

MINUTES OF A UPTON ST LEONARDS PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD IN THE PAVILION ON
MONDAY 5th FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Chairman Chrissie Castle
Cllr Jim Browne
Cllr David Hunt
Cllr Mary McLachlan
Cllr Hilary Morris
Cllr Keith Pearson

In Attendance: 5 Members of the Public

Before Parish matters were discussed there was a heartfelt mention of the King following the news of his Cancer diagnosis. The Council jointly wished him a speedy recovery and acknowledgement that he was in our thoughts.

The meeting was opened by a member of the Public delivering their concerns regarding the proposal of a specialist school on the Wheatridge East Field (Abbeymead). Whilst it was confirmed that this field no longer fell under the Parish of Upton St Leonards, the impact on the Parish was still a viable one. Concerns were raised regarding the increase in traffic, troublesome parking and the loss of a valued green space within the community as a whole. It was confirmed that consultation on the planning application had not yet begun however when this commences the Parish of Upton St Leonards can duly note its concerns being the adjacent Parish. An action point being for Gloucester City Council to consult with us as a neighbouring consultee once the administration process begins.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- A member of the Public raised a question regarding the weight limit on Upton Bridge and the 7.5 tonnes restriction. Concern was raised regarding a recent event where a visibly heavier vehicle was using the highway. Concerns were addressed with the clarification that heavier vehicles can use the highway concerned providing it was for access requirements.
- A second member of the Public requested an update on the Parish ANPR camera project. Chairman Chrissie Castle confirmed an update on this would be provided during the meeting.
- A third member of the Public raised concerns regarding Valley Lane and troublesome potholes. Chairman Chrissie Castle discussed the concerns and confirmed the Cllrs had been trying to liaise with Highways regarding these matters with continued frustrations including the Portway resurfacing now being delayed until 2027/28. Emphasis was placed on 'Fix My Street' where members of the public can report problematic potholes <https://fixmystreet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/>. There was also discussions regarding Health and Safety concerns and the Council responding more efficiently to reports when serious threat of injury is reported. The matter remained concluded in the emphasis for the public to use the 'Fix My Street' reporting system.

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

The Council accepted apologies from County Cllr Sue Williams, Cllrs Graham Hayes, Roy Roberts, Matt Sergeant and Pete Wilson.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 2023

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed.

4. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS:

a. County Councillor.

County Cllr Sue Williams was unfortunately not present at the Meeting however Chairman Chrissie Castle confirmed there was no primary comments to raise other than a respectable small increase on households for Social and Youth care in 2024/25. There were no messages to pass on to the County Cllr.

b. District Councillor.

District Cllr Keith Pearson updated the council on District Council matters which included:

- A slow down in matters until the upcoming election.
- Confirmation regarding the pending 2024/25 Council Tax increase, including reassuring the Council that the Upton St Leonards Parish Precept increase is very reasonable compared to other Parish's.
- Concern regarding the Local Plan; particularly indicating that the Inspector has put a hold on the current version with concerns particularly in reference to the increase in traffic at Jct 12 and 14 on the M5. Cllr Pearson reiterated his concerns from previous meetings regarding speculative developers during this period looking for land in the Parish.
- Praise was also given to Stroud District Council who has been nominated for its Biodiversity.

c. Council Chairman.

Chairman Chrissie Castle updated the council on matters which included:

- Continued frustrations regarding the Churchfield/ Bondend Road issue. Highways have confirmed that the Parish requires a feasibility report to be commissioned at a starting cost of £400 and then further costs listed. After these financial requests have been put on the Parish there is then no guarantee that anything can be

done regarding the problematic junction. It was concluded that it was not feasible to gamble the Parish money on a problem which may not have a resolution. A point was raised as to whether a meeting could be arranged between the County Cllr and the Cabinet Member for Highways. Cllr Keith Pearson suggested he may be able to write a letter to the appropriate parties.

