

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 October 2016 at 7.00pm at Upwood Village Hall.

Present: Councillors J. Edwards, H. Nel, J. Noble, R. Howe (Chairman), J. Paxton, G. Slater, H. Smith (from item 65-10/16).
In Attendance: Mrs. C. Bilverstone (Clerk) and 9 members of the public.

Minutes

- 62-10/16 To receive and approve apologies for absence and to acknowledge the resignation of Councillor Singleton.**
Councillor Perkins: Holiday
County Councillor Tew: County Council commitment
The parish council had received a letter of resignation from Councillor Singleton. Both the clerk and the chairman have written to acknowledge her contribution to the parish council since May 2015.
- 63-10/16 To consider the advertisement of a casual vacancy**
The chairman proposed that the casual vacancy be advertised with a view to the appointment of a new councillor at the next meeting. Councillor Slater seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.
- 64-10/16 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. There were no declarations of interest.
- 65-10/16 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.

Mrs June Green spoke to the council about the Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland campaign "Purple4Polio", and a joint initiative between the Royal Horticultural Society and Rotary Great Britain and Ireland, "Greening Great Britain" (see item 72-10/16.3). The two initiatives are designed to unite communities and transform public spaces with the planting of 6 million purple flowering crocus corms to mark the eradication of polio worldwide. Mrs Green offered a gift to the parish of 500 early flowering crocus corms "Ruby Giant" which she hopes will flower in time for Rotary Day on 23 February. The parish council was invited to make a donation to "Purple4Polio" although Mrs Green confirmed that this was not an expectation. The chairman noted that the parish council is not in the habit of making donations but there are some limited precedents. He proposed that councillors accept the gift with thanks. Councillor Slater proposed that a donation of £50 be made to "Purple4Polio". Councillor Nel seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. The chairman asked Councillor Noble and Councillor Paxton to arrange for collection and planting of the corms Councillors suggested that they be distributed around each of the noticeboards; around the village sign; and in the churchyard.

Mr Ian Ward and Mr Robert Brown expressed concerns regarding the letter received following the last meeting (see item 55-09/16.1). He suggested that volunteers had received mixed messages both from the council and from members of the public: that they had been praised for their efforts, yet reprimanded for taking initiative.

They asked the chairman to define the way forward. The chairman reminded everyone that councillors had agreed that a working party would take place in the autumn and that volunteers had crossed a line of governance. He apologised on behalf of the parish council for any negligence in its management of the situation and noted that everyone had acted in the best spirit of the council and the community. Councillors have been vilified and one had resigned over this matter; an unfortunate article had been published in the local press; and volunteers have lost their motivation to give time to parish work. The chairman concluded that lessons have been learned by all concerned; that a sense of proportion needs to be restored; and he asked that a line now be drawn under this episode. He asked that volunteers clear the remaining piles of vegetation; and that the council be allowed to agree a maintenance programme (see item 72-10/16.1).

Mr Brown thanked the council for awarding the grant for his grass cutting services (item 40-07/16.4). He informed the council that an accident had taken place at the entrance to Fairmead earlier in the day. The chairman noted that road safety would be addressed under item 73-10/16.

66-10/16 To receive and approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 05 September 2016.

Copies of the minutes of the meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council held on 05 September 2015 had been circulated in advance following their informal approval by the chairman. Councillor Nel proposed acceptance of the minutes. Councillor Noble seconded the proposal. All who had been present at the meeting were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. The vice-chairman signed the minutes.

67-10/16 Matters arising or carried forward from the last or previous meeting.

67-10/16.1 To consider a proposal to refurbish the base of the village sign.

Mr Ian Ward suggested that the damage to the base of the sign had been caused by grass cutting equipment and that this could be avoided in future by removing the overhanging tiles and replacing them with pebbles. A gravel border around the sign would ensure that no further damage is sustained, and would offer a safe location for flowering bulbs. All agreed that Mr Ward should proceed with the work.

