



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held in Urchfont Village Hall on Wednesday 12th March 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): Alan Moscrop, Geoff Potter

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome by the Chair – PM welcomed all to the meeting and noted that Sally Shears had resigned immediately after the February meeting which she did not attend.

2. Apologies - None

3. UPC Website Review - Alan Moscrop made a PowerPoint presentation outlining - Current website status, UPC feedback on current website, other vendor options (Teec, Netwise, Aubergine and Self Build) and costs comparisons, examples of templates, summary / recommendations and next steps. Alan pointed out that the current supplier, e-Mango, had declared that they are unable to offer the desired operating upgrades. Integrity and appropriateness of content is of prime importance recognising that this is a Parish Council owned website with its own restricted access to the council element, but direct access to their own page by community organisations is highly desirable to ensure that information is kept up to date. Opportunity for councillors to have council email addresses was welcomed. Based on his recommendations and offer to assist in the updating process, councillors made the following proposal:

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To further explore the Netwise option	PM	JW	AGREED unanimously

B. PLANNING – See Separate Minutes

C. MARCH FULL COUNCIL MEETING

1. Councillor Declarations of Interest – None declared at the meeting.

2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports – No participation.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 12th March 2025

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	PM	TH	AGREED unanimously

4. Outstanding Action List Status Review and Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2025 – councillors identified that actions 30, 77 and 98 can be closed. PM commented that she will distribute an corrected version of the Lead Councillor Roles.

5. Finance

i. **Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 28th February 2025** – BL confirmed that the Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting and that the accounts are in good order, BL reminded councillors that we are in the last month of the financial year, any outstanding invoices must be submitted to him as soon as possible. No other comments were made.

ii. Financial Spend Items during February 2025

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To ratify the spend items in February.	PM	JW	AGREED unanimously

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

Clerks Report – A Notice of Election issued on 1st May 2025 was published on notice boards on 11th March 2025 - Nomination papers must be hand delivered to the Returning Officer or her appointed staff at County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN on any working day after the date of this notice of election (excluding weekends), between the hours of 10am and 4pm, but no later than 4pm on Wednesday 2 April 2025. All councillors were reminded to submit completed applications as above. Eleven valid nominations will result in an uncontested election result not requiring a public poll.

a. Councillor reports

New Councillor Recruitment – JR commented that he was aware of at least two people who might decide to join the council, but recognised that now was not the best time as we approach an election. PW advised slowing down on recruitment activities until after the election when new people can be co-opted if there are seats available.

First Responders – Having discussed and recognised the importance and benefits of a RAIZER chair, JR gained councillor support to seek at least a 50% - 70% Scarecrow grant towards purchase of a RAIZER chair for the First Responders, UPC will then consider funding the balance.

ACTION: FC/25/19 - JR

New Website – see Item A3 above

Pond – Nothing to add or clarify

7. **Community Bus Incident** – one person remains in hospital following this incident. It is understood that the Community Bus Committee will be further considering options for the way forward for this service next weekend.

8. **Revision of Councillor Lead roles following** – PM confirmed that she will be issuing an updated version shortly following the resignation of Sally Shears.

ACTION: FC/25/20 - PM

9. **Urchfont Parish Neighbourhood Plan – (see written report at Appendix III on website version only)** – No comments were made regarding the minutes at Appendix III. PW asked whether the site assessment matrix will be published to the community prior to the consultation meeting on the 26th April. TH stated that the matrix will not be published until approved by UPC, it is a council the WG is not ready to start declaring actual sites at this stage. As it currently. As he understands the current process, PW queried why the public are not being given the opportunity to document. PM commented that lot of work has been put into the matrix, it needs to be right before publication. RH wants to see comparison back to the original survey and variations identified. TH commented that an Environmental Sustainability Assessment will need to be undertaken in due course. RH insisted that whatever, the matrix and outcomes need to be credible, TH responded that the WG has put a lot of work in to ensure credibility and transparency. TH said comment on the matrix prior to UPC approval, what status results? JW commented that NP WG adverts are intended to be published in Redhorn News in pdf. Format, but Redhorn won't accept pdf except from a select few. JW agreed to contact the Redhorn Editor to question this policy.

ACTION: FC/25/21 - JW

10. Proposal to submit a Current Neighbourhood Plan Minor Modification application to WC (see draft Proposal at Appendix IV on website version only) – PM confirmed that WC have responded that they consider this a Material modification rather than Minor and requires examination by an independent neighbourhood planning examiner. PW suggested that the position is reviewed at the next meeting.

