



Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

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A meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council was held on Monday 05 September 2022 at 7.00pm in Upwood Village Hall.

Present: Councillors, D. Awit, J. Burgess (Chairman), J. Edwards, J. Milner.

In Attendance: Mrs. C. Bilverstone (Clerk) and four members of the public.

Minutes

43-09/22 To acknowledge the sudden death of Councillor Michael Tew; to observe a minute's silence; and to reflect upon his commitment to this parish.

Further to many years of successful and committed public service, with Bury Parish Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, Councillor Michael (Mike) Tew served as a parish councillor for Upwood and the Raveleys from November 2016 to April 2018 and again from December 2021 until his sudden death in July. He became a founding member of the RUB (Ramsey, Upwood and Bury) Alliance, drawing on his forensic research techniques to expose problems with large planning applications which he felt concentrated too much upon the number of homes being built and too little on the supporting infrastructure, notably traffic management systems. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of local government rules and often quoted legislation or statistics to support council decisions. The clerk would check the facts when drafting the minutes but always found him to be correct. Mike had been attending a course in town and country planning and intended to use this knowledge to revise the community plan for Upwood and the Raveleys. He was always looking ahead to improve his knowledge and the welfare of residents. Sadly, these things will not now come to pass under Mike's watch. He will not only be remembered for his unwavering dedication to public service, but also with immense fondness by friends, colleagues and residents alike.

44-09/22 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Councillor Howe, Councillor Costello & Councillor Lowe (Huntingdonshire District Council), Councillor Mashford: All for personal reasons.

45-09/22 To receive declarations of interest.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

46-09/22 To consider applications for two casual vacancies (one further to the election on 05 May; and the other arising from the resignation of Councillor Bonnett-Kolakowska) and to consider the advertisement of a further vacancy arising from the death of Councillor Tew.

There had been no applications for the two existing vacancies. All were in favour of advertising for a third and it was **resolved** to do so.

47-09/22 To receive and approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 04 July 2022.

The minutes of the meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council held on 04 July 2022 had been circulated in advance following the informal approval of the chairman. Councillor Burgess proposed that the minutes be approved. Councillor Awit seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

48-09/22 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 asked about the response from BPHA and Muir further to the request for a tree survey at Farm Close (minute reference: 36-07/22.2. The clerk confirmed that no response had been received from either of the housing associations. The resident spoke passionately about the desperate need for tree maintenance on the estate. Many of the trees are overgrown and he and his neighbours are concerned for damage to their own properties and for the safety of their children. The clerk agreed to pursue this, but it was noted that the parish council has no jurisdiction over Farm Close as it is a privately owned estate.

49-09/22 To receive reports from county and district councillors.

Notification had been received from Councillor Costello that the number 30 bus from Ramsey via Bury to Huntingdon (then Warboys and Oldhurst) is under threat of finishing at the end of October. Residents are invited to sign a petition at Ramsey Library.

Councillor Lowe will attend Cambridgeshire County Council’s conference “How we can work together to combat flooding” and will report back at the next meeting. She reminded councillors of the opportunity to attend the Local Government Association’s webinars on personal safety as part of its civility in public life programme.

Residents are invited to participate in focus groups and to share ideas for the future of Huntingdonshire. For further information please see: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/huntingdonshire-futures-51409352923>

50-09/22 Notification of planning items.

50-09/22.1 21/00572/FUL | Application for full planning permission for demolition of existing redundant building and infrastructure and residential development of 321 dwellings with associated highways, infrastructure and open space | Upwood Hill House and part of RAF Upwood (deferred from minute ref.: 154-04/21.1). This application remains in abeyance.