68-10/16 To receive reports from county and district councillors. There were no reports.

69-10/16 Notification of planning items.

69-10/16.1 16/01873/TREE | Magnolia grandiflora: Fell due to close proximity to the house. | Upwood House High Street Upwood Huntingdon PE26 2QE

Councillor Noble proposed that this application be approved. Councillor Paxton seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

69-10/16.2 16/01463/HHFUL | Erection of garage and garden store | 58 Huntingdon Road, Upwood. PE26 2QQ

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

69-10/16.3 16/01869/OUT | Proposed staff and holiday accommodation | The Cross Keys, High Street, Upwood. PE26 2QE

Some councillors expressed concern regarding drainage of the land; its position in the conservation area; and that such a development may set an inappropriate precedent. Others supported the initiative especially now that there is no other bed and breakfast provision in the parish. Some considered that it will impact on the street scene; others believe that it will blend in with the existing buildings. One councillor asked that the screening from the rear of the properties on Church Lane be improved; and one expressed regret that although it is private property, the land is the closest the parish has to a "village green" and he would be sorry to see that lost. Councillor Smith added that the applicant has a right to run a viable business and proposed that this application be approved. Councillor Edwards seconded the proposal. One Councillor registered an objection and two abstained from voting. All others were in favour and it was **resolved** that the application be approved.

70-10/16 Finance

70-09/16.1 To approve accounts for payment: 03 October 2016:

Date	Ref. No.	Payee	Description	Amount
03.10.16	873725044	Mrs C. Silverstone	Clerk/RFO Salary. September 2016	663.41
			Expenses: Working from home allowance, postage	10.55
03.10.16	867250844	HMRC	PAYE/NI	3.61

03.10.16	380566754	SALVUS Master Trust	Employee + Employer Pension Contributions. September	70.22
03.10.16	367421919	Mr A. Davis	Parish grass cutting (no. 10)	385.00
03.10.16	303986882 134657338	Upwood and the Raveleys Village Hall	Meeting room hire (July & September 2016)	44.20
03.10.16	219203766	Fenland Leisure Products Ltd.	Bentley Close play area maintenance & repair	36.00

Councillor Nel proposed that the council approve the accounts for payment. Councillor Slater seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. Two signatories signed the invoices and agreed to authorise the electronic transactions. The chairman signed the list of payments and the bank reconciliation.

70-10/16.2 To note income received: 05 September 2016. None received.

70-10/16.3 To acknowledge completion of the annual appraisal and to consider a recommendation for the salary review of the clerk.

The clerk was appraised by the vice-chairman and has received an outstanding appraisal. The vice-chairman proposed that the clerk be awarded an additional spine point (rising from point 37 to point 38 on the NJC payscale) and noted that as point 38 is the top of the "LC2" range there can be no further progression without significant changes to the roles and responsibilities of this position in the future. Backdating payment to 01 August 2016 would result in an additional cost to the council of £164.50 + 5% employer's pension contribution of £8.23 in the financial year 2016/2017 and £249.12 + £12.46 employer's pension contribution annually thereafter. These figures are within the budget. Councillor Noble proposed that the council approve the pay award. Councillor Paxton seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. Councillors offered their congratulations to the clerk and the clerk thanked councillors for their continued support.

70-10/16.4 To review a grant application from Upwood and the Raveleys Newsletter.

Councillors agreed that the newsletter continues to provide a valued service to all in this parish. Councillor Nel proposed that the application for £525 to support continued printing costs be approved. Councillor Noble seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

70-10/16.5 To review a grant application from Upwood and the Raveleys Village Hall.

