

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting
Held on 17th February 2026 at 7.00pm
The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)	Cllr. Nick Crocker	Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Rilla Forge	Cllr. Angela Linforth	Cllr. Nigel Smith
Cllr. Vincent Smith	Cllr. Murray Thomas (after item 4)	Cllr. Tig Thomas

Judi Hallett (Clerk)	One member of the public was present
District Councillor Sally Noble (<i>part</i>)	County Councillor Alexander Nicoll (<i>part</i>)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: Apologies had been received from Cllr. Keith Bennett (away).
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllr. Bennett were proposed as accepted by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. T Thomas and all were in agreement.

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 14 – Treasurer to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 6 -Trustee to the Ufford Charities
 - Cllr. Edworthy - Item 14 – Committee Member to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. Forge – Item 10 – Recipient of a refund
 - Cllr. Forge – Item 8 – Chair of the Friends of Parklands Wood
- 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*):
 - No comments were received

Chair's initials.....

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble reported on the following elements (notes only):
 - SZC Southern Transport Forum would held in 2 weeks – lots to report about the impact of lorry traffic and pace of infrastructure development – looking to work together with Jenny Riddell-Carpenter on all issues
 - Four Rivers Deben Workshop held earlier in the day was very successful
 - Better Recycling project was coming soon, bins would be delivered in February /March but not used until June, SN happy to answer any questions from residents
 - ECB fund will be renewed in April – Happy to consider any funding requests
 - Nature First grants are available – just ask
 - ‘Nature at Work’ will be working more closely with PCs in the future
 - NSIPS – Recent Ministerial visit but we struggled to get across the impact of all the NSIPS power networks plans on the area.
 - [Cllr Findley – Thank you for funding the new chain saw]
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll reported on the following:
 - SZC - the recent Northern Transport Forum heard that High Lodge at Darsham has been bought by SZC for workers accommodation. There are strong feelings that roads are being destroyed by SZC traffic and they are being asked to fund resurfacing. Sizewell HGV numbers are close to capacity rates, 2 villages bypass will not be ready for another 2 years
 - 300 more houses at Campsea Ashe will bring further congestion on our roads
 - Elections – These will be going ahead but I will not be standing, I will remain in my role on Melton PC
 - CEO of SCC has stood down and I am assisting in the project to find a replacement.

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 meet with Mr Murray Thomas who was interested in joining the Council. Mr Thomas had completed an application form and spoke briefly to the members. Mr Thomas’ co-option was proposed by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. T Thomas and all were in agreement. Cllr. M Thomas signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.
- b) To discuss establishing a standard reply to all social media posts – It was agreed that the Clerk did not have capacity to monitor and reply to all social media posts that involved the Parish Council. It was suggested that standard wording would be used by Cllr. T Thomas and/or Cllr. Crocker, to reply to any such posts. It was agreed the draft wording would be circulated for comment.

Members were asked to consider the wording and respond to the Clerk with any suggested amendments. It was agreed that any response would be posted anonymously.

Action: All

Chair’s initials.....

5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 20th January 2026:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 20th January 2026 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. N Smith, 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

6. Ufford Charities:

- a) To receive resignation of Mrs Susan Wright as UPC Representative Trustee on the Ufford Charities (Town Estate and Non-Ecclesiastical) and to consider process for appointing another Trustee – It was agreed that an article should be placed in to the next PUNCH, asking for nominations for the role of Representative Trustee on the Ufford Charities. The Clerk was asked to prepare a letter for the Chair to sign, thanking Mrs Wright for her service.
- b) To consider re-appointment of Mr Harvey Osbourne as a UPC Representative Trustee on the Ufford Charities (as above) – The Clerk reported that Mr Harvey Osbourne was willing to stand again as a Representative Trustee on the Ufford Charities. His re-appointment was proposed by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Forge and members voted 7 For and 2 Abstentions (new Councillors not knowing the Charities or the nominee)

Action: Clerk

7. To discuss establishing the ‘Ufford Community Champion Award’:

The Clerk gave details of a similar award granted by Melton Parish Council and all present felt it was a very good idea. It was agreed that the outline criteria would be:

- Award to start from 2027
- Nominations requested from residents in February each year
- The same person could not win the award two years running
- Parish Council consider nominations and make choice at their March meeting
- A shield is purchased and names added to it each year
- A suitable gift voucher is purchased for the recipient – value £50
- Award is presented at the Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed that the concept would be mentioned at the 2026 APM and an article in the next available PUNCH after that.

Action: Clerk

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

a) DC/26/0404/TPO - A1 of TPO No. 31 / 1957 - 3no. Sycamore and 1no. Tree of heaven (marked blue on plan) – Fell - Ufford Recreation Ground, The Avenue, Ufford – The following comments were made:

- It is a Friends of Parklands Wood/ Ufford Parish Council application and the work was supported by the ESC Tree Officer
- Conclusion: **‘Support’** on above grounds (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. T Thomas, all in agreement).

Action: Clerk

9. Other Planning Matters:

a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – There were no further questions.

b) To discuss if UPC wish to comment on the draft East Suffolk Major Energy Projects Workers’ Accommodation Planning Position Statement – After discussion it was agreed that the members were not minded to respond to this consultation.

