

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting
Held on 21st October 2025 at 7.00pm
The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)	Cllr. Keith Bennett	Cllr. Tim Buxbaum
Cllr. Nick Crocker	Cllr. Pat Edworthy	Cllr. Rilla Forge
Cllr. Angela Linforth	Cllr. Nigel Smith (from 7.09pm)	Cllr. Vincent Smith
Cllr. Tig Thomas		

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Two members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: No member apologies had been received. Cllr. Noble had sent her apologies.
- b) To Accept Apologies: N/A.

2. To receive any:

- a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - None
- b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 12 – Treasurer to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. Edworthy – Item 12 –Trustee to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. Findley – Item 9. c) – Recipient of refund of expenses
- c) Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items
 - None
- d) Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £50.00
 - None
- e) Notification of Lobbying with reference to any Planning Application to be discussed
 - None

3. Public Session:

- a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):
 - Item 7 – I am very pleased to see you will be debating the issue of ensuring all visitors to and residents of Ufford feel welcome.
 - Item 5. a) – I feel it would be a great shame if this development were to go ahead as it would mean a loss of habitat for many birds and animals.
 - Item 5. a) – I attended the Melton PC meeting and I have objected to ESC [reasons for objecting read aloud] and encouraged near neighbours to do so.

Chair's initials.....

b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors (notes only):

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble had given her apologies but her report had been circulated.
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll was not present.

4. **To sign Minutes of meeting dated 16th September 2025:**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16th September 2025 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Thomas, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors, who were in attendance at the meeting, were in agreement that they be signed. The Clerk agreed to publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

5. **Planning To discuss and agree responses to the following Planning Applications:**a) DC/25/2945/FUL - Single-family dwelling and associated landscaping works - Land At Dingley Dell, Lower Road, Melton. Councillors made the following comments:

- I feel this is a good scheme, it is innovative and interesting, potentially in the bracket of outstanding. It is self-sustaining and the build will be of exceptional quality. We are permitting tree clearance elsewhere in the village. The flood risk is not an issue as the building will be 1.5m above the ground.
- I have an issue with the location, historically it is a water meadow, not woodlands and I feel this should be protected
- I have concern at the precedent this would set if permitted, would we have further development of the water meadows?
- The ESC Tree Officer has concerns and I feel we should support these
- The building has a very large footprint and will be visible to the neighbours, especially in winter; this is not an isolated site
- If permitted this will mean the joining of Ufford and Melton, exactly what both NPs say they do not want to see
- The impact on the environment from the actual build process will be great; there are bats in the area but there does not appear to have been a survey.
- I like the design but I think it is in the wrong location
- Flooding may not be a planning consideration but what if the displacement of the water has an effect on neighbouring properties?
- We must remember it is not in Ufford so we cannot rely on the NP being considered by the planning authorities.
- Conclusion: **Objection on above grounds** (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. Bennett, 8 For, 1 Against (Cllr. Buxbaum), and 1 Abstention)

b) DC/25/3585/FUL - Erection of summer house for staff use in conjunction with existing business premises at Bella Barn, Decoy Farm, Old Church Road, Melton -

Councillors made the following comments:

- After discussion it was agreed that this proposal would not affect Ufford and therefore no comment should be made
- Conclusion: **No comment to be made**

- c) DC/25/3954/TCA - 1no. Poplar (T1 on plan) - Fell 1no. Norway Maple (T2 on plan) - Reduce crown by up to 3 metres - Shincliffe, Lower Road, Ufford - Councillors made the following comments:
- Tree Warden has assessed the application and has no objection but some good comments about the proposed work
 - Conclusion: **No objection -Tree Warden's comments to be sent in** (Prop: Cllr. Linforth, Sec: Cllr. V Smith, all in agreement).