Mr Stephen Howes, Chairman of the village hall committee confirmed that due to a late application and the subsequent request by councillors for further information, the grant requested in 2015/2016 was paid at the beginning of the financial year 2016/2017. The chairman noted that awarding a grant now will skew the budget figures for this year but reminded councillors that this would balance with the "saving" in the previous year. All agreed that the village hall is vital to the fabric of the parish. Councillor Paxton proposed that the application for £1000 to support ongoing running costs including insurance be approved. Councillor Smith seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

70-10/16.6 To review budget requirements for the next three financial years based on revenue and capital plans for the council and its community in preparation for finalising the 2017/2018 budget and agreeing the precept prior to 16 December.

The clerk has updated the budget figures and annotated the finance spreadsheets with revenue and capital plans for the next three years. Councillors were asked to consider the needs of the parish with reference to their portfolio responsibilities to add further detail to the council's business plan for review at the next meeting. Councillor Paxton reminded councillors that consideration should be given to the provision of further cemetery space over the coming years. The clerk's prediction that the "new" cemetery will serve the community until approximately 2035 is noted in the business plan. Councillors agreed to forward further suggestions to the clerk. The finance committee will meet to review the budget prior to the next meeting.

71-10/16 Governance

71-10/16.1 To consider the adoption of a volunteer policy.

The clerk has taken advice from Hunts Forum and reviewed the policies of several parish councils and other organisations. She has produced a simple and straightforward document with the intention of providing a structure to protect the integrity of the parish council and promoting and maintaining safe working practices for volunteers. Councillor Nel proposed two minor changes to the wording of the document and its subsequent adoption. Councillor Noble seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

72-10/16 Parish Maintenance

- 72-10/16.1 To review a strategy for the future management of St. Peter's Churchyard.
Councillors continued to debate strategies for the churchyard. Councillor Noble's proposal had been reviewed by councillors prior to the meeting and prompted the question "are we discussing a churchyard or a conservation area?" The chairman reported that he had personally visited more than twenty churchyards in recent months and without exception they were well tended with no obvious areas of unkempt vegetation. He concluded that the vast majority of parishes appear to prefer the churchyard to have a neat and tidy appearance. There was one exception in that a church in Bedfordshire had obviously assigned a small, discreet area as a habitat for flora and fauna. Councillors agreed that there are no right or wrong answers and that they must each be prepared to compromise on what has become an emotive issue. Views ranged from "the churchyard, as a focal point of the village, needs to be kept as nice as we can possibly make it" to "the church should not be a show place". Councillor Nel suggested that two councillors with opposing views should be asked to manage the area. The chairman proposed that a motion be brought to the next meeting outlining a strategy to ensure the churchyard is appealing to the eye and that it should support and sustain flora and fauna as a secondary function. Within this, councillors must work to define how the churchyard should look and agree a maintenance specification for volunteers and professional contractors.
- 72-10/16.2 To consider a proposal from the Parochial Church Council to replace the "Welcome" notice with a newly refurbished noticeboard.
Councillor Paxton clarified that the proposal is for the "Welcome" sign to be removed and the old noticeboard to be replaced with a newly refurbished one. The clerk apologised for the misunderstanding. St. Peter's Church have applied for a faculty from the Diocese but would like the approval of the parish council. Councillor Slater proposed that the council would welcome this initiative. Councillor Paxton seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.
- 72-10/16.3 To consider a donation of 500 purple flowering crocus bulbs from the Rotary Club of Ramsey to commemorate the eradication of polio. A donation to the "Polio Fighting Fund" would be welcomed. See item 65-10/16.
- 72-10/16.4 To consider a recommendation from the Tree Officer regarding the safety of a tree in Charters Spinney.
Councillor Perkins confirmed that the ash tree has been made safe and should now be left as further cutting of its branches would damage the tree. He has offered to remove self-set saplings from the area during the winter months.
- 72-10/16.5 To consider authorising the council's tree officer and the councillor with a portfolio responsibility for parish maintenance with small annual budgets (the amount to be agreed) and the flexibility to spend this if it would not be prudent to wait for a decision from the council.
Minute reference 35-05/14.3 authorises a named councillor to spend an additional £100 annually on grass and hedge cutting. The clerk has suggested that it would be preferable to authorise the post holder rather than the individual. Councillor Nel proposed that the holder of each position be authorised to spend up to £100 annually should it become necessary. Councillor Paxton seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

