

Minutes of Annual Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 19th May 2026 at 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair item 1)	Cllr. Vincent Smith (Chair after item 1)
Cllr. Tim Buxbaum	Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Angela Linforth	Cllr. Nigel Smith
	Cllr. Rilla Forge
	Cllr. Murray Thomas

County Councillor Stephen Molyneux

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

11 members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. To elect the Chair of the Council for 2026/27 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office':

Cllr. Findley asked for nominations for the role of Chair. Cllr. Findley proposed Cllr. Vincent Smith, Cllr. M Thomas seconded and Cllr. V Smith indicated he would be willing to stand. There were no further nominations. Members resolved unanimously to elect Cllr. V Smith as Chair of the Parish Council. He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Chair.

2. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: Apologies had been received from Cllr. Pat Edworthy (unwell), Cllr. Tig Thomas (away), and Cllr. Keith Bennett (away). District Councillor Sally Noble had also sent her apologies.
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllrs. T. Thomas, Edworthy and Bennett were proposed as accepted by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement.

3. To receive any:

- a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. T Buxbaum – Item 13. e) and f) as the Agent for the applicant
- b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 10 – Trustee to Ufford Charities
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 13 e) and f) - Trustee to Ufford Charities
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 17 b) - Treasurer to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 18 – Treasurer 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

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e) Notification of Lobbying with reference to any Planning Application to be discussed

- Cllr. Findley – Item 13. a) – Applicant had spoken to Cllr. Findley about the application.

4. Public Session:

a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):

- DC/26/1294/FUL – Eleven residents of Nicholls Close attended the meeting and comments on this application. Comments included:
 - All residents in attendance object to this proposed application
 - We were under the impression the Lime tree was covered by the TPO, as it replaced the old Oak – We have confirmation from ESC Tree Officer of this
 - There is a sapling growing from the original oak – is that now covered by the TPO? The Lime is in a very healthy state, could there not be a TPO placed on it?
 - The roots of the original tree are still live and extend to over the plot. There is another veteran oak at the back of the plot, will this be affected by the excavation?
 - There have been no fences or signs preventing us from using this land, and we have done so for 40 years
 - My children have played on this land and it is full of wildlife
 - This is a housing estate, not a cluster of houses
 - The building will encroach on houses 1 and 3 Nicholls Close. The building will cut out light to number 3
 - We have had a recent flood in the close with a burst water main, can they cope with more connections?

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble had sent her apologies but had sent a report which had been circulated.
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Molyneux introduce himself and gave details of his background. He was congratulated on his appointment and looked forward to learning more about Ufford.

5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 21st April 2026:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 21st April 2026 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas 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

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6. To elect the Vice- Chair of the Council for 2026/27 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office':

No member wished to be considered for the role of Vice-Chair. It was agreed to defer the item to the June meeting and Cllr. V Smith asked that all members considered the position.

Action: All Councillors

7. To advise Members to review their entry on the ESC Register of Interests Website:

The Clerk reminded all members present of the importance of ensuring their ESC Register of Interests was up to date. She had recently sent them a link to the present details and advised that if anyone wished to amend their entry but did not know their log-on details, they should email her and she would pass on details of ESC Democratic Services.

Action: All Councillors

8. To confirm all Standing orders and Direct Debits presently set up for the Council:

The Clerk confirmed that there were no Standing Orders assigned to either UPC bank account and only one Direct Debit:

- Information Commissioner Office - £47.00 (Annually)

Cllr. Linforth proposed that this payment remain established. This was seconded by Cllr. V Smith and all were in agreement.

9. To agree all Councillor Responsibilities for 2026/27:

The Clerk ran through the list of responsibilities and a few adjustments were made. The final list was proposed by Cllr. Linforth, seconded by Cllr. Buxbaum and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to publish the final list on the website and send a link to all.

Action: Clerk

10. Ufford Charities – To discuss applications received for Representative Trustee and make an appointment

The Clerk confirmed that one application had been received for this position, that of Mr Barry Searle. After discussion Cllr. Forge reported that she was very happy to appoint Mr Searle and proposed that he be appointed as a Representative Trustee of Ufford Parish Council, to the Ufford Charities. This was seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in unanimous agreement (*Cllr. V Smith abstained*). The Clerk was asked to advise the UC Clerk and Mr Searle.