Action: Clerk

6. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – There were no further questions.
- b) To report comments on the Consultation Telecoms Site at Grove Farm – It was acknowledged that the new tower would replace an old one and that Mr Rolph, the owner of Grove Farm nearby, had been consulted regarding the works and was understood not to object.
- c) To report back from the 'ESC Local Plan – Call For Sites' webinar – The Clerk reported that the Webinar was actually happening the following day so a report would be given at the November meeting.
- d) Additional Item - Loudham Solar Farm – It was reported that the Loudham Solar Farm would probably be heard by the ESC Planning Committee (South) at their meeting in November. It was expected that Pettistree PC would speak, along with a representative of the Loudham Hall Estate and the owner of a nearby property. Clerk to notify members of details when available.

Action: Clerk

7. To discuss how to show Ufford is a 'welcoming and inclusive' village:

Members raised concern at the much reported rise in racism and antisemitism across the country in recent months and concluded that the Parish Council had a responsibility to ensure that all residents and visitors to Ufford felt welcomed.

After general discussion it was agreed to take three actions (*Prop: Cllr. Thomas, Sec: Cllr. Forge and agreed by all*):

- Start to use the strapline "Promoting a welcoming and inclusive community for all" on the website and letter head
- Draft an article in the PUNCH regarding the Council's stance
- Investigate the cost of placing a welcoming message on the village gateway on Yarmouth Road.

Action: Clerk

8. Neighbourhood Plan:

- a) To discuss progress of setting up the 'Ufford Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Group' – UNPIG – Cllr. N Smith reported that he had spoken to a number of members of the Steering Group and concluded there was confusion as to what they were being asked to sign up to. After discussion it was agreed that a review of the Plan should take place every six months (starting Jan 2026), with members of the PC and SG being invited to an online meeting. The Clerk agreed to set up these meetings.

- b) To discuss the latest position with Landex regarding Crown Nursery site development – It was reported that six members had viewed the site and had gained a much clearer understanding of the land and woodlands. Cllr. Findley had thanked Landex for the permission to visit the site and had been told the final plans were still being developed.

Concern was raised at the large and deep pond on the site, which had been established when the A12 was built to take surface water from the road. The Clerk was asked to make contact with SCC Highways to request a copy of any agreement between SCC and the landowner permitting the use of the land in this way.

Action: Clerk

9. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts to 30th September 2025 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated. There were no questions. Cllr. Bennett reported that he would carry out the quarterly inspection in early November.

- b) To review funds held with CCLA and discuss any transfers – After discussion Cllr. Bennett proposed £8,000 was transferred to CCLA. This was seconded by Cllr. V Smith and all were in agreement. Cllr. Bennett also reported that he had booked on to a webinar, to hear news of the recent buy-out of CCLA and would report back at the November meeting.

c) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£974.45
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£222.72
iii. H C Slingsby Plc (Grit Bin)	£226.80
iv. Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire)	£120.00
v. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Items for Woods Group)	£274.22
vi. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE/NI)	£146.05
vii. SALC (Payroll Service)	£57.60
viii. East Suffolk Services (BMX Track Bin)	£48.95
ix. D Findley (Water Testing Consumables)	£84.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. Linforth with Councillors voting all in favour that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Edworthy and V Smith agreed to authorise the online payments and inspected the invoices.

d) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

e) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. East Suffolk Council (Precept 50%)

£13,053.00

Action: Clerk**10. Council Administration:**

a) To discuss moving to 'gov.uk' email addresses for all Councillors – Members discussed this matter fully and agreed that it would reduce the likelihood of accidental use of the wrong email account and increase the professionalism of the Council, if gov.uk email addresses were used. The motion to move to these was proposed by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to arrange and to set up a WhatsApp group for use when an urgent email was set out, since the .gov.uk mail account does not give alerts.

b) To discuss co-option of a Councillor – Cllr. Findley reported that he had spoken to two potential candidates but that neither were ready to join the Council yet. A further name was put forward and all members were asked to let Cllr. Findley know any further names.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Findley**11. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:**

a) To receive an update on Woodlands Management (report from Cllr. Forge) and discuss further work required – Cllr. Forge reported on the following items:

- Tree Surgeon (Tim Clarkson) has visited and assessed the Leylandii trees in The Avenue. Work is needed to a couple in the short term and he will give a full quote for removing them completely, when funds allow.
- Garrow Shand has done an excellent job at cutting the hedge - Clerk to thank him
- Saturday working groups are being trialled; the AGM will be held on 22nd November
- The £1,500 grant from the RPA was proving difficult to obtain; Clerk to thank Mr Searle for his persistence
- The hedge around Sogenhoe Chapel has been cut, presumably by Mr Rolph; Clerk to write to thank him.

b) To discuss scope of 'Terms of Reference' for FPW – The draft Terms of Reference had been circulated and Cllr. Thomas proposed they were adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to convert to a Word document, resolve a small numbering issue and publish on the website.