11. Parish Council hustings on 17th April before the 2025 Unitary Elections - Candidates to be invited will not be known until after 2nd April which does not leave a lot of time to the actual hustings meeting on 17th April in the Village Hall. PM will not be available to chair the session, SB has agreed to stand in as chair assisted by RH. The event will need to be well publicised in the next edition of Redhorn, PM agreed to submit an article. It should also be advertised on social media, in the shop and by distributed flyers. It was suggested that the programme will include a 5 minute introduction and presentation from each candidate followed by Q&A's. Questions could be submitted in advance and read out by the chair. Light refreshments need to be available

ACTION: FC/25/22 - PM

12. Preparation for Parish Meeting on 14th May 2025 – Th confirmed that he will not be attending. Discussion focused on whether local organisations should be invited to make a short presentation or man stalls to try encourage more of the community to attend. Organisations such as the School, Scouts, Church, Community Bus Committee, Community Shop, Scarecrows and 1st Responders. UPC will give a summary report, but the emphasis should be on community involvement. PM agreed to put an article in Redhorn and on social media to gauge interest in such involvement.

ACTION: FC/25/23 - PM

13. Best Kept Village 2025 – A very short and enthusiastic debate concluded with the following proposal. BL to prepare and submit the application.

Proposal	Proposer	Second	Resolution
To enter the 2025 Competition.	PM	TH	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/25/24 – BL

PM commented that she will again try to encourage Wedhampton residents to enter the Hamlet competition.

ACTION: FC/25/25- PM

14. VE Day Celebrations – RC believed that something should be organised in the community, we have previously contributed / organised the Jubilee and coronation celebrations. He understood that a beacon will be lit on Redhorn Hill and the Church will be holding a celebratory peel. He believed that a lunch should be organised for the community and that the villages should be decorated with bunting (maybe put up before the Scarecrow Festival). SB expressed concern that lunch attendance cannot be guaranteed, even if weather is good, this leads to waste and cost. SB also had the view, supported by others, that the celebration can be irrelevant for the younger generation, especially in today's global tension situation. As a result SB was not convinced that UPC should be organising such events, leaving it instead to local areas and groups if they so wish. It was agreed that this would be considered further at the April meeting. Consensus indicated support for the Beacon and Church bells TH pointed out that the NP WG had a drop in session at the Village Hall on the 8th June,

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

Crookwood Lane Flooding – Whilst he had not submitted a report, AS commented that a meeting with WC is scheduled for 14th March to discuss the flooding of the road. Geoff Potter was invited to comment who said that a lot of water comes off the Cricket pitch and surrounding area and floods out of Will Corke's yard. Up to around 4 feet of water has been experienced blocking traffic and potentially leading to accidents. PW commented that pipework needs modification.

Evolving Government Planning Regulations – JR asked why? PW responded that the intention is to limit planning committee intervention and call-ins, but nothing will really change until builders have funding to commence developments.

Daffodil Planting – TH commented that for whatever reason the UPEG planting initiative has not been a great success, many have not bloomed or have been cut down by mowing. There is a need for better planning in future so that funds are not wasted. Some plantings are good, we should learn from this.

LTP4 Transport Planning – RH commented that this was passed recently by WC, it is a strategic framework not a plan and as far as he could see from the summary contains nothing contentious but with some bias. He recommended councillors to read the summary but not the whole document which is extensive. He will now look further into EV charging infrastructure and opportunities for the Parish for which Government funding is available.

16. External Meetings – None reported

17. Other Reports from Councillors

Devizes Gateway - PM stated that an email had been received from Simon Holt asking what UPC is doing now to actively support the Devizes Gateway Station development. She will respond based on the discussion at the February meeting.

ACTION: FC/25/26 - PM

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

There being no other business the meeting finished at 8.53pm

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 9th April 2025 - 7.00pm Village Hall (Conference Room)

APPENDIX I TO MARCH 2025 UPC MINUTES

A. CLERK'S REPORT

i. Finance – Copies of the Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation on 28th February 2025 will be distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. The accounts are in good order.

ii. Councillor Status – Three vacancies currently exist following the resignation of Cllr Sally Shears in February 2025. 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.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

B. COUNCILLORS WRITTEN REPORTS

New councillor recruitment

We have started advertising again due the fact there are 3 councillor's vacancies. There is one candidate who is very interested but is currently on holiday.

Cllr John Rotherford

First responders

See below the comments from Neil Jones regarding a RAIZER chair need for the team.

'My view is that fundraising for a new standard CFR kit isn't the best use of efforts at the moment - a further kit would only be needed once the current one is so oversubscribed that CFRs who want to book on are unable too due to demand. However, enhancing Urchfont current CFR provision would certainly add value.