Action: Clerk

11. To appoint persons to the following offices:

The following appointments were made:

Position	Appointment
Responsible Finance Officer	Clerk – Judi Hallett
Tree Warden	Mr Rob Flory
Footpaths Warden	Megan Smith
SALC Representative	Cllr. Vincent Smith
Internal Auditor	Mr Trevor Brown
Maintenance Officer	Mr Steven Churchyard
Ufford Community Hall representative(s)	Cllr. Vincent Smith Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Representative of ESC Community Partnership	Cllr. Angela Linforth
Councillor Internal Controller	Cllr. Keith Bennett
Friends of Parklands Wood representative	Cllr. Rilla Forge
River Deben Warden	Cllr. David Findley

The above positions were proposed en mass by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement.

12. Local Government Review – To receive details of the new SCC Councillor:

SCC Elections – The Clerk reported that Mr Stephen Molyneux, representing the Green Party, had been elected as County Councillor for the Framlingham and Wickham Market Ward.

Local Government Review – The Clerk reported that the new administration of Suffolk County Council would reportedly be seeking legal action against the Government’s plans to divide Suffolk in to three Unitary Councils.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) DC/26/1093/FUL - Replace existing shed with single storey ancillary garden studio - Gildenhurst, Lower Road, Ufford – The following comments were made:
 - This is a straightforward application and neighbours have supported it.
 - There will be very little intrusion as it is behind a wall
 - Conclusion: ‘**No Objection**’ (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. Linforth, all in agreement with the exception of Cllr. Findley who abstained due to being a neighbour)
- b) DC/26/1294/FUL - Formation of new highway access and erection of new self-build dwelling and associated works - Land Between 1 And 3, Nicholls Close, Ufford – The members discussed this application at length and the following comments were noted:
 - There is conflicting information regarding the TPO from ESC
 - The property is outside the Settlement Boundary, and therefore in the ‘Countryside’

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- The Neighbourhood Plan is quoted, but only parts of it that favour the application
 - The Local Plan policy SCLP 5.4 is quoted and the applicant claims the property is part of a 'Cluster', it is part of a housing estate, not a cluster
 - The NP suggested 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes, not a 4 bedroomed home
 - The neighbours will experience a loss of light and privacy
 - The TPO status is not clear
 - The Planning, Design & Access Statement for the application speaks of the Ufford Neighbourhood Plan and cites Policy UFF1. However, it fails to mention UFF2
 - Conclusion: '**Objection**' on the above grounds (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. Findley, all in agreement)
- c) DC/26/1447/FUL - Single Storey Side Extension and Other Alterations - Clay Cottage, High Street, Ufford – The following comments were made:
- This is a small side extension and should not been seen by neighbours
 - Conclusion: '**No objection**' (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. N Smith, all in agreement)
- d) DC/26/1340/FUL - Development of 3 covered outdoor padel courts with separate advertisement application for signage - Ufford Park Hotel, Yarmouth Road, Melton – The following comments were made:
- There is concern that these courts will generate noise, although they are inside
 - The building is large and will be visible
 - There are no close neighbours, apart from ESSL
 - This will contribute to the coalescence of Melton and Ufford
 - The site does provide employment and sports facilities for local people and Padel Ball is played by all ages.
 - The court should not be used before 8.00am or after 10.00pm
 - Conclusion: '**No objection**' but Clerk asked to bring above concerns to the attention of ESC (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. M Thomas, all in agreement)

Cllr. Buxbaum left the meeting

- e) DC/26/1633/FUL - Replacement of existing path from the front doors of the Almshouses to Church Lane, to improve safe access, and related works – Almshouses, Church Lane, Ufford – The following comments were made:
- This work needs to be done to assist the residents
 - Conclusion: 'Support' (Prop: Cllr. Linforth, Sec: Cllr. Forge, all in agreement)
- f) DC/26/1634/LBC - Replacement of existing path from the front doors of the Almshouses to Church Lane, to improve safe access, and related works – Almshouses, Church Lane, Ufford – The following comments were made:
- This work needs to be done to assist the residents
 - Conclusion: 'Support' (Prop: Cllr. Linforth, Sec: Cllr. Forge, all in agreement)