Action: Clerk

12. Community Hall:

- a) To receive an update on the Hall and to discuss requirement for main entrance to be replaced – Cllr. Edworthy presented four quotes for the replacement Community Hall entrance doors and, after discussion, it was agreed to use The Burgess Group, at a total net cost of £6,791.00 (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Crocker, all in agreement). Before the order was placed, the Clerk was asked to check that the door width was compatible with all accessibility legislation.

Cllr. V Smith indicated that the Community Hall Charity would be giving a grant of £5,000 towards this cost and agreed to arrange this. As for the remaining £1,791.00, the Clerk was asked to request a grant of Cllr. Noble. Should this not be forthcoming, it was agreed that the remaining funds should be taken from the CIL reserve.

- b) To discuss WTYFC use of the Hall and Recreation Ground – Cllrs. Edworthy and V Smith reported that a diary of the Football matches had not been passed to them. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to request this again, and give a weeks' deadline to respond. They also asked for the name of the adult responsible for safeguarding whilst the children were at the grounds.
- c) To receive an update on options for renewing the CCTV at the Recreation Ground – The Clerk indicated that she was due to meet with STC Solutions, to discuss upgrading the CCTV at the Recreation Ground on Friday 31st Oct, and would report back.

Action: Cllr. V Smith and Clerk

13. Highways:

- a) To receive an update on the Sogehoe Chapel Wooden Cross and stone, and a suggested donation to charity – The Clerk reported that Mr Spencer Wix had suggested that the £100 that the Council had put aside to pay for the plaque, could be donated to a charity of Jo Prentice's choice. This was agreed and Cllr. Findley agreed to ask Mrs Prentice.
- b) To discuss forthcoming Rail Level Crossing closures at Ufford and Melton and related Sizewell C construction issues – It was confirmed that the forthcoming closures had been advertised as much as possible. Many meetings had been attended by the Clerk and Cllr. Findley, and it was hoped the signage would be adequate.

Cllr. V Smith proposed Standing Order 3 x) was suspended to allow the meeting to conclude. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.

- c) To discuss supporting a call for villages affected by SZC to have a 20MPH speed limit applied – The Chair explained that Cllr. Noble had circulated a letter (drafted by Cllr. Paul Ashton) regarding a call for all villages affected by Sizewell C (SZC) to have the option to call for a 20mph speed limit on agreed roads within their village.

This suggestion was debated at length. It was felt that, potentially, single track roads with no pavement, could be designated as 20mph, but this may result in a patchwork of speed limits in a village such as Ufford. It was mentioned that the JPTI group had argued that SZC traffic was affecting villages, but it could not be proved.

In conclusion it was agreed that without data, a request could not be made. Cllr. Findley agreed to explore what data was available and report back to the November meeting.

Action: Cllr. Findley

14. Documentation – To review and adopt:

- a) IT Policy (October 2025) – Cllr. V Smith indicated he had some suggested amendments to make and agreed to send these to the Clerk. This matter to be moved to the November meeting.

Action: Cllr. V Smith

15. To receive reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Council:

- One Suffolk Presentation – Cllr. V Smith – Report made to Council and slides passed on. It was suggested that the Government would make a decision on which model would be followed and the Parish Council would need to discuss this after the expected consultation was opened for comments (possibly from late November for two months).

16. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (18th November 2025):

It was agreed to include the following items on the agenda of the October meeting:

- Budget 2026/27
- Grant Requests
- IT Policy

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9:16pm

Signed:.....
Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....