Most of the calls I've gone to involve the elderly, and usually a fall of some description. Falls seem to be rarely categorised above a 3 which could mean waiting for an ambulance for hours. When it is appropriate to lift, the Raizer chair is a fantastic tool and allows a CFR to safely lift someone without any other assistance - getting an elderly person up off the floor can, in of itself, be a life-saving action. Urchfont's population would certainly see more slips, trip and falls than cardiac arrests (thankfully) and having a Raizer available here would be a huge advantage.

Neil Jones'

The cost of this RAIZER chair is £3,200 + VAT and if we budget for 50% of this cost in 25/26, I will apply to the Scarecrow fund for the balance and if approved ask the council to approve the £1600 +VAT.

We will advertise again in June/July for additional CFRs, and we have one potential candidate who says she will apply and has experience.

Cllr John Rotherford

New website

Request for councillors' feedback has been sent out for discussion at the meeting on 12th March (see Appendix II). Mandy McDougall has sent some of her ideas as to the layout, but she would not be able to take this as a project due to other commitments.

Cllr John Rotherford

Pond

The pond is in good condition thanks to Eric Ahlquist's continuous monitoring and so action is needed at present.

Cllr John Rotherford

APPENDIX II TO MARCH 2025 UPC MINUTES

UPC WEBSITE REVIEW

CURRENT STATUS SUMMARY:

The existing UPC website, while serving it's overall purpose, is in need of some refreshing, general improvements (eg. More mobile phone friendly) and functionality additions, to align to what is a fantastic parish with an award winning village and passionate and proud local residents.

The website is currently hosted & supported by E-Mango. On contact from PC they have advised that they're not in a position to provide any enhancements (not their focus) and suggested PC may be better off finding an alternate supplier going forward for the needs that have been highlighted.

Therefore to introduce the necessary improvements to the UPC website, it will require a change of provider. Website designs and functionality come in all different shapes and sizes, and there are 2 distinct routes to consider –

- a. Use a specialist/established parish council website provider in UK (there are a few to consider), or
- b. Create a website that is bespoke to the UPC, built by a 3rd party, and have this hosted by a trusted host company.

There are pros and cons to each of the above. I'd be happy to give a short overview of what these would be for the next UPC meeting to help with getting consensus on what route should be taken. But as a preview I would suggest the following needs thought:

- Time needed and costs to the UPC for moving to option a or b above from current provider,
- Training for UPC members and other 3rd parties for content management of either option,
- Ongoing time/effort to manage content on the new website,
- Compliance requirements relating to items such as data protection and accessibility,

UPC MEMBER INPUT NEEDED:

I had requested a report for the last 12 months from E-Mango on the UPC website, just to gauge what areas/topics were being most viewed and engaged with by the public. Unfortunately after a bit of back and forth, it was discovered that they had updated the analytics platform, so I don't have this data to share.

Therefore it would be helpful to get the following input:

- 1. Which areas of the current UPC website of are most importance to the public,**
- 2. What areas/subjects are currently missing from UPC site that should be added,**
- 3. Which current areas of site are surplus and could be considered for non-migration to new site? (helps reduce cost and effort)**
- 4. How many UPC members or other local persons would you envisage needing access/training to use the new website?**

Alan Moscrop

APPENDIX III TO MARCH 2025 UPC MINUTES

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

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

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 30 Jan 25 had been passed to UPC and approved. TH had explained the stages of the Neighbourhood Plan to other councillors and the progress made so far.

2. SITES UPDATE

LJ confirmed receipt of another site submission, though there were a few points which required clarification. A plan of the site was passed round the WG. TH outlined the background to the late submission. LJ stated that she had done a basic assessment of the site according to the latest matrix.

Decisions:

- The latest site submitted would be included in the sites schedule and assessed in the site matrix
- Further site submissions would not be accepted

Action: LJ would pass the new site assessment to KH for inclusion in the matrix.

3. SITE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

KH had further refined the matrix following on from the last NP meeting and circulated it amongst WG members. MT asked how similar WG members assessments had been and asked about the resolution of the points he had made - including the need for a contamination criterion. KH had explained the reasoning behind the criteria and their scores which had focused discussion in the previous meeting and led to a WG consensus view. He added that where contamination was likely, it's presence could affect the deliverability of the site and was therefore a relevant issue to assess. It was felt that it would be prudent to present the assessment matrix to UP councillors to ensure that they were happy with the document and its contents prior to the public presentation in Apr. TH offered to arrange for the draft matrix to be circulated to UPC councillors prior to the next UPC meeting on 12 Mar. KH offered to provide information on the weighting system.