Action: Clerk

Cllr. Buxbaum returned to the meeting

14. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – There were no further comments on the list. The Clerk advised that the application for the development at Dingley Dell along Lower Road had been refused.
- b) To receive update on sale of small parcel of land at the rear of Nicholls Close – The Clerk reported the applicant had agreed to pay the reasonable legal costs of the Council, had obtained a letter of comfort from Clark and Simpson regarding the valuation of the land, and had agreed to pay for the change in use of the land, should planning permission be granted. No further action would be taken until the outcome of the application was decided.
- c) To receive update on the ESC Call for Sites results – The Clerk reported that the consultation on the ESC Call for Sites had not commenced yet.
- d) To receive update on the refurbishment of the Stocks and Whipping Post – The Clerk had circulated plans drawn up by Cllr. Buxbaum, for refurbishment of the Stocks and Whipping Post. An estimate for the 'Structural Engineering Services' for the project had been obtained from G C Robertson and Associates; at a cost of £450.00 + VAT. Cllr. Buxbaum advised that notice needed to be served on the landowner. Cllr. N Smith agreed to review plans he had, but felt the land probably belonged to Suffolk County Council. It was agreed that Cllr. Buxbaum should submit the application to ESC, once the land ownership was established.
- e) To consider exploring the feasibility of a Rural Exception Site or the establishment of a Community Led Housing Group – It was agreed to defer this item to the June meeting.

Action: Clerk, Cllr. N Smith and Cllr. Buxbaum

15. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts to 30th April 2026 – The Accounts had been prepared, and circulated. There were no further comments or questions.
- b) To discuss funds held with CCLA and if to transfer any more – The Clerk circulated all correspondence from CCLA and the Members debated its appropriateness for managing council funds. The Clerk also reported that, in her opinion, no funds should be transferred at this time, due to the forthcoming expenditure matching what was currently held with Lloyds.
- c) To receive update on VAT overcharge by SCC Street Light Team – The Clerk reported that SCC had refunded £41.74 as an overpayment of VAT charged for the Street Light services. They had not been able to provide a new invoice for reconciliation purposes.

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d) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£1,002.60
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£196.52
iii. Countryside Home Improvement Ltd (Final instalment for UCH Doors)	£814.96
iv. National Association of Local Councils (Planning Training for Clerk)	£42.00
v. David Bracey (Annual and Quarterly Play Park Inspections)	£516.00
vi. Suffolk Digital Ltd (Heritage Trail Printing)	£198.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. Findley with Councillors voting in favour that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Findley and Linforth 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. Alford Storage (Clothes Bank)	£14.00
ii. Lloyds Bank Plc (Interest)	£2.43
iii. East Suffolk Council (50% Precept)	£13,862.50
iv. Suffolk County Council (VAT Refund)	£41.74
v. Ufford Tennis Club (Annual Ground Rent)	£350.00

Action: Clerk

16. Highways:

- a) Ufford Hole Breach and PRoW – To receive update on the breach – Cllr. Findley gave an update on the collapse of the weir at Hawkeswade Bridge and the damage it had caused. All parties were working together and were considering temporary resolutions alongside more permanent resolutions. There was also fear the new water course would affect the rail track and Network Rail had been informed.
- b) Additional – Path 20 – The Clerk reported that a new personnel gate had been installed by Mr Notcutt, making this path much more accessible. The Clerk was asked to write to thank Mr Notcutt.

Action: Clerk

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.

17. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

a) To receive an update on Woodlands Management (report from Cllr. Forge) – Cllr.

Forge reported on the following items:

- Saturday sessions have been paused for the summer but a new recruit has been enlisted
- The old CCTV cupboard (back of the Community Hall) has now been cleared out and will be used by the team

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- Much goose grass (sticky weed) has been removed recently and sycamore pulling continues
- 531 'man' hours recorded since 1st Jan 2026

- b) To review the Ground Rent charges for the Tennis Club and Ufford Community Hall (wef 1st April 2027) – The Clerk had circulated the current Licenses for both groups, and had calculated potential rent increases, based on a Bank Of England inflation calculator. After debate the following rent rises were agreed:
- UCH - £840.00
 - Ufford Tennis Club - £375.00

These rents were proposed as starting from 1st April 2027, by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement (Cllr. V Smith did not take part in the debate or vote)

Action: Clerk

18. Community Hall - To receive monthly update on management of the Hall:

Cllr. V Smith reported that the replacement front door project had now been completed. Minor vandalism to a cooling unit had been rectified by a local volunteer but this would need attention from a professional bar maintenance company before it can be removed. The Clerk was asked to request a cost for a new CCTV 'Eye' in the entrance lobby, as people had been congregating there recently.

Action: Clerk

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

- JPTI – Cllr. N Smith – Next meeting at the end of July
- SZC Transport Forum – Cllr. Findley - Next meeting on 3rd June, data from traffic monitoring should be available and will be requested
- Community Partnerships – Cllr. Linforth – Meeting attended and slides will be sent to Clerk for circulation

Action: Clerk

20. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (16th June 2026):

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

- AGAR Section 2 – Amendment needed
- Community Land Trust

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.11pm

Signed:.....
Cllr. Vincent Smith - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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