



## Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

Parish Clerk – Mrs Carol Bilverstone. Kilimanjaro, 9 Meadow Road, Upwood, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE26 2QJ  
Telephone: 01487 812447. E-Mail: parishclerk@upwood.org

A meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council was held on Monday 03 December 2018 at 7.00pm at Upwood Village Hall.

**Present:** Councillors J. Edwards, D. Hall, R. Howe (Chairman) H. Nel, J. Noble, A. Perkins, G. Slater, J. Twose.

**In Attendance:** Mrs. C. Bilverstone (Clerk), Councillor Bull & Councillor Taverner (District Council) and 23 members of the public.

### Minutes

The chairman opened the meeting by acknowledging that the parish council's application for the prestigious Local Council Award Scheme "Quality Gold" Award has been successful. This is the highest award in the scheme and the achievement recognises that the council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement. Moreover, that this parish council goes above and beyond its legal obligations, leading the community and continuously seeking opportunities to improve and develop even further.

There are 10,000 parish councils in England, of which only 37 have achieved the Quality Gold Award. Upwood and the Raveleys is the only rural parish council in Cambridgeshire to gain the award (Somersham Parish Council achieved the Quality Gold Award in 2016). The chairman thanked the clerk and members of the council for their rigorous and consistent efforts over the last decade to restore governance, financial management and confidence in this parish council.

**106-12/18 To receive and approve apologies for absence.**

Councillor Rogers: Attendance required at another meeting.

**107-12/18 To receive declarations of interest.**

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

Councillor Nel declared an in interest in the correspondence relating to planning in Great Raveley (items 118-12/18.3 & 118-12/18.4).

**108-12/18 To consider applications for the casual vacancy.**

Huntingdonshire District Council has confirmed that the statutory period for electors to request an election to fill the vacancy due to the resignation of Councillor Smith has now passed without such a request having been made, and that the parish council may now fill the vacancy by co-option. One member of the public has expressed an interest to the chairman, but no formal applications have been received. This item will be re-considered at the next meeting.

**109-12/18 To receive and approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 05 November 2018.**

The minutes of the meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council held on 05 November 2018 had been circulated in advance following their informal approval by the chairman. Councillor Hall proposed that the minutes be approved. Councillor Twose seconded the proposal. All who had been present were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

**110-12/18 Public participation.**

To allow up to 10 minutes (2 minutes per person) for any members of the public and councillors declaring the existence and nature of a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to the business on this agenda. A member of the public offered sincere congratulations to councillors and to the clerk on achieving the Quality Gold Award. She noted that if protocol had allowed, she would have "burst out in applause!"

Many members of the public were in attendance regarding the potential development plans for Great Raveley. The chairman asked that the following two items be brought forward to allow for meaningful debate:

118-12/18.3 To consider correspondence received from the Director of Optimum Lettings and Property Management regarding potential development plans for Great Raveley, minute reference: 102-11/18.5.

Several further items of correspondence had been received since the last meeting. In summary, despite recent assurances from the developer that no further plans would be submitted after gaining permission to proceed with the two dwellings on the paddock, they outline an intention to apply for planning permission for nine bungalows on three acres of farm land in Great Raveley. The developer has expressed a desire to gain the support of the parish council and the community by offering traffic calming measures, an illuminated footpath, a small part time local convenience store, bowling green and a community building, all under the management of a warden living on site. The chairman reminded members of the public and councillors of similar correspondence received in 2015 which resorted to coercion and persuasion in an attempt to encourage residents to accept proposals for two dwellings. This evolved to veiled threats of a caravan or glamping site; a pig farm; caravan storage facilities; or a garden centre.

The chairman invited members to comment and in summary all appreciate the district council's requirement for housing and the pressure on some neighbouring parishes to accept development but agreed unanimously that Great Raveley is simply not a suitable site for development. Councillor Perkins noted that neither the parish council nor the district council will not be swayed by the proposed community facilities (none of which are identified as desirable through the Community Led Plan). Members expressed concern regarding the concept of "tilted balance" which applies until such time as the district council's Local Plan to 2036 is formally adopted, whereby the presumption is in favour of the developer unless it can be demonstrated that it would cause "significant harm" to a community.

