/25/14 - BL
- **Website Development** – JR reported that he had met with Mandy and Alan Moscrop, traction is now being gained. BL had notified JR that e-Mango (now X-Net) had decided not to offer an update as they are only just progressing amalgamation of companies. UPC emails for all councillors will be included in the scope for the new website.
- **Highways Report** – AS added a comment about the recent vehicle damage to Top Green as identified by Alistair Hedley. The vehicle has not yet been identified which also hit a parked car in the process. The problem appears to be exacerbated by parent parking from the School in the morning and afternoons. We need to try to get the yellow zigzag repositioned so that it is more central to the school entrance and provides a clearer path for passing vehicles entering the top road. Thanks went to AS, JW and Ian from Magic Grab hire who quickly responded to tidy the damage, Ian has also offered to provide some topsoil to repair the bank. AS asked whether he could purchase some traffic cones to highlight the damaged area.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To purchase traffic cones up to the value of £200	AS	PM	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/25/15 – AS

- **Emergency Hub** - Nothing further to add or clarify

7. Community Bus Incident – two elderly residents are still in hospital, at least one may be in until April. All the others injured are now recovering at home. The parish Council wished all the injured a very speedy recovery and would offer help where possible. PM commented that those involved had been blown away by the level of support given by the Parish so far, especially via the dedicated What's App group. It is understood that the Heritage van driver has recovered and is back at work. Various options are being discussed by the community bus commitment as to the future of the service, PW stated that WC are willing to provide temporary vehicles. RC offered to provide support on the personal litigation services available to the injured. TH understood that the police had given information packages to all injured parties which may include such information

8. Revision of Councillor Lead roles following resignation – Having sought volunteers for a number of roles, PM had distributed a revised listing to all councillors prior to the meeting. RH suggested the need for a liaison role with the police, PW suggested that local PCSO's should be invited to the Parish meeting.

Liaison with the school is a key role, SB volunteered for this. PW asked about the Devizes Area Board which had previously been undertaken by the Chair. PM agreed to distribute a final listing.

ACTION: FC/25/16 - PM

Urchfont Parish Neighbourhood Plan – (see written report at Appendix III on website version only) – TH advised that the Village Hall had been booked on Saturday 26th April between 3 and 5pm for 1st stage consultation with members of the community on sites for development, approx.. 40 have been identified. The 2nd stage will be public drop-in sessions before the 14th May Parish meeting for further interaction on specific site details. The third stage will be voting slips delivered to all households. PW advised that timings may need to be reviewed due a period of purdah between 1st April and 1st May when councillors may not be able to be involved if UPC is subject to an election on 1st May.

9. Proposal to submit a Current Neighbourhood Plan Material Modification application to WC (see draft Proposal at Appendix IV on website version only) - The proposal had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting, all councillors indicated their approval. PM to sign and send it to WC.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To submit proposal to WC.	PM	TH	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/25/17 – PM

(Post meeting note: submitted to WC on 13th February 2025)

10. Potential Parish Council hustings before the 2025 Unitary Elections – If agreed, PW explained that the Parish Council will need to book a date between 2nd April and 1st May to book the Village Hall and to invite aspiring councillors to address members of the Community, this does not apply to aspiring parish councillors. The discussion concluded that this idea should be pursued, PM agreed to look at the Village Hall availability. Invitations to aspiring councillors cannot be made until candidates are known.

ACTION: FC/25/18 - PM

11. New notice board in Crooks Lane – JW reported that this has now been installed with TH assistance and is ready for use. PM thanked both for undertaking this work.

12. Update on Current Issues not covered by above agenda items

- Fly Tipping in Farmer's Field** – instances had been reported of tipping in the Field apparently via

the vehicle access gate. FOF have proposed locking the gate to try to prevent such action in the future and have asked the council to pay for the locks etc. If the practice still continues then UPC may need to consider CCTV coverage.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To cover the cost of gate locking	PM	JW	AGREED unanimously

ii. **Parish Meeting** – AS asked whether local organisations in addition to clubs and charities can erect displays at the next Parish meeting. PM expressed the view that these should be to advertise but not sell at the meeting.

13. External Meetings – None reported

14. Other Reports from Councillors – None reported

15. Items for Future Agenda (not identified from agenda items above) – None identified

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 12th March 2025 - 7.00pm Village Hall (Conference Room)

APPENDIX I TO FEBRUARY 2025 UPC MINUTES

A. CLERK'S REPORT

i. **Finance** – Copies of the Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation on 31st January 2025 will be distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. The accounts are in good order.

ii. **Councillor Status** – Two vacancies currently exist following the resignation of Cllr Pauline Kendall in January 2023. A vacancy notice has been posted on the Notice Boards. As it is now less than 6 months before the intended local council elections on 1st May 2025, legislation stipulates that a separate election cannot be held but co-option can still take place if a suitable candidate is found.