51-09/22 Finance

51-09/22.1 To approve accounts for payment: 05 September 2022

Reference	Description	Payee	Amount
43872636	Parish Maintenance*	BEAM	£450.00
Debit Card	Two batteries for MVAS devices**	Unity Trust Bank / Tayna Limited	£131.95
SO	Clerk/RFO Salary. August 2022	Mrs C. Silverstone	£1077.76
SO	Cemetery Officer Salary. (July – Sept. 2022)	Mr B.C. Edwards	£119.72
SO	Clerk/RFO/Cemetery Officer Salary PAYE/NI	HMRC	£56.13
SO	Employer National Insurance August 2022	HMRC	£60.83
DD	Employee & Employer Pension Contribution	SALVUS Master Trust	£116.22
DD	Pension Administration Fee	SALVUS Master Trust	£24.00
156406257	Clerk/RFO Expenses (July & August 2022)	Mrs C. Silverstone	£36.50
Debit Card	Monthly Fee.	Unity Trust Bank	£3.00
Debit Card	Mobile Phone Monthly Top-Up	Unity Trust Bank / Tesco.com	£7.50
Debit Card	Monthly Subscription. Acrobat Pro DC.	Unity Trust Bank / store@adobe.com	£15.17
982669034	Meeting Hall Hire	Upwood Village Hall	£66.48
21291882	Annual Membership Fee***	SLCC	£171.00

* The parish maintenance contractor was paid on 04 August in accordance with minute reference 58-09/17.1

** The clerk and the chairman approved the purchase of two batteries for the MVAS devices in accordance with the parish council’s financial regulations.

51-09/22.2 To note income received: 05 September 2022.

Reference	Description	Received From	Amount
000049	Cemetery Fees	Dignity Funerals Ltd.	£190.00
000050	Cemetery Fees	Dignity Funerals Ltd.	£320.00
BACs	Cemetery Fees	Fenland Stoneworks Ltd.	£30.00
BACs	Cemetery Fees	A.J. Mills Master Masons	£35.00

The chairman proposed that the accounts be approved for payment and the income received be acknowledged. Councillor Awit seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. The chairman signed the list of payments on the agenda; the chairman and Councillor Milner signed each of the invoices and agreed to authorise the online payments. The chairman signed the bank reconciliation and this was countersigned by Councillor Milner.

- 51-09/22.3 To receive an update regarding the proposed application for CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding from Huntingdonshire District Council (minute reference: 37-07/22.3).

An application to support the refurbishment of Bentley Close playground has been submitted. Councillors expressed their thanks to Councillor Mashford for taking the lead on this project and completing the application.

- 51-09/22.4 To consider options and quotations for the replacement of the clerk's laptop and to authorise the clerk and two signatories to arrange for immediate purchase of and payment by BACs for the agreed model (with payment details to be published on the agenda for the next meeting). To authorise safe disposal of the faulty laptop.

The clerk confirmed that the parish council's laptop developed a sudden fault in July and having taken advice, that it is deemed to be beyond repair. The laptop was purchased in 2018 and its potential replacement was budgeted for in 2024/2025. The clerk presented two quotations from Dell Corporation Ltd. further to the advice of the parish webmaster. The chairman proposed that the council authorise the immediate purchase of an Inspiron 15 laptop at a cost of £499.50 + £99.50 VAT. Councillor Awit seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. The clerk confirmed that no data had been lost as everything pertaining to the business of the parish council is backed up in the cloud. All agreed that the clerk should arrange for safe disposal of the faulty laptop.

- 51-09/22.5 To consider a grant application for £200 - £300 to support the purchase of a defibrillator to be located at Fairmead Park.

The total cost of a defibrillator and cabinet is £1,600. £1,300 has already been raised by residents but the target figure is £2,000 to allow for operational costs (replacement of batteries, pads and electrodes). All agreed that the provision of a defibrillator at Fairmead in addition to existing provision at Upwood Village Hall and Bury Stores would be beneficial to the community. Councillor Edwards proposed that the parish council supports this initiative with a donation of £250. Councillor Milner seconded this proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. A member of the public very generously offered a further donation of £50 to meet the shortfall on the purchase price. Fundraising to date has been administered through a personal bank account. The parish council will make payment when the project is formalised.

52-09/22 Governance

- 52-09/22.4 To receive an update further to the appointment of an internal auditor for the financial year 2022/2023.

A thorough interim audit took place during August with only two matters arising. The council is advised to formally pass a resolution to confirm its eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and to update its Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures to reflect ACAS code of practice 2018. Both items will be addressed at the next meeting.

- 52-09/22.5 To consider whether to opt out of the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA) central external auditor arrangements.

The chairman proposed that the parish council continues with the current audit arrangements. Councillor Edwards seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

- 52-09/22.6 To review the annual appraisals and salary reviews of the clerk and the cemetery officer.

