

Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

A meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council was held on Monday 02 December 2013 at 7.00pm in Upwood Village Hall.

Present: Councillors C. Bryce, R. Howe (Chairman), F. Hopkins, J. Noble, J. Paxton A. Perkins G. Shelford, G. Slater, K. Sisman

In attendance: Mrs. C. Bilverstone (Parish Clerk), Councillor Tew (County Councillor) and 9 members of the Public.

Minutes

- 76/12-13 Apologies**
No apologies were received.
- 77/12-13 Declarations of interest**
Councillor Perkins declared an interest in the village hall. Councillor Sisman declared an interest in the planning application for 96 High Street, Upwood.
- 78/12-13 Public Participation**
Members were advised that two members of the public had registered to speak in the public address: Mrs H. Yilmaz in support of her planning application for 96 High Street, Upwood; and Mrs S. Wells, 94 High Street, in opposition to the same development.
- Councillor Perkins confirmed that the Council had studied the plans and that two Councillors had visited the property. He confirmed that the applicants have worked closely with the District Council to design a sympathetic extension and that the current plans represent the eleventh revision. Councillor Perkins believes that there will be no loss of light to neighbouring properties and that Huntingdonshire District Council are satisfied that the proposal is acceptable and would now wish the plans to proceed.
- 78/12-13.1** Mrs Yilmaz presented the plans to the Council. She and her husband have consulted with neighbours; (four are now in support of the application, two are against); and worked closely with the Planning Department and the Conservation Officer. They are anxious to retain the visual appeal of the front of their picturesque cottage but to replace a piecemeal single storey extension to the rear with a two storey extension with a Mansard roof. The site is set back, and is not visible from the High Street. The current single storey extension is not seen from Helens Close. The roof would be visible from Helens Close.
- 78/12-13.2** Mrs Wells quoted from her letter to the District Council. She is concerned that the proposed development will significantly increase the size of the current property and that minimal changes have been made to the plans since they were previously rejected on the grounds of scale and massing. Should the plans be approved, the development would have a significant and detrimental impact on the visual amenity of her own property; the new roofline would dominate her view; the size would be overbearing; and there would be a significant loss of light to her garden. Mrs Wells does not believe that the proposal is in keeping with its surroundings and that it does not demonstrate due regard to the existing cottage and the conservation area within which it is situated.
- 78/12-13.3** The Chairman thanked both speakers and asked that that item 7 (Planning Applications) on the agenda be brought forward to allow Councillors to ask questions of the two speakers.
- 78/12-13.4** Councillors considered the plans and the objections. They recognised the challenges to all concerned. Concerns were noted about size and massing, and about the visual impact. The village is however, host to a diverse range of architectural styles and this adds to its charm. Councillors were appreciative of the efforts the applicants have made to design a modern extension which aims to meet the demands of current guidelines and legislation yet remain sympathetic to an historic building. It was recognised

that change is challenging to all but that change needs to be embraced if we wish to encourage people to make their homes here.

The Chairman asked for a proposal to approve the plans. Councillor Perkins proposed acceptance; Councillor Bryce seconded the proposal. 5 Councillors were in favour, 2 were against and one abstained from voting. The Clerk will inform the District Council that the Council is in approval of this application.

79/12-13

Minutes

Copies of the minutes of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council meeting held on 04 November 2013 had been circulated in advance of the meeting following their informal approval by the Chairman. Councillor Bryce proposed to accept the minutes. Councillor Noble seconded the proposal. Councillor Paxton abstained from voting as she was not present at the meeting. All other Councillors were in favour. It was **resolved** that these were a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

80/12-13

Matters arising or carried forward from the last or previous meeting.

80/12-13.1

To receive an update on the Community Led Plan Working Party.

Councillor Hopkins, together with a team of three volunteers from the CLP working party have started to formulate a skeleton questionnaire. This will be reviewed by the working party in the New Year with a view to its distribution across the Parish in the spring of 2014. The questionnaire is to be based on the knowledge gained from the village fete and the open afternoon held in October.

80/12-13.2

To receive an update on the negotiations of a new lease of the playing field.

Further to concerns expressed at November's meeting, the Clerk has requested that a clause be added to the terms of the lease. The clause would enable the Parish Council to terminate the lease with no penalty at any point after notice of 12 months. Jolliffe Daking has referred this to the Diocesan Investment Committee's Chairman for discussion at their next meeting in February.

80/12-13.3

To receive an update on the future of the Cross Keys Public House.

Councillor Howe confirmed that two conditional offers have been received by the agent. Neither have been accepted at this stage. The Council continue to be hopeful that negotiations will be successful.

