

MINUTES OF A UPTON ST LEONARDS PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD IN THE PAVILION ON
MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 2023 AT 7.35 PM

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

In Attendance: County Cllr Sue Williams
1 Member of the Public

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public commented regarding a hole on the Village Green. Cllr Keith Pearson believed this may be from a previously removed tree and was happy to look into filling it.

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

The Council accepted apologies from Cllrs 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 6th NOVEMBER 2023

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

4. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS:

a. County Councillor.

A report was circulated to the Members prior to the meeting, the County Councillor then detailed the salient points.

The report is available on the Councils Website – follow the link below:

<https://www.uptonstleonards-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/parish-council-meetings/>

Highlights of the report included:

- Apologies for the lateness in circulating the report however new council administration systems had caused issues when sending the attachment.
- Public concerns regarding the recently felled trees on the bridal path and confirmation that the Council were not responsible for their removal. This then generated queries regarding who owns the land.
- Brief discussions regarding the 'Fix My Street' project discussed at the recent Highways meeting held on 30th November. Chairman Chrissie Castle suggested the topic could be included in the next Parish Newsletter and confirmed she would discuss the request with Cllr Pete Wilson.
- Also discussed from the recent Highways meeting was an update on the condition of the Portway and concern on its rapid deterioration. County Cllr Sue Williams said she is considering walking the problematic part of the Portway to count the increasing number of potholes on the road; in response Cllr Keith Pearson said he would join her to continue his project on counting and assessing the drains in the Village (again a topic which was discussed at the Highways meeting).

b. District Councillor.

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

- Re-confirming a meeting was held with Paul Helbrow from Highways on 30th November. Frustrations were vocalised that the Parish appeared to have been promised things that were proving difficult for Highways to deliver. Clerk Roy Balgobin addressed concerns regarding the delayed ANPR cameras which he confirmed could be purchased by the Parish however would still require authorisation by the Police and Highways. Cllr Keith Pearson also confirmed that he would be plotting on a map drains in the Village in an attempt to visualise where local flooding issues could be seen and resolved. He also reminded the meeting attendees that during 2007 the Parish had been promised regular drain clearing 3 times a year which no longer is happening. Disappointment was also aired that the new machine promised to fix potholes was not as productive as hoped and the Portway resurfacing once again has been postponed to 2025/26. Chariman Chrissie Castle enquired as to if the situation could be improved by Cllrs writing to the responsible parties and County Cllr Sue Williams confirmed there had been lots of contradictions given in the meeting. Clerk Roy Balgobin confirmed the Parish Administration Assistant Tracy Slator would be writing a summary report on the meeting.

- Confirmation that a Full Council Meeting will be held on the 14th December and the hope that an outcome will be achieved in reference to the Local Plan and Highways.
- Once again (as per the previous Parish Meeting) there was concern highlighted regarding local land vulnerabilities in the attempt for Councils to meet their new homes targets.
- The Annual Satisfaction Survey was discussed (a telephone survey held in the Autumn with 500 residents). Once again there was a downward trend in satisfaction reported, a trend which has been repeated in the last 4 years.
- It was confirmed that the Canal project is progressing well and reference was made to the Brimscombe Port development with 174 dwellings.
- Final reference was made to the popular Air Balloon Pub which has now been demolished as part on the ongoing Highways project.

c. Council Chairman.

Chairman Chrissie Castle updated the council on matters which included:

- The 'Fix My Street' project and the importance of the community working together in clearing leaves away from drains and gutters.
- Confirmation regarding Cllr David Hunts ongoing Conservation area project and the hard work he is putting in to achieve a result.

d. Coopers Edge Councilor.

Cllr Matt Sergeant was absent from the meeting however Cllr Keith Pearson gave a brief update to the council on ongoing issues with the Coopers Edge estate. Updates included:

- A meeting had been held regarding the Coopers Edge Youth Club. Unfortunately nothing can be done due to the funding parameters until the next fiscal year. As was unanimously agreed in the last Parish Council Meeting there is already a reserved amount of £1,500 for the youth facility and with the future budgeted £3,000 for the next fiscal year the total amount available will be the combined £4,500. County Cllr Sue Williams also pledged a further £2,000 and the Lady Downe Trust suggested they could also provide a grant for the first year however the amount is yet to be clarified.
- Regarding the antisocial behavior in the area the group agreed that the Police also need to be fully involved in the area. It is hoped as daylight reduces over the winter months there will be fewer of the trouble makers on the streets. Concern was raised in reference to criminal damage occurring on the new youth club and it was also noted that the original location will need to change to prevent access to the rest of the school. The new location in discussion is

the meeting rooms on the same location as there is a separate door to access the site.

e. Clerks Report.