73-10/16 Traffic, Highways & Road Safety

- 73-10/16.1 To receive an update regarding Community Speedwatch.
Councillor Noble has agreed to act as the Community Speedwatch Coordinator in the short term. The clerk has approached Sergeant Andrew Street for assistance with promoting the scheme and encouraging volunteers to support the initiative. The clerk has added the recently purchased Speedwatch equipment to the council's asset register. The council's insurance provider have extended cover at no additional charge for the remainder of the year but an additional premium of £11.30 will apply from 01 June 2017.
Councillor Noble reported on a traffic survey, carried out with the assistance of volunteers from Wistow, on Huntingdon Road between 3:00pm and 4:00pm on a Thursday. Of 207 vehicles approaching from the south, 20 registered speeds of over 40 mph, one exceeded the 10% latitude at 47mph.
- 73-10/16.2 To re-consider proposals for a bid to Cambridgeshire County Council Local Highways Initiative.
Further to the previous meeting, the vice-chairman had received feedback from Mr Scott Parsons, Cambridgeshire County Council Project Engineer suggesting that an LHI bid aimed at slowing traffic on the approach to Upwood village by the school would be more likely to be successful if it were to include a reduction in the speed limit (from 60mph to 50mph) between Bury and Upwood. He has suggested that separate LHI bids from Upwood and the Raveleys and Bury demonstrating a holistic approach and collaboration between the two parishes would be met favourably and could reduce the number of incidents that occur on this stretch of road.

Councillor Michael Tew had indicated at the previous meeting that Bury Parish Council would be keen to work in partnership and potentially to share costs. Councillor Slater therefore asked the council to reconsider the decision made at the last meeting based on Mr Parsons' recommendations. (If a LHI grant covered 50% of the cost (estimated at £8,500), it is possible that the remaining 50% could be split between Upwood and the Raveleys and Bury resulting in an overall bill of approximately £2125, a more expensive option but perhaps one which offers better value for money in the longer term). £1000 has been identified for highways improvements in the budget for this financial year but it is likely that an invoice would be received in the next financial year for this project thereby allowing provision to be made in the budget (see item 70-10/16.6).

Councillor Edwards asked for an update on the relocation of the Upwood sign to include Fairmead. Councillor Slater and the clerk confirmed that despite considerable effort they had been unable to gain agreement from the county council on the process. Councillor Slater suggested that this might be achieved through this project. The chairman proposed that the council accept the recommendations and authorise Councillor Slater to proceed. Councillor Smith seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. Councillor Slater will liaise with Bury Parish Council and prepare the bid for presentation at the next meeting.

73-10/16.3 To consider two independent requests regarding the removal of redundant Highways signposts (one in the churchyard, see item 72-10/16.2; the other outside 60 High Street).

The clerk has made enquiries of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways regarding removal of the posts or the replacement of the missing signs (A "no cycling" sign is missing from the post just inside the church gate; and a "right turn ahead" sign is missing from the post outside 60 High Street). Councillors were unanimous that they would not like to see the signs replaced and that they would like the posts removed. The clerk will endeavour to make the necessary arrangements.

74-10/16 Correspondence and Communications.

74-10/16.1 Flood Awareness and Preparedness Questionnaire

Councillor Paxton agreed to complete the questionnaire.

74-10/16.2 A letter of apology from the Ramsey and Warboys Reporter in response to a letter of complaint from the clerk (minute reference: 55-09/16.1).

The clerk's letter and a brief note of apology had been printed in the latest edition of the newspaper.