80/12-13.4

To receive an update on the allotments and community orchard.

There is currently one half plot available in Upwood and one half plot available in Great Raveley. The Clerk is waiting for one payment (the tenant has confirmed that she wishes to retain the plot); and one completed agreement form.

The community orchard site has been prepared and planting will take place at the end of January/beginning of February. The newly formed Community Orchard Group and the Parish Council is appreciative of the support given by Bridget Halford, Tree Warden Coordinator, Huntingdonshire District Council.

The Parish Council continues to hold £1200 in reserve for Upwood and the Raveleys Community Allotments Association (URCAA). It was agreed at the Parish Council meeting in March 2013 (minute reference: 186/03-13.3) that this amount would be released to the association on presentation of a "spending plan" for future activities. Councillor Bryce agreed to check on the progress of this plan.

80/12.13.5

To receive an update regarding security measures for the Upwood allotment site.

The Council has received two quotations for a gate to be installed at the Meadow Road entrance. Councillor Bryce agreed to obtain a third and this matter will be reviewed at the next meeting.

81/12-13

County and District Councillors

Councillor Tew (Cambridgeshire County Councillor) apologised for the inconvenience caused by multiple closures of the B1040 (due to accidents), and the subsequent diversion of traffic through Upwood and the Raveleys. The County Highways Department are investigating this matter.

Members of the County Councils Scrutiny Committees are considering draft budget proposals to accommodate savings of £149 million required for 2014/15 and the following five years.

Councillor Tew informed members that the next meeting of the Police Forum will take place in Warboys on 22 January 2014.

Councillor Hopkins requested an update following consultation on the "Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2014/2015". Councillor Tew advised that the County Council are unable to offer financial support for a speed restriction on Huntingdon Road. The Parish Council may apply but he does not believe that permission would be granted. The cost to the Parish Council would be approximately £2000.

Councillor Sisman re-iterated ongoing concerns that the roads across the Parish are grossly inadequate. The media continues to advocate children walking to school but Huntingdon Road is simply not safe for pedestrians.

Councillor Howe noted again that housing developments in Bury will have a significant impact on the road network through Upwood and the Raveleys further exacerbating existing traffic concerns.

Councillor Howe (Huntingdonshire District Councillor) explained that the District Council is also focused on cost savings. Expenditure plans are to be addressed through a study entitled "Facing the Future". Parish Councils will ultimately be asked to choose which services they are prepared to forgo in the future. Councillor Howe noted that the services provided by the District Council (e.g. refuse collections, welfare and housing benefits) have significant impact on the daily lives of its residents.

Councillor Hopkins requested clearer communication from the County Councillor to Parish Councillors.

82/12-13

Planning items received since publication of the agenda.

No further applications had been received.

83/12-13

Finance

83/12-13.1

Members noted the financial report November 2013 detailing all transactions to date for the financial year 2013 – 2014. Councillors were informed that as bank statements are prepared on 29 of each month (and had therefore not been received) it was not possible to provide a bank reconciliation at this time. The bank reconciliation will be forwarded to Councillors on receipt of the statements.

83/12-13.2

To consider adoption of the updated financial regulations (November 2013)

The Finance Committee presented the updated financial regulations.

83/12-13.3

To review and approve the budget and precept request for 2014/2015.

The Chairman presented an extensive analysis of itemised monthly income and expenditure to date and a forecast for the remainder of the financial year. Using this data, the finance committee have prepared an itemised draft budget and in doing so have calculated requirements for the Precept for 2014/2015.

The Chairman explained that although figures have been allocated to specific budget headings, there is flexibility to move funds between budget headings if the Council identifies a need.

The Chairman reminded members that that the Council aims to be fully compliant with all procedures in time for the next audit and to improve the clarity of financial information presented to members on a monthly basis.

Councillor Howe asked Councillors for approval of the updated financial regulations, and for approval of the budget for 2014/2015 including a precept of £20,000. Councillor Noble proposed acceptance;

the proposal was seconded by Councillor Bryce, all were in favour and it was **resolved** that the Clerk should apply to the District Council for the precept on this basis.

83/12-13.4 To review allotment finances.

Councillor Bryce proposed that URCAA contribute to the cost of the quarterly water bills. The Chairman suggested that provision for 75% of each bill should be accounted for in their "spending plan".