Councillor Edwards expressed concern that his views had been misrepresented by the Director of Optimum Lettings and Property Management. He had referred to the need for more affordable housing in relation to the debate on the two recently approved homes for the paddock. He did not suggest and does not believe that affordable homes per se should be built in Great Raveley.

Councillor Bull suggested that the district council's Local Plan to 2036 is subject to minor amendments and it is expected to be adopted by May 2019. Councillor Bull suggested that the time scale for adoption is impressive compared with other local authorities whose plans are taking several years to reach this stage. He also assured the parish council and members of the public that he would speak against the development should a planning application for Great Raveley reach the Development Management Committee.

The chairman invited members of the public to speak and their written and spoken comments are summarised in item 118-12/18.4 below.

118-12/18.4 To consider correspondence from residents of Great Raveley in response to item 118-12/18.3.

Residents of Great Raveley had been consulted regarding the proposed development of the land to the rear of "Highfield". There are 26 households in the village (not including those on Huntingdon Road), of these two are let and one is vacant. Sixteen responses had been received, all of which reflect strong opposition. Residents have expressed "outrage", "anger" and "horror". Concerns have been raised regarding the lack of infrastructure to address sewerage and drainage; the intrusion into the countryside; and an overwhelming rejection of the proposed introduction of unwanted and unplanned amenities. An additional nine dwellings would increase the housing capacity of the village by almost a third. There are concerns for the changes in designation of land. At one time this was deemed agricultural or countryside land, now it appears to be designated as infill. It is in fact grade three pasture land and not "wasted land" which has been suggested by the developer.

The chairman noted that it would be tragic if the district council were to approve a planning application of this nature as it would be in direct opposition to the advice of the parish council; the unanimous wishes of residents; and planning legislation. Such a development would cause "significant harm" to Great Raveley.

**111-12/18 To receive reports from county and district councillors.**

Councillor Bull noted explained that the district council is still unsure of central government funding and is thus unable to finalise its budget.

**112-12/18 Matters arising or carried forward from the previous meeting.**

112-12/18.1 Further to item 102-11/18.4, to consider additional correspondence from the Parochial Church Council of St. Peter's Church regarding the collapse of the church path.

Further to the parish council's decision at the last meeting, the clerk wrote to the Parochial Church Council to request that that professional advice is sought to ascertain the underlying cause of the problem. Additional

correspondence has been received by the clerk and the chairman suggesting that this is the responsibility of the parish council. The Local Government Act 1972 s.215 agreement extends only to the maintenance of the churchyard and the perimeter wall. The parish council therefore is legally responsible for maintaining the path, but it may not spend money on the church building. Councillors reiterated concerns addressed at the last meeting. The chairman proposed that the clerk should seek the advice of a surveyor with a view to confirming the underlying cause of the problem. Councillor Noble seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

112-12/18.2 To address matters arising from the risk assessment carried out in October 2018:

- To consider action to address a loose roof tile on the chapel of rest.
- To consider replacement of plastic bolt covers on the Bentley Close play equipment and to consider action to prevent further systematic removal of these covers.

The chairman proposed that the clerk should ask a local builder to secure the roof tile. Councillor Slater offered to coordinate the purchase and fitting of the plastic bolt covers. Councillor Howe proposed that Councillor Slater be authorised to spend up to £50 for this purpose. Councillor Nel seconded both proposals and it was **resolved** to do so.

113-12/18 **Notification of planning items.** There were no planning items.

#### 114-12/18 Finance

114-12/18.1 To consider approval of a further payment of £60 to Serjeant and Son Solicitor in respect of the revised application to Land Registry Fees to upgrade the title of Charter's Spinney (minute ref. 100-11/18.2).

Councillor Nel proposed that this payment be approved. Councillor Slater seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