However, assuming that local elections take place on 1st May 2025, please remember that ALL councillors (including any newly co-opted now) will be stood down and be subject to the 2025 election application process. If only 11 or less valid applications are made, then the parish council election will be declared uncontested. If more than 11 applications are made, then the electorate will have to vote at the Polls. This is in accordance with the normal 4-year term of office for all Unitary, Town and Parish councillors.

iii. **PRECEPT 25/26** – The UPC agreed demand for £60,038.09 was submitted to and acknowledged by WC prior to their deadline of 20th January 2025.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

B. COUNCILLORS WRITTEN REPORTS

Pond Update - no issues but the Heron is now fishing! We will need to replace a pump this year at £250 estimate plus £70 for blower spares. There needs to be a provision for calcium /gypsum at £200 approx. to include in 25/26 budget.

Cllr John Rotherford

First responders - The potential extra recruits did not apply due to holiday commitments clashing with the training, but one candidate will apply for the summer intake.

A Report from Southwest Ambulance re Ambulance call outs in 1/1/24 – 31/12/24 in Urchfont were.

18 CAT I – highest priority life threatening such as cardiac arrest, massive bleeding

86 CAT 2 high priority but not immediately life threatening – chest pain difficulty breathing

34 CAT 3 falls, broken bones, abdominal pains

Cllr John Rotherford

Website development - At the initial stage three interested specialist parish council web hosting companies have sent their information and references. The current provider (e-Mango) has also confirmed that they are interested as they now have a wider range of products following mergers into X-Net. The next step is understanding the scope and input from the council plus all provisional stake holders as what the specification (and current limitations with the existing website) needs to be,

Cllr John Rotherford

Emergency Hub report Feb 25

Change Over switch - A Change Over switch has been fitted to the Village Hall which will allow us to connect a generator, from Green Farm Power, to run the Village Hall during a long serious power outage. The Village Hall would be used as an emergency centre during an emergency.

Thanks goes to R&T Harris for supplying and fitting the equipment and Green Farm Power for giving us a generator to run a test. All the systems within the Village Hall worked as if they were on mains power.

Steering Group - We have formed a small steering group to manage the admin of the Hub and they will meet during February with the task of completing the Emergency Hub guide, recruit suitable volunteers to fulfil the roles of the Community Response Team and to purchase the relevant supplies to run the hub.

The steering group members are Liz Turner, Helen Boyd, Sam Weller, Richard Harding and Andy Stephens.

Recovery Post Emergency - One very important area to address after the emergency is the continued welfare of those impacted. We will be meeting with Rev Richard Curtis and members of the Redhorn Team, who have been involved closely with the victims of the community Bus incident, to see what lessons can be learnt for the future.

Further information - We will be rolling out information about how the Emergency Hub will work in the coming months through the Redhorn News.

Financial - I will be discussing the provision of a reserve fund being ring fenced for the use in an emergency. The fund would only be drawn down when the hub is called into service.

Thanks - As we write the guide there is a lot of information gathering, We would like thank the following for their advice and support so far, Thanks goes to Richard and Tim Harris, Ed Hale and Will Corke, Simon Veitch and Richard Hawkins.

Andy Stephens and Sam Weller.

Highways Report for February 2025

Highways Maintenance - As I am writing, patch work is taking place between Foxley Corner and Planks farm shop to the junction of the A342. This road has been problematic for some time. We are grateful to the Highways engineer for bringing the work forward as it was planned for in the next financial year.

Urgent repairs were made to the surface water drain along Townsend, next to Farmers field. The base of the drain became unstable causing the cover to become dislodged. It was spotted by a member of the public and councillor, the area was made safe and reported via the "My Wilts" app. In less than 4 hours the drain cover was inspected by an engineer and a team organised to make a permanent repair 24 hours later.

Parish Steward - Matt, our Parish Steward, has been busy this visit and dealt with 39 potholes around the parish, repairing holes next to Green Farm and the entrance to the Croft, also along Crookwood lane.

Water leak at The Bottom - Wiltshire Council Highways dept have confirmed work will take place shortly to stem the flow of water seeping out of the bank.

Top Green - The Green has been a problem since the reinstatement. Trevor and I have re dressed it several times.