- Further frustrations were raised regarding other Highways issues such as the still pending ANPR cameras and the request for dropped curbs in the Parish to enable more suitable crossings for residents. Again it appeared Highways were proving awkward around this matter whether intentional or not.
- A final point of discussion was the Parish noticeboard by the shop. Exact sizing was not finalised however it was generally agreed that the noticeboard is important to the village. Costings would be investigated.

d. Coopers Edge Councilor.

Cllr Matt Sergeant was absent from the meeting however there was a brief update to the council on ongoing matters which included:

- The Anti-Social behavior previously discussed appears to have now been resolved.

e. Clerks Report.

Clerk Roy Balgobin's report was circulated prior to the meeting with no questions from the Council. Highlights included:

- An upgrade of the printer in the Parish Office which is more cost effective.
- Confirmation he had arranged multiple meetings.
- Reported concerns regarding the collapsed wall at Prinknash.
- Dealt with a Golf Ball striking incident on the Recreation Ground and ordered appropriate signage.

5. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE M5 WORKING GROUP AND AGREE ACTIONS.

The Ombudsman have advised that they will not take a complaint from a Parish Council however they have agreed to work with Mr Tony Pryce regarding the matter.

6. TO APPROVE A PARISH COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY REPORT.

This matter was put on hold until the next meeting as key people were absent from the meeting.

7. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS.

- a. Allotments.** Cllr Mary McLachlan updated the Council on Allotment matters confirming the skip had now been removed from Perry Orchard and some ongoing issues at the Stanley Allotments regarding ignored plots. Also discussed was the requirement for some grass seed to be added to the areas where the skips had been removed and caused damage.
- b. Recreation Ground/Pavilion.** Cllr David Hunt reported a temporary delay in the painting of the stairwell and reception in the Pavilion with the need to find a new contractor. Cllr Hunt confirmed that the Pavilion upper floor window frames would not be approached for refurbishment until the Spring. The Biodiversity of the Recreation ground had already briefly been discussed in the meeting with reference to the grass cutting however again would be reviewed in more detail with the Parish Biodiversity report.
- c. Environment.** Cllr Pete Wilson was unfortunately absent from the meeting however Chairman Chrissie Castle approached the subject of tree planting in the Parish having been offered the opportunity for their supply and maintenance. The question was raised regarding how long the maintenance support would be provided however no one was certain. Everyone agreed that Cllr Pete Wilson and his wife should already be thanked for their contribution of tree planting in the Parish.
- d. Village Hall.** Cllr Keith Pearson reminded the Council of his need to find a replacement once Mike steps down and once again Cllr Jim Browne was identified as a sensible replacement in April. Cllr Pearson confirmed he would remain the Chair at the Village Hall for an extra year to assist with any transition with the Vice Chair. There was also a reminder regarding the Village Hall fundraiser on the 18th May 2024. Cllr Pearson confirmed the Hall did have some excess income however this is reducing as running costs increase.

9. ACCOUNTS:

a. To approve the Accounts

Payee	Chq Number	Amount	Reason
J Evans	3236	£ 40.00	Litter pick
T W Hawkins	3237	£ 1,724.45	Grass Cutting 2023
NSALG	3238	£ 66.00	Subscription (Allotments)
T Slator	3239	£ 333.16	Salary/ Expenses JAN
R Balgobin	3240	£ 1,089.86	Salary/ Expenses JAN
HMRC	3301	£ 439.30	Tax & NI JAN
J Evans	3302	£ 40.00	Litter pick
Severn Signs Ltd	3303	£ 90.55	Signage - Golf
MOWTECH	3304	£ 540.00	Rec - feed & weed
T Slator	3305	£ 330.76	Salary/ Expenses FEB

R Balgobin	3306	£ 1,071.86	Salary/Expenses FEB
HMRC	3307	£ 439.30	Tax & NI FEB
	Total	£6,205.24	

The Council agreed that the accounts be accepted for payment.

b. To approve the Verti drainage quotation for the football pitch cost £300.00.

The council agreed to payment of this quotation.

c. To consider and approve an allotment increase of £5 per unit (per annum) with effect from April 2025.

The Council unanimously agreed to this increase based on current running costs and the lack of increase in the last 10 years.

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Monday 4th March 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Coopers Edge Community Hall

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.46 PM