83/12-13.5 The following accounts were **approved** for payment by Councillor Noble, seconded by Councillor Bryce and all were in favour:

Date	Payee	Cheque no.	Amount
02.12.13	Mr B. Edwards. Cemetery Officer's Salary	101379	68.54
02.12.13	HMRC. PAYE	101380	17.00
02.12.13	Mrs C. Bilverstone. Expenses (Postage & Travel)	101383	13.00
02.12.13	Mr A. Davis. Hedge Cutting	101384	300.00

83/12-13.6 To note income received in November 2013:

Date	Description	Reference	Amount
07.11.13	Allotment Rents	100161	100.00
19.11.13	Allotments & Cemetery Fees	100162	75.00
25.11.13	Allotment Rents	100163	40.00

84/12-13 Correspondence and Communications

Members noted the following communications:

84/12-13.1 To review a request for financial support from Upwood and the Raveleys Village Hall Management Committee.

The letter does not define an exact amount or a specific purpose for support. Councillor Howe noted that the village hall is a great asset to the Parish. The Council would wish to ascertain the purpose of the request, and would like to see the village hall accounts. Councillor Perkins agreed to gain clarification so that this may be addressed at the next meeting.

84/12-13.2 To review a letter received from a Parishioner regarding an incident in Meadow Road Cemetery.

The Clerk outlined the concerns of a Parishioner regarding the "topping up" of new graves in the cemetery. Swearer's Funeral Service confirmed that it is standard practice for graves to be "topped up" with soil taken from other areas of the same cemetery. In this instance it would seem that the soil utilised was not of the best quality. Swearer's and the Grave Digger have offered sincere apologies to the family.

The same Parishioner asked whether it would be possible to purchase a double grave rather than two adjacent plots. The Clerk sought clarification from Swearer's and from other Parish Council Clerks and confirmed that due to the high level of the water table in this area, double depth graves are not permitted as they would be subject to flooding.

84/12-13.3 To review a query from Swearer's Funeral Service

Swearer's Funeral Service have enquired whether grave surrounds are permitted in the Meadow Road Cemetery. Councillor Howe confirmed that the Cemetery Regulations enable Parishioners to submit plans for cemetery memorials to the Council. Such applications will be afforded sympathetic consideration.

84/12-13.4 To review the consultation on "Huntingdonshire Environmental Capacity Study: Additional Site Assessments".

The consultation includes revised peripheral area assessments on sites for potential development; and detailed assessments of new sites submitted during the "Stage 3" consultation in the summer.

Councillors agreed that whilst none of the sites identified are in the Parish, Upwood and the Raveleys will be affected by an increase in traffic to and from these areas.

84/12-13.5 To consider the benefits and the potential for use of "ShapeYourPlace" ([www http://huntingdon.shapeyourplace.org/your-city/](http://huntingdon.shapeyourplace.org/your-city/)).

Councillors were asked to visit the website, provided by Huntingdonshire District Council, as a community access point for use by local councils. Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council has a space on this forum and is invited to activate it. It may be a positive additional communication tool for the Parish, and in particular for the CLP team. This item will be taken forward to the next meeting for further discussion.

84/12-13.6 To consider a request for funding from Upwood and the Raveleys Newsletter

The Parish Council is pleased to support the production of the newsletter and is concerned for its financial survival considering the insecure future of the village fete. The Clerk was asked to obtain a statement of accounts and an itemised breakdown of the production costs of the newsletter in order that the Council may consider how best to support this initiative in the future. All were in favour of supporting their request for £525.00. The following transaction was added to the accounts approved for payment and the cheque signed at the end of the meeting.

Date	Payee	Cheque no.	Amount
02.12.13	Upwood & the Raveleys Newsletter	101385	525.00

85/12-13 Matters arising from Councillors

85/12-13.1 Councillor Perkins confirmed that he has received permission (under Section 211, Town and Country Planning Act, 1990) from Bill Ogden, Arboricultural Officer, Huntingdonshire District Council, to proceed with the planned tree works in St Peter's Churchyard.

85/12-13.2 Councillor Howe requested that a notice be placed in the village newsletter regarding the Book Exchange. Whilst volunteers are pleased that the facility is being used, they request that Parishioners are less generous with their donations. The telephone box is frequently overflowing with books and this is creating additional work for the small team who aspire to keeping the facility tidy and useable. Councillors noted that the Book Exchange has a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/UpwoodBookExchange?fref=ts>.

85/12-13.3 Councillor Sisman requested the inclusion of SpeedWatch on the agenda for the next meeting.

86/12-13 Matters for future consideration

There were none (other than those items outlined above).

87/12-13 Date of next meeting

06 January 2014, Upwood Village Hall, 7.00pm.

CLOSE OF MEETING