Clerk Roy Balgobin's report summarised the following points from the last month:

- Confirmation that he had met with the Coopers Edge Manager to discuss local concerns.
- Arranged and attended the Highways Meeting on 30th November 2023.
- Drafted a Parish Council Diversity Policy.
- Finalised a draft Budget/Precept.
- Productivity was confirmed via a summary of work completed.

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

It was confirmed that the Ombudsman had written a letter acknowledging the Parish complaints and a case officer has been appointed.

6. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON CONSERVATION AREAS FOR UPTON ST LEONARDS AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS.

- Chairman Chrissie Castle confirmed that Cllr David Hunts Conservation report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was clear that there was some potential areas in the Parish which could meet the requirements for the listing. Cllr David Hunt confirmed that Upton St Leonards could qualify as part of a pilot study for the district and he would contact Stroud District Council to see if this could be put into action. The alternative would be to create a 'Neighbourhood Development Plan' / 'Parish Design Statement'. It was generally agreed that creating any form of conservation acknowledgment on areas of the Parish could be valuable in the future should any planning applications be put forward. There were discussions regarding the 2006 Village Plan which contained valuable information and the topic was closed with an agreement that Cllr David Hunt would continue his discussions with Stroud District Council.
- Following on from the topic of Conservation areas Cllr Keith Pearson praised Stroud District Council for their recent environmental improvements to the bungalows in Woodlands Green. Not only do the improvements look aesthetically pleasing, the improvements were good for the environment and completed within an acceptable time period.

7. TO CONSIDER ANY COMMENTS IN RESPECT OF THE HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE NEW POLITICAL MAP FOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION.

Following the discussions held in the November Parish Meeting Cllr Keith Pearson suggested the possibility that Cllr Pete Wilson includes an explanation on the newly proposed political boundaries in the next Parish Newsletter. As in the previous meeting there were concerns raised regarding more changes and Chairman Chrissie Castle raised concerns regarding the pending plans for residential expansion in Whaddon. It was generally agreed that the Parish Council could not comment on the changes and could only be led by future higher level decisions.

8. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS.

- a. Allotments.** Cllr Mary McLachlan updated the Council on Allotment matters and confirmed that a numbering system has been budgeted for in 2024/25. She also confirmed that Tracy Slator (Parish Administrator) would walk around the allotments with her in the new year to discuss the requirements.
- b. Recreation Ground/Pavilion.** Cllr David Hunt reported on the continued improvements at the Pavilion including the painting of the window frames (to save costs on full replacements). Additionally the tiling in the changing rooms has been fixed and there are plans for the stairwell and foyer to be repainted soon. He confirmed that there has not been any football training recently due to the disruptive weather therefore could not give an update on how the new temporary floodlights were assisting their training.
- c. Environment.** Cllr Pete Wilson was unfortunately absent from the meeting however Chairman Chrissie Castle could provide some updates. She confirmed that the Climate Group meeting had been successful and in the new year the Parish could look into the E-Bike facilities if there is enough interest. The Parish Biodiversity plan would also be discussed in January 2024. Cllr David Hunt also confirmed that the Jet Age Museum would assist with the technical info and mock up drafts for the historical signage plaques in Coopers Edge.
- d. Village Hall.** Cllr Keith Pearson discussed their pending meeting on Monday 11th December and described some ideas for future fundraising events. There was also discussions around a trustee stepping down in April and the requirement for a replacement (previously also discussed in the last Parish Meeting). He approached Cllr Jim Browne and kindly asked if he would mind being a representative for the Parish Council in case the newly appointed trustee had limited knowledge on the Parish Council. Cllr Jim Browne confirmed he was happy to assist.

9. ACCOUNTS:

a. To approve the Accounts for payment as per the list circulated prior to the meeting:

Accounts for payment December 2023			
Payee	Chq Number	Amount	Reason
South Western Ambulance Service	3225	£ 960.00	Defib
D J Lord	3226	£ 260.00	USL Admin assistant laptop
VOID CHEQUE	3227	£ -	-
VOID CHEQUE	3228	£ -	-
VOID CHEQUE	3229	£ -	-
G Knight	3230	£ 270.00	Grasscutting
J Evans	3231	£ 40.00	Litter pick
R Balgobin	3232	£ 1,109.85	Salary/ Exp
T Slator	3233	£ 384.96	Salary/ Exp
HMRC	3234	£ 439.30	Tax/ NI
D Cridland	3235	£ 468.00	Groundworks
	Total	£3,932.11	

The Council agreed that the accounts be accepted for payment.

b. TO APPROVE THE BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025

The draft budget had been circulated to the Councilors prior to the meeting. The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the budget as presented for the Financial Year 2024/25.

c. TO APPROVE AND SET A PRECEPT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025.

The Council unanimously agreed to set the precept at £46,810.00 for the Financial Year 2024/25

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Monday 5th February 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Recreation Ground Pavilion

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.01 PM WITH ALL WISHING EACH OTHER A MERRY CHRISTMAS.