Councillors reviewed the appraisals of the clerk and the cemetery officer, both of which were extremely positive. All agreed that as there had been no changes made to either job description that both members of staff should remain on their respective salary scales at this time.

- 52-09/22.7 To consider supporting the renewal of the clerk's annual membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks at a cost of £171.00***

The chairman proposed that the clerk's membership of the SLCC is invaluable and that the parish council should support this. Councillor Milner seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so (the payment is listed under minute reference: 51-09/22.2 above).

53-09/22 Traffic, Highways & Road Safety

- 53-09/22.1 To review data gathered from the Moveable Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) during June, July & August 2022. Councillor Milner confirmed that he had taken over the portfolio responsibility for traffic, highways and road safety but that he had been unable to share the MVAS data. This item was therefore deferred.
- 53-09/22.2 To receive an update on speed management strategies and to consider the purchase of a dedicated laptop and software to support data management.
The chairman proposed that a dedicated laptop, together with an upgrade of Office 365 (to enable multiple users) be purchased for use by the councillor holding the portfolio for traffic, highways and road safety. Councillor Milner seconded the proposal and agreed to seek quotations for consideration at the next meeting. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.
- 54-09/22 Community**
- 54-09/21.1 To consider a proposal from the Diocese of Ely to extend the lease for Glebe Paddock from 10 to 15 years at the point of renewal in 2023.
The chairman proposed that the parish council accepts this invitation (which not only provides a longer-term commitment but also means that the legal fees for renewal of the lease would only need to be paid every 15 years rather than every 10). Councillor Edwards seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was resolved to do so.
- 54-09/21.2 To consider three quotations for legal representation to facilitate the renewal of the lease for Glebe Paddock. Councillors consider three quotations from local solicitors. The chairman proposed that the parish council accepts a quotation of £750 - £1,000 + VAT from Serjeant and Son. Councillor Milner seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. Serjeant and Son facilitated the previous lease agreements for Glebe Paddock; and this quotation was also the cheapest of the three received.
- 54-09/21.2 To receive an update further to suggestions of planting of oak trees to commemorate HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (minute reference: 39-07/21.2).
Further to consideration, Councillor Edwards reluctantly confirmed that the parish council doesn't have a suitable site for the planting of an oak tree (or trees). The clerk added that she had been approached by the residents who had raised money for two benches (minute reference: 135-04/22.3 confirms that £108.52 of the donation from Upwood and the Raveleys History Group remains unspent) with a suggestion to plant a Crataegus Crimson Cloud Hawthorn on the grass verge at the junction of Longholme Road and High Street. Permission for this would need to be sought from Cambridgeshire County Council. Councillor Edwards agreed to look at the site to assess suitability and report back at the next meeting.
- 54-09/21.3 To receive an update on the re-wilding of the highway verges.
Members were reminded that surveys of each site have been carried out over the summer months and that the results have been recorded with the UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (please see: ukpoms.org.uk). The results of his surveys may be accessed at: <https://btcloud.bt.com/web/app/share/invite/DNWujLPGEF>
Councillors thanked Mr. Charman for his continued commitment to this project.
- 54-09/21.4 To consider an offer of a memorial bench for the cemetery.
Councillors offered their appreciation to the family of the late John and Daphne Hickman and accepted their kind offer to replace the bench noting that this would be a fitting tribute to a couple who had made a significant contribution to Upwood village life over many years.
- 55-09/22 Correspondence and Communications.** There was no additional correspondence or communications.
- 56-09/22 To receive verbal reports from parish councillors on matters arising from their portfolio responsibilities and matters for future consideration.** No decisions can be made under this item.
Councillor Mashford had reported that the summer sports sessions had been well attended and appreciated by all involved. Two sessions had been supported by one member of staff rather than two and this will be reflected in the invoice.
Councillor Awit suggested that the bird spikes above the swings in the play area should be replaced. All were in favour and agreed that this small purchase should be made using the clerk's debit card without further delay. He noted that he will continue to monitor the gaps in the surface of the play area but that they haven't progressed since the annual inspection in April. Councillor Awit added that he will re-secure the nets to the goal posts in Glebe Paddock.
- 57-09/22 Date of next meeting:** Monday 03 October 2022. **Close of meeting:** 8:10pm