114-12/18.2 To approve accounts for payment: 03 December 2018

Date	Ref. No.	Payee	Description	Amount
03.12.18	611354849	Mrs C. Bilverstone	Clerk/RFO Salary. November 2018*	747.69
			Expenses: Working from home allowance, stationery, travel.	33.49
			Reimbursement for the purchase of a padlock for Glebe Paddock	20.99
03.12.18	319726604	Mr B.C. Edwards	Cemetery Officer Salary. October - December 2018	93.78
03.12.18	N/A	HMRC	PAYE/NI. November 2018**	Nil
03.12.18	DD	SALVUS Master Trust	Employee + Employer Pension Contributions. November 2018	78.70
03.12.18	DD	Salvus Master Trust	Small Employer Fee	24.00
03.12.18	646607635	SLCC	Purchase of "Local Council Administration" 11 <sup>th</sup> Ed.	108.79
03.12.18	362114016	Mr A. Davis	Parish Maintenance. Grass Cutting (no. 9)	395.00
03.12.18	501443196	Mr G. Slater	Reimbursement for purchase of bookcase for Upwood Book Exchange	55.99
03.12.18	486668807	NALC	Local Council Award Scheme: Quality Gold Registration	60.00
03.12.18	456857518	Huntingdonshire District Council	"Active Lives" sports sessions, Summer 2018***	383.94
03.12.18	81743410	Serjeant and Son Solicitor	Additional Payment re. land registration, Charter's Spinney (subject to resolution in item 114-12/18.1)	60.00

\*The clerk's salary payment reflects the resolution made in item 63-09/18.3 that the council would award an additional spine point to take effect on the successful completion of the Quality Gold Award.

\*\*The parish council remains in credit with HMRC.

\*\*\* The actual cost of the "Active Lives" sessions is £639.90 but the parish council had resolved to pay £393.94 based on the quotation and service level agreement. The district council has accepted that an error has been made (the quotation was based on one member of staff and not two) but the parish council should note the actual cost of this provision should it decide to offer this opportunity in future.

Councillor Noble proposed that the accounts be approved for payment. Councillor Perkins seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. The chairman signed the list of payments on the agenda and two signatories signed each of the invoices and authorised the online payments after the meeting. The chairman signed the bank reconciliation after the meeting and this was counter-signed by Councillor Noble.

114-12/18.3 To note income received: 03 December 2018:

Date	Ref. No.	Payee	Description	Amount
13.11.18	000024	Peterborough Funeral Services Ltd.	Cemetery Fee: Interment of cremated remains	50.00
16.11.18	000025	Mr J. & Mr H. Edwards	Cemetery Fee: Memorial x 2	120.00

#### 115-12/18 Traffic, Highways & Road Safety

115-12/18.1 To receive an update regarding proposed traffic calming measures in Great Raveley (Local Highway Initiative 2019/2020).

Councillor Howe and Councillor Slater will attend the Local Highway Improvement Panel meeting in December. They will collect the Speed Indicator Device (SID) (Local Highway Initiative 2018/2019) at the same time.

115-12/18.2 To receive an update from Cambridgeshire County Council regarding completion of the refurbishment of the public right of way leading from Bentley Close towards Upwood Meadows (minute ref. 64-09/18.1).

Councillor Edwards, Councillor Slater and the clerk met with Cambridgeshire County Council's Public Rights of Way Officer and the contractor in November. Cambridgeshire County Council has accepted the parish council's offer to contribute £1500 for the completion of the refurbishment. The work is weather dependent and will be completed in the spring of 2019. The clerk is liaising with local land owners to secure access.

#### 116-12/18 Public Involvement & Engagement and Parish Council Development

116-12/18.1 To receive an update from the youth involvement and engagement working party.

Councillor Hall confirmed that he had contacted Oak Activities Limited and that the company would be willing to work with the parish council. The chairman asked about the progress of a draft strategic plan for youth engagement and involvement. Councillor Hall confirmed that the working party had not met since the last meeting and that they will report back in January.

#### 117-12/18 Parish Maintenance.

118-12/18.1 To review quotations for a three-year parish maintenance contract to take effect from Spring 2019.

Councillors reviewed four quotations for 14 cuts to the grass and 2 cuts to the hedges. Three of the quotations are comparable in cost, the fourth is significantly cheaper. The chairman proposed that the clerk requests references for the fourth contractor from three other local parish councils for review at the next meeting. Councillor Nel seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

Further to item 101-11/18.1, Councillor Edwards, Councillor Hall, Councillor Noble & Councillor Twose presented a proposal for less frequent and more timely cutting of three areas of the parish grass. Councillor Twose proposed that the following are cut only twice annually (in the spring and the autumn) to soften the edge habitats and to enable wildflowers to seed. They recommended that arisings are removed in order to keep nutrient levels low:

- Specific 1m strips around the wooded areas and along the ditch of Charter's Spinney.
- A 1m strip along the field side of the grass verge opposite Church Lane.
- A 1m strip on each boundary of Glebe Paddock.