One problem is cars parking at the top end of the green not leaving insufficient room for large vehicles to pass without damaging the bank. We have placed traffic cones along there only to find children keep moving them to use them as goal posts. Recently Trevor and I met with the Highways engineer and discussed the matter. There are ideas we could try.

Councillors will have seen the email from Mr Alistair Hadley regarding The Green. Having spoken to him on the phone, he is passionate about The Green space and does not want to see it eroded away any further. One solution we discussed would be to reinstate the fading yellow zig zag lines and extended them to along the front of Mr Hadley's house, he is happy with this suggestion. Having also spoken to Cllr. Whitehead we also thought that placing a weight restriction on Blackboard Lane (except for access) would help prevent large vehicles trying to squeeze past.

Cllr Whitehead is investigating to see if the yellow lines could be painted as part of the maintenance program.

Speed indicator Displays -The Speed indicator signs are working well, and residents are reporting they are having a positive effect on reducing speeding vehicles through the village.

Flash Flooding

So much for a dry January, In the last weeks of the month we had two named storms giving us another soaking. Parish councillors, along with members of the public were out clearing drains covers to help clear the drains of debris. Blocked drains were reported to Wiltshire council via the "My Wilts" App.

A more serious problem occurred along Crookwood Lane at the Knowle, where the water was approximately 4 foot deep. Drastic action was taken by Geoff Potter and Pete Huntley to dig a trench in the access to their field to allow the flood water to flow away down to Breach Hanging, thus preventing risk to life of drivers attempting to drive through it. The matter has been reported to the Highways Engineer to inspect the site before it is reinstated.

My Wilts Ap - If you have any Highways issues, please to report them on the "My Wilts" app., or visit the Wiltshire Council website.

Cllrs Andy Stephens and Trevor Hill.

Proposal for UPC Funding of Redhorn News

The Distribution of The Redhorn News

Historical Perspective

When it was originally introduced the magazine was paid for by individual subscription and distributed accordingly.

Subsequently, Urchfont, Wedhampton & Lydeaway Parish Council requested that a monthly copy of each edition should be delivered to every household in the Parish. This was to try to ensure that all of the electorate it served would regularly be updated concerning the Council's activities, meetings and decisions. This system still remains in place.

Initially, the funding in this case was split among UPC (6 months), the Scarecrows (4 months)) and Urchfont Com. Bus (2 months). It was later decided by U.C.B. Committee that they could no longer meet this level of funding.

At a later date, Chirton & Conock Parish Council also decided to finance the distribution of a monthly edition to all households in the Parish. The smaller villages continue to receive their magazines by households paying their own subscriptions individually.

In late 2023, Paul Scarffe and Brian Taylor were again asked to attend an UPC Meeting to discuss magazine funding. After considerable discussion, they were informed that that the requested funding would be authorised for the year from July 2023j to June 2024 but that UPC would give further consideration to whether the arrangement would continue beyond this.

UPC have not informed any member of The Management Committee of the magazine that their policy has changed. They have continued to submit copy for inclusion in each monthly edition and to use the existing delivery system. Nonetheless, our latest request for funding for 2024/25 has not yet been decided on the basis that more detail is required.

Current Situation

In the absence of receiving any further instructions, we have continued to provide and deliver the agreed total of 550 magazines throughout the Parish. This is without any confirmation that payment will be received and without any indication of the Council's future intentions regarding support for Redhorn delivery.

Continuation of Redhorn Magazine

On the assumption that The Scarecrows maintain their grant in 2025, we can continue to deliver in Urchfont until April, June if receiving the £1600 funding, but we would request that UPC notify us of their intentions in respect of future funding and delivery to each household in the Parish, as a matter of urgency.

We very much wish to continue the magazine's longstanding relationship with UPC but we also understand that any funding decision by UPC could be subject to future change. We would ask that any intended changes be notified well in advance so that we have time to adjust our operations accordingly.

Redhorn News Financials (Estimated)

918 copies printed and distributed each month- of which 556 now go to Urchfont and the remainder to the other parishes.

Most issues are 40 pages but 3 or 4 editions have 44 pages- depending on the copy received.

Individual copies are charged at 50p (£6 a year) but this can be reduced if f projected income is exceeded because of increased advertising income etc.