74-10/16.3 Devolution update from Huntingdonshire District Council

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/news/consultation-shows-support-for-devolution/>

74-10/16.4 Definitive maps update from Cambridgeshire County Council

74-10/16.5 Further complaints from a member of the public regarding the management of St. Peter's Churchyard (see item 58-09/16.4).

74-10/16.6 Confirmation from the National Association of Local Councils of the achievement of the Quality Award.

This is prestigious award and a presentation will be made by Mr Ian Dewar, CEO, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) at the next meeting.

74-10/16.7 An update from Connecting Cambridgeshire regarding the provision of broadband for Great and Little Raveley. County Councillor Michael Tew has received confirmation that that fibre solutions are now planned for both villages and are due to be delivered by June 2017. BT has confirmed that the solution to bring superfast broadband to premises in Little Raveley will be a new all-in-one cabinet (combining copper and fibre) and Great Raveley will receive a Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) solution.

74-10/16.8 An invitation from St. Peter's Church to attend the Harvest Festival service on 09 October at 10:00am.

74-10/16.9 To consider a request for support from the district council regarding the future of the district Tree Warden Coordinator.

Councillors agreed unanimously that the parish council should not support this request.

74-10/16.10 To consider an offer of free trees from the district council.

Councillor Noble and Councillor Perkins will meet to review this offer.

74-10/16.11 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment: Additional Sites Consultation. 26/09/16 - 07/11/16.

Please see: <http://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/portal/pp/hlp2036/helaa2016>

74-10/16.12 Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire: Final Recommendations. Please see:

<http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/lgbce-opinion-survey>

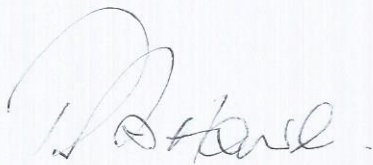
74-10/16.13 Cambridgeshire County Council Business Plan Consultation. Please see:

<http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CambbsBusinessplan2016>

- 75-10/16 To receive verbal reports from Parish Councillors on matters arising from their portfolio responsibilities.**
No decisions can be made under this item.
Councillor Perkins had forwarded a report regarding future tree works. A lime sapling which is growing near the church wall should be removed. A tree could be planted 3m further back. The chestnut should be felled during the winter but three quotations will be required as Mr Papworth is no longer able to offer this service. The yew tree in the churchyard can be left for the time being. The clerk will liaise with the tree officer with a view to presenting three quotations at the next meeting.
Councillor Slater noted that the hedge in Glebe Paddock needs attention, particularly by the entrance from Huntingdon Road. Councillor Edwards will look at it and report back at the next meeting.
The chairman asked Councillor Smith for an update on the Community Led Plan. Although this is due for review at the next meeting, Councillor Smith suggested that it is unlikely he will have made any progress by this time. Councillor Noble reported that Upwood Primary School continues to have problems with parents parking at the school gates. The chairman noted that as this road is privately owned, there is little the parish council can do to assist.
Councillor Nel forwarded concerns from a parishioner regarding an inaccessible footpath leading from Great Raveley. This is a matter for the county council and the clerk had already made contact with the parishioner. Members of the public may access the county council's online fault reporting service at: <https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>
Councillor Paxton suggested that if a working party were to be organised for the autumn, the overgrown graves in the "old" cemetery are in need of some attention.
- 76-10/16 Matters for future consideration.**
No decisions can be made under this item. There were no further matters for consideration.
- 77-10/16 Date of next meeting:** 07 November 2016, Upwood Village Hall, 7:00pm.

Close of meeting: 9:45pm

Clerk's note: a bag of bulbs had been brought to the meeting by Mr Ian Ward. They had been donated by Mr & Mrs Andy and Susan Mason who had asked for them to be planted in the churchyard in memory of Mrs Mason's parents, Mr & Mrs Doug and Joyce Shaw. Councillor Edwards offered to take them to Mr Peter Haddon (Mr Haddon prepares and maintains the potted plants which line the path to the church).



11-11-16