Councillor Hall seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

#### 118-12/18 Correspondence and Communications.

118-12/18.1 To receive an update on Huntingdonshire District Council's Local Plan to 2036

118-12/18.2 To consider correspondence received further to consideration of planning item 18/02279/HHFUL | Single storey rear and side extensions | 4 Helens Close, Upwood. PE26 2QN, minute reference: 96-11/18.4.

Several items of correspondence had been received from a member of the public concerning the parish council's decision to review this planning application at the last meeting. Notification had been received after publication of the agenda and as planning applications are subject to a statutory 21-day consultation process, the parish council has on occasion considered "relatively straightforward" applications which have not been published on the agenda. A significant amount of correspondence resulted in the chairman meeting with the parishioner and

he agreed that this practice would be discontinued with immediate effect. In future, if a time extension is not granted by the district council the parish council will, where it is deemed necessary, arrange an extra-ordinary meeting.

Further correspondence had been received by the chairman to complain about his "misrepresentation" of the parishioner's concerns regarding this planning application to the district council and regarding the layout of the parish website and the parishioner's difficulty in locating the agenda. The chairman confirmed that the parish council is merely a consultee in the planning process and this application and it's accompanying correspondence will be reviewed prior to determination by the district council. He has also requested that the planning department make a site visit prior to confirming its decision. The clerk has added a further link from the "parish council" page to the "home" page of [www.upwood.org](http://www.upwood.org) to assist navigation of the website. The chairman has apologised to the resident on the parish council's behalf and this matter is now closed.

Items 118-12/18.3 & 118-12/18.4 were addressed after public participation above.

118-12/18.5 To consider further correspondence from St. Peter's Church regarding the collapse of the church path.

This matter was addressed in item 112-12/18.1

118-12/18.6 A letter of concern regarding the recent closure of the Cross Keys Public House.

Since publication of the agenda, the parish council had learned that "The Cross Keys is closed with immediate effect and that there are currently no plans to re-open".

In 2015, the parish council listed the pub as an "Asset of Community Value". If an Asset of Community Value is offered for sale or lease (freehold or a lease of at least 25 years) the district council would impose a six-week period in which the asset can only be sold/leased to a community group. If an application is received, this period can then be extended to six months, to enable the group to raise funds and put together a bid. This would not restrict the sale price and it does not give community organisations a right of first refusal. On expiration of the restricted period a listed asset may be sold to any buyer for the remainder of an 18-month protected period.

Although this item had not been published on the agenda, councillors were asked to consider whether they wished to consider making a second application; whether this should be done immediately; or whether they would wish to consider this as an agenda item at the next meeting. The chairman proposed that the clerk be asked to apply to have the Cross Keys re-listed as an Asset of Community Value. Councillor Nel seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

**119-12/18 To receive verbal reports from Parish Councillors on matters arising from their portfolio responsibilities.**

*No decisions can be made under this item.*

Councillor Slater expressed concerns for the vulnerability of this parish having attended a parish meeting in Bury to review proposals for several new developments. The chairman confirmed this parish council's wish to partner with neighbouring councils in the formation of a neighbourhood plan and reminded members that this parish is not big enough to undertake its own. He also reminded members of the benefits of adopting a neighbourhood plan, namely that it allows parishes to pre-ordain housing stock; and that the Community Infrastructure Levy is increased from 15% to 25%.

Councillor Slater presented a statement from Strawsons Property regarding the planning consent gained in 2017 for 160 houses and two hectares of employment land on the RAF Upwood site. The company confirmed that work has been delayed as their intention had been for prospective purchasers to carry out demolition and remediation of the site as part of the new development. The proposed sales have not taken place but now that they have the agreement of the County Archeologist, they will seek approval from the district council with a view to progressing the site clearance works themselves from January 2019.

Councillor Nel informed members that her forthcoming house-move will necessitate her resignation in the near future. The chairman suggested that eulogies are deferred until Councillor Nel's last meeting.

**120-12/18 Matters for future consideration.** *No decisions can be made under this item.*

**121-12/18 Date of next meeting:** 07 January 2019, 7:00pm. Upwood Village Hall.

Close of meeting: 8:45pm