Annual Costs

Printing costs (40 pages) £9264

Misc. expenses, licences, extra pages etc. £840

Total Annual Costs

£10,104

Annual Income

Income Other Villages/Subscribers - £1900

Income from Urchfont - UPC £1600

Scarecrows - £1100

Total Annual Subscription Income - £4600

Advertising Income - £6000

Total Income - £10,600

APPENDIX III TO FEBRUARY 2025 UPC MINUTES

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NP WORKING GROUP ON 30 JAN 25 IN URCHFONT VILLAGE HALL

Present: Al Gordon (AG); Trevor Hill (TH); Keith Hills (KH) Linda Jennings (LJ); Sally Stephens (SS); Jackie Waddell (JW).

Apologies: Malcolm Turner (MT).

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 26 Nov 24 had been passed to UPC and approved.

a) Sites matrix - KH and LJ had developed the matrix and sent it round to NP WG members for consideration. A special WG meeting was held to discuss the matrix and KH and LJ subsequently made further refinements and added some technical details. This topic is further covered at Para 2 below.

b) WC liaison – LJ reported that this was still outstanding

Action: LJ to follow up

c) NP Timetable – AG had looked at options for timetable formats, but the most suitable required a fee payment for use. KH felt that it might be possible to adapt one of the formats.

Action: AG and KH would look at adapting existing timetable options for WG use.

d) Site submissions – TH reported that he had contacted the landowners who had expressed an interest in submitting sites but had not yet done so. Subsequently, further sites had been put forward and added to the list.

2. SITE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

KH and LJ had sent out a refined matrix, sites map and schedule to WG members to test and report back on any difficulties/anomalies. MT had sent in his completed test and other WG members had completed the inputting of information. The guidelines of the matrix and scores were discussed at length and WG members identified the points on which there was uncertainty/lack of clarity. Amendments were made during the meeting, and it was agreed that a few further refinements were necessary.

Decision: Amendments would be made to the site assessment matrix as discussed

Action: KH would revise the assessment guidelines and their associated scores and circulate a latest version of the matrix to WG members for comment.

3. SIMON VEITCH'S LETTER

The WG had received a letter from Simon Veitch, a resident of Urchfont, in which he suggested that the NP could promote opportunities for new self and custom build housing. He outlined the sustainability benefits of such a strategy and suggested that any opportunities of this type could be addressed in the site assessment matrix.

Decision: Whilst the WG agreed that that the NP could promote self and custom build housing, the site assessment matrix dealt with site advantages and disadvantages rather than the details of housing site development. Details of house size, type and tenure would be addressed at a later stage through policy.

Action: KH would compile a draft response to Simon Veitch's letter and circulate it to WG members for comment.

4. NEXT PUBLIC MEETING

TH felt that it was important to fix a date for the next public meeting given that the availability of the Village Hall could be an issue. The WG discussed what the purpose of the meeting should be and it was agreed that it should take place before the Parish public meeting on 14 May 25.

Decisions:

- The next NP public meeting would focus on housing sites and their assessment.
- The NP public meeting would be held before the Parish public meeting.

Action: TH would look at the Village Hall diary and book the venue for the next NP public meeting.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None to report.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next monthly WG meeting would be held on Tue 25 Feb 25 in the Village Hall commencing 7.00pm with JW as the Chair.

All to note

DRAFT

Urchfont, Wedhampton and Lydeway Neighbourhood Plan Amendment

Michael Kilmister
Neighbourhood Planning Manager
Planning Directorate
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
BA14 8JN

DATE XX XX XXXX

Dear Michael

Proposal to amend the Urchfont Wedhampton and Lydeway Neighbourhood Plan (UWLNP) 2015 - 2026

At its meeting on Wednesday 12th February 2026 Urchfont Parish Council passed a resolution to make the following amendment to UWLNP:

Urchfont Parish Council proposes that item h) of Policy H1 on page 14 of the UWLNP be removed because of the material changes that have impacted this site.

Urchfont Parish Council is not proposing any change to Policy H1 and is not proposing any further changes and thus confirms this is a minor amendment. This is supported by the following:

- Urchfont Parish Council has a clear and strong mandate from its residents that item (h) of Policy H1 is no longer considered a safe or appropriate inclusion in the UWLNP?
- UWLNP is now more than 7 years old and is considered out of date by Wiltshire Council. It is no longer be considered a safe and correct plan for Urchfont, Lydeway and Wedhampton.
- By 2026 UWLNP is expected to deliver more than its required 37 planning approvals for the plan period 2015 – 2026. (Current expected total approved 52 dwellings)

Urchfont Parish Council is happy to meet with the Neighbourhood Plan officer to discuss this matter or for the officer to visit a future Parish Council meeting so that they can judge the support for these changes by the residents of the parish.

Yours sincerely

Pam Moscrop, Chair, Urchfont Parish Council