

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting
Held on 20th January 2026 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	Cllr. Vincent Smith
Cllr. Tig Thomas		

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

No members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: Apologies had been received from no parish councillors. However, apologies had been received from Cllr. Alexander Nicoll and Cllr. Sally Noble
- b) To Accept Apologies: *Not applicable.*

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 – Committee Member to the Community Hall
- 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):
 - None
- b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors (notes only):
 - East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble had given her apologies
 - Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll had given his apologies

Chair's initials.....

4. Council Administration:

- a) To discuss co-option of a Councillor and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office (if appropriate) – Cllr. Findley reported that he and the Clerk had met with a resident of Ufford who was keen to join the Council. His CV was passed around and members expressed interest at the skills and expertise he had. It was hoped that the gentleman would be able to attend the February meeting to be considered for co-option.
- b) To agree the date of the Annual Parish Meeting (suggested 28th April at UCH) – It was agreed that the date of the APM would be 28th April at the UCH.

Action: Clerk

5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 18th November 2025:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16th December 2025 had been circulated. Cllr. N Smith pointed out a slight error on page 991 (the word ‘December’ should have read ‘January’) With this correction made, the minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. N Smith and all Councillors, who were in attendance at the meeting, were in agreement that they be signed. The Clerk agreed to correct the electronic version and publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

6. Local Government Review and Devolution – To consider what Assets, if any, and/or Services, Ufford Parish Council could undertake when Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council are merged:

A debate was held over the possibility of Ufford Parish Council taking on various parcels of land from either SCC or ESC, once both were merged (it was thought there were no buildings in the parish). Opinions were varied with some wishing to take on as much as possible, in order to secure it against potential development; others were concerned that owning small parcels of land would only mean more expense for the Parish Council and little chance of revenue. In conclusion, it was agreed that the Clerk would give Cllrs. N Smith and Findley access to the mapping system and they would identify any possible parcels of land belonging to SCC or ESC, that UPC may consider taking ownership of.

Whilst on the subject of land ownership, the Clerk was asked to chase a reply to the Council’s letter regarding the pond on the Crown Nursery land.

Action: Clerk

7. Planning To discuss and agree responses to the following Planning Applications:

- a) DC/25/4983/TPO - TPO No. 189 / 2005 1no. Oak (T1 on plan) - Crown lift to 8 metres above ground on property side only - 2 The Oaks, School Lane, Ufford – The following comments were made:
- Tree Warden suggested work should be to 6 metres and not 8 metres; and that the work should ensure the tree was balanced when complete.
 - Conclusion: ‘**Objection**’ on above grounds (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. Crocker, all in agreement).

- b) DC/25/4854/FUL - Demolition of existing conservatory and outdoor store and erection of single storey side and rear extensions – Sunnybank, East Lane, Ufford - The following comments were made:

- This development is sensible and to scale
- There have been no comments from neighbours
- Conclusion: '**No Objection**' (Prop: Cllr. Bennett, Sec: Cllr. Thomas, all in agreement)

Action: Clerk

8. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – There were no further questions.
- b) To discuss the latest position with Landex regarding Crown Nursery site development – Both the Clerk and Cllr. Findley reported they had not heard from Landex or Mr Short. It was thought that perhaps they were waiting for an upturn in the market before continuing with the project.
- c) To receive update on creating a Biodiversity Action Plan in conjunction with Melton Parish Council – The Clerk reported that Melton PC were interested in compiling a BAP in conjunction with UPC, however no councillors were free to join a project group at the present time. The MPC Chair had included a call for volunteers in her latest newsletter article but it would be mid-March until this was published and after that before anyone stepped forward. Cllr. Forge indicated that she had made a start in thinking about the draft of a BAP, and felt Ufford already had many initiatives in place. In addition, the Ufford Gardening Club would be interested in being involved.

Cllr. Findley gave a update on a new grouping called LDOG (Lower Deben Owners Group); made up of riparian land owners whose land contained sections of the River Deben between Easton and Ufford. A report on potential work to restore river flow and improve flood resilience had been compiled and was being explored with the Environment Agency and other interested parties.

- d) To discuss if UPC wish to comment on the draft Statement of Community Involvement from ESC – The Clerk advised that she had read the document in full (save for the appendices) and suggested 8 comments that the Council may wish to make. The members agreed with all the comments and asked the Clerk to submit them (Proposed by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Forge and all in agreement).

Action: Clerk

9. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts to 31st December 2025 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated. There were no questions. Cllr. Bennett agreed to take the accounts away for the quarterly CIC checks.

b) To review the Internal Controls observed by the Council and the Appropriateness of the Internal Auditor – The following comments were made:

- Internal Controls – Members felt the introduction of the CIC role, and all other internal controls such as two signatories, viewing of the invoices by Councillors, and monthly account Balance Sheets, were adequate internal controls for the Council.
- Appropriateness of Internal Auditor – It was agreed that Mr Trevor Brown’s credentials were as apposite as previous years and that he was therefore an appropriate person to carry out the internal audit for the Council. The Clerk was asked to speak to Mr Brown to ask if he would consider continuing to carry out the internal audit.