Decision:

The site assessment matrix would be tidied up for presentation to UPC councillors for their approval

Actions:

- KH would tidy up the matrix and reissue it to WG members and provide a brief summary of the weighting system
- TH /JW would ask for the tidied final draft of the site assessment matrix to be sent to UPC councillors, in confidence, prior to the next UPC meeting on 12 Mar – with the aim of seeking their approval to it before the next public presentation

4. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

The date for the presentation had been fixed on 26 Apr 25. TH had confirmed that the Village Hall was booked and all WG members would be present.

It was felt that the presentation should briefly cover all the sites and housing numbers but not go into the depths of detail about the assessment matrix. An explanation as to how the matrix worked could be given through the use of a few scored examples. TH felt that it would be important to clarify and confirm the details on the site submission forms with landowners before they were discussed at the public presentation. This point is further discussed later under Item 9.

The presentation needed to include Information about the dates and purpose of the subsequent drop in workshop/discussion sessions, where residents could address any issues or concerns with WG members. It was felt that 2 additional informal sessions were required (in addition to those booked on 8 and 10 May) to give maximum opportunities for residents to gain further detailed information. A voting system, based on the use of pre-numbered forms (as per the 2nd questionnaire) was discussed and it was agreed that it would be beneficial to devise a system for recording votes. Voting on the sites should commence after the drop in/workshop sessions.

Decisions:

- The public presentation would be no longer than 40 mins to give the audience opportunities to ask questions
- It would include:
 - a summary of information on all the sites and the total housing numbers
 - a brief outline of the site assessment process matrix and its purpose relating to a few

examples

- details on the purpose and timings of the drop in/workshop public sessions
- the voting system for the sites
- the next steps in the plan making process
- Setting up would commence at 2.30pm to start the presentation at 3.30pm
- A display would include
 - a large map showing the locations of all the sites submitted
 - a copy of the sites schedule
 - details of the site assessment matrix and the scores would be available later in the drop in workshop sessions
- Refreshments would include tea/coffee/biscuits

Actions:

- TH would put together a first draft of a powerpoint presentation and circulate it to the WG
- All WG members would help with preparations for setting up the Village Hall
- SS would liaise with the graphic designer in the village to seek assistance with the production of the powerpoint slides and arrange for publicity for the presentation in the Redhorn News
- KH and LJ would work on the display site information sheets
- LJ would produce the display maps
- JW would organise the refreshments with help from other WG members on the day
- TH would liaise with landowners for clarification of site submission details
- AG would work on a system for recording votes
- TH would check the village diary and book 2 further drop in sessions

5. TIMETABLE REVIEW

AG and KH had been involved with other plan priorities and there had been insufficient opportunity to develop this further.

All to Note

6. WC LIAISON

LJ had been in contact with Wiltshire Council and confirmed that its Local Plan had been submitted to the Inspectorate on 28 Nov 24 and would be assessed according to the old National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Whilst there was a chance it would become a legal document and a reference for UPCs NP before the end of 2025, it was evident that subsequently, it would not be compliant with the latest NPPF and would have to be reviewed, once adopted.

LJ had e-mailed the head of the Neighbourhood Planning team, but had not received a response regarding the appointment of new officers to assist with plan preparation. **All to Note**

7. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

LJ pointed out that request for funding from Locality for the next FY should be processed in March/April. However, such requests needed to be supported by a note from Wiltshire Council confirming that SEA was necessary; to achieve this, Wiltshire Council would need the details of the sites which were being proposed for the Plan.

Decision: It was agreed that the funding request forms could be completed, in anticipation of the submission of site details to Wiltshire Council later.

8. REDHORN SUBMISSION

SS asked the WG about publicity for the public presentation. It was agreed that there should be an entry in the April edition of the Redhorn News.

Decision and Action: JW and SS would design a notice for April's Redhorn News, based on previous publicity, circulate it to the WG, then send the final document to the editor.

9. AOB – Landowner liaison

TH brought up the need for final meetings with owners of all the sites on the schedule to ensure that all details were clear and there were no changes to make before the public presentation. SS felt there should be the same checklist of questions to each landowner to ensure that all aspects of their site submission were covered.

Decisions:

- A common list of questions for landowners should be devised
- At least 2 members of the WG would visit each site before the presentation
- There would be map showing the each submitted site with its development boundary
- For each site, there would be a list of key points to discuss based on the outcome of WG site assessment

Actions:

- TH would draft a list of common questions for landowners of submitted sites and circulate to the WG
- LJ would produce a map of each site
- KH and LJ would produce a list of key points to be covered on each site

10. NEXT MEETING

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

All to note