10. Finance Matters:

a) To receive and agree Accounts to 31st January 2026 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated. There were no questions but Cllrs. Findley and Edworthy were asked to initial a couple of invoices that had been accidentally missed and were picked up by Cllr. Bennett during the quarterly CIC review.

b) To discuss making a grant to the St Audrys Sports and Social Club to assist them in fund raising to purchase the club house and land – The following comments were made:

- This is a well-established facility and it is likely that many Ufford residents use it.
- The fundraising appeal has not been advertised very well, I am surprised we have not heard about it before
- Melton PC have promised a substantial grant but this appeal needs more promotion

In conclusion it was agreed that a grant would not be awarded, but that the Council would offer to promote the cause via PUNCHLine.

c) To confirm from Cllr. Bennett that the quarterly CIC checks have been carried out – This was confirmed by the Clerk.

d) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£890.26
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension)	£222.72
iii.	S Churchyard (PPE Masks for Woods Group)	£47.94
iv.	Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Consumables for Woods Group + Chain Saw)	£1,017.09
v.	Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire)	£42.00
vi.	Ufford PUNCH (Annual Subscription)	£27.50
vii.	R Forge (Saplings for Woods)	£54.94

Chair’s initials.....

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. T Thomas 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:
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| i. Countryside Home Improvements Ltd (Comm Hall Doors) | £3,259.82 |
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- e) To note Payments received since last meeting:
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| i. Alford Storage (Clothes Bank) | £31.00 |
| ii. Anonymous (Grant for Woodlands) | £300.00 |
| iii. HMRC (VAT Refund) | £224.17 |
| iv. Lloyds Bank Plc (Interest) | £2.72 |
| v. East Suffolk Council (Grant for Chainsaw) | £728.88 |
- Action: Clerk**

11. Highways:

- a) To discuss a 'Womble Week' instead of a dedicated Litter Pick event – After discussion it was agreed that a set date for the Litter Pick should be arranged; Saturday 21st March was suggested. The Clerk was asked to advertise the event via PUNCHLine and organise the bags and sticks

Action: Clerk

12. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

- a) To receive an update on Woodlands Management (report from Cllr. Forge) – Cllr. Forge reported on the following items:
- New Chain Saw – very sharp but still quite heavy – Serial number to be passed to Clerk for Asset Register
 - £300 donation from resident of Parklands – letter of thanks sent and funds will be used for planting
 - Swanns Nursery providing plants and they are in very good condition
 - Diseased sycamore trees continue to be felled (awaiting TPO decision for larger trees)
 - Working Parties and Saturday sessions continue to be very well attended
 - Highways run off water had been diverted down the Millenium Path but has now been re-directed in to the woodlands and a soak away created
 - Some areas proving difficult to dig (concrete just under surface)
 - Snowdrops are out and bluebells are coming
 - Clerk, Mr Searle and Cllr. Forge continue to try to obtain the £1,500 RPA grant
- b) To review the license for Football on the Recreation Ground – The Clerk reported that she had not heard from the Football Club Manager. She was asked to contact them one more time and advise that a decision on the license would be made at the March meeting.

- c) To discuss if the Council would like to request retention of the Bottle Banks at the Recreation Ground, once doorstep collections have commenced – Cllr. Noble had indicated that this would not be possible and it was felt not worth pursuing.
- d) To discuss clothes bank and reports of people taking clothes out of it to sell on – The Clerk reported one report of clothes being taken out of the clothes bank, presumable to sell on. It was agreed that the situation would be monitored.
- e) To discuss adding a paragraph to the Woodlands pages of the website regarding the flying of drones and metal detecting – The Clerk had suggested two paragraphs for the website and these were agreed.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Forge

13. Neighbourhood Plan – To receive report on the first ‘Review’ and authorise suggested actions

Cllr. N Smith reported that the first review of the Ufford Neighbourhood Plan had taken place. There were only a few applications to measure it against but it was regularly referred to by ESC. Two suggestions had been made by the Steering Group: To contact Rachel Leggett to ask if a review could be pencilled in for 2030/31 and to ask her to estimate the cost of a review, in order that funds could be set aside annually. These were agreed and the Clerk was asked to write.

Action: Clerk

14. Community Hall:

- a) To receive an update on the Hall and replacement main entrance project – It was reported that the new front doors would be installed on 27th February 2026. Once installed the Clerk was asked to pay the remaining invoice.

Action: Clerk

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

- JPTI – Cllr. N Smith – Cllr. N Smith had attended a recent meeting where concerns were raised once again over the level of traffic being generated by Bentwaters Park and Sizewell C, monitoring of traffic in and out of Bentwaters Park was now being undertaken. Ben Woolnough (ESC Head of Planning) had given details of the new Local Plan process (30 months instead of 5/6 years), Cycling, Walking and Wheeling initiatives and the recent Call for Sites; each project would continue once the unitary Council was established.
- Four Rivers Recovery Workshop – Cllr. Findley – regarding flooding, resilience and drainage; attended by LPA, PCs, TCs, Farmers, SWT, and Councillors. Mr Guy Hayward gave details of 10 projects in the Ufford area. Cllr. Findley also reported that fencing had been placed around the footpath on the North Meadow to keep walkers safe.

Cllr. V Smith proposed that Standing Order 3. X) be suspended to allow the business of the meeting to conclude. This was seconded by Cllr. M Thomas and all were in agreement.

16. 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:

- a) IT Policy (Feb 2026) – Cllr. V Smith reported he had a few minor amendments. Subject to these, he proposed the policy be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.

- b) Suffolk Code of Conduct (2020) - All members present confirmed they had reviewed the Code of Conduct.

The Clerk was asked to finalise and publish the IT Policy.

Action: Clerk

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

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

- Football licence
- APM (publication of the 20 mph policy)
- Local Plan Review (progress of Call For Sites)

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9:20pm

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

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council