The above two items were proposed by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in favour.

c) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£890.46
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension)	£222.72
iii. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk’s PAYE and NI for Qtr.)	£221.58
iv. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (items for FPW)	£208.68
v. East Suffolk Services Ltd (BMX Waste Bin Collection)	£48.95

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. Crocker with Councillors voting all in favour that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Edworthy and Bennett 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. Transition Rendlesham (Water Testing Consumables) £150.00
- ii. Alford Storage (Clothes Bank) £6.00

Action: Clerk

10. Highways:

- a) To receive update on Gas works on the A12 (Jan to May 2026) – The Clerk reported that the A12 works were underway and appeared to be causing minimal additional traffic through Ufford and Melton. The onsite staff had been happy to adjust the cones, to allow 2 lane queuing, close to Woods Lane roundabout.

Cllr. N Smith reported that the A12 slip road, close to Sogenhoe Chapel, had now been reopened, after emergency gas main repairs.

Cllr. Findley stated that redundant roadworks signs left by Network Rail had been reported to them and it was hoped these would be collected soon.

- b) To discuss new Village Gateway and Sign – The Clerk had inspected the Village Gateway and provided images. It was suggested that the Gateway was repaired and replacement of it was placed on to the CIL projects list for a later time. The Clerk was asked to speak to the maintenance officer.
- c) To discuss the new SCC Policy on 20 mph speed limits and if UPC wishes to establish a policy for requesting these – Members discussed the new SCC policy on 20mph speed limits at length. Those who monitored the HUG face book page reported that there was some comment on this new policy and that they were surprised that no members of the public were in attendance, as they had been invited. The Clerk commented that the two most vocal commentators were not on the Ufford Electoral Register, so she was unable to verify if they were Ufford residents.

It was suggested that a number of Ufford roads may be suitable to be limited to 20 mph. However, it was also acknowledged that there was no new funding from SCC and therefore the total cost would fall to the Parish Council. It was felt that this could ultimately run in to many tens of thousands of pounds. In conclusion it was agreed that an article would be written for the March PUNCH and that the Annual Parish Meeting would focus on this subject.

Action: Clerk

11. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

- a) To receive an update on Woodlands Management (report from Cllr. Forge) – Cllr. Forge reported on the following items:
- The Saturday working groups continued to be very productive and popular
 - 60/70 saplings would be available for planting shortly
 - A number of sycamore trees with sooty bark disease had been felled (in line with guidance from the ESC Tree Officer)
 - Mr Searle and Mr Mutton had carried out an enormous amount of voluntary work
 - The £1,500 grant for the Management Plan had been turned down, as the plan had already been drawn up.
- b) To discuss purchase of a new Chain Saw for FPW, and possibility of requesting a grant from Cllr. Noble – The Clerk reported that Mr Searle of the FPW had requested a new chainsaw for the group, as the old one was now beyond economic repair. Cllr. Noble had been contacted to ask if she could fund purchase of a new machine from her Enabling Communities budget (net cost of £728.88) but she was not certain she had the funds. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Cllr. Noble just before the February meeting to obtain an update.
- c) To review the license for Football on the Recreation Ground – The Clerk reported that a new Manager was in place for the Football Club and that he had asked for a further month to consider the draft licence. It was agreed that this matter would be placed on the February agenda.

- d) To discuss establishing a policy for the flying of drones from the Recreation Ground – It was agreed that the flying of drones on the Recreation Ground was not appropriate and the Clerk was asked to explore any templates for this activity and produce a draft policy.
- e) To discuss establishing a policy for the use of metal detecting at the Recreation Ground – It was agreed that no metal detecting should take place at the Recreation Ground or in Parklands Woods, without specific permission from the Council. The Clerk was asked to explore any templates for this activity and produce a draft policy.

Action: Clerk

12. Community Hall:

- a) To receive an update on the Hall and replacement main entrance project – Cllr. V Smith reported that the new doors would be fitted on 27th February 2026.
- b) To discuss the quotes for renewing the CCTV at the Recreation Ground – The Clerk reported that she had been able to obtain two quotations for renewal of the CCTV, one other company had attended site but had not provided a quote. After discussion, it was resolved (*proposed by Cllr. N Smith and seconded by Cllr. Bennett, 8 votes in favour and 2 abstentions*) to accept the quote from Suffolk Prestige Security. It was also agreed that the Clerk should request a grant for some of the cost from the Ufford Charities, who had recently advertised grants of up to £1,250 for community projects.

Action: Clerk

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

- None

14. Review of Data Protection Documentation – To acknowledge review of all Data Protection documentation by the Clerk and to formally adopt the following policies and procedures:

- CCTV Policy (Jan 2026)
- Data Protection Impact Assessment (Jan 2026)
- Information Protection Policy (Jan 2026)
- Information Security Incident Policy (Jan 2026)
- Retention of Documents and Records Policy (Jan 2026)
- DP Risk Assessment (Jan 2026)

The above policies were taken together. All members acknowledged review of the policies. Cllr. Findley proposed they be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to finalise and publish.

Action: Clerk

15. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (17^h February 2026):

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

- IT Policy
- Retention of the Bottle Banks
- Ufford Community Award
- Football Licence
- New Councillor co-option

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm

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

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....