
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 14th July 2025, 7pm

Committee Members: Cllr Aston, Cllr Gooch, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Shorting, Cllr Pope, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Carr, Cllr Judd, Cllr Singh, Cllr Spikings, Cllr Fairbrother.

Those Present: Cllr Fairbrother, Cllr Aston, (arrived 19.08pm), Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Judd, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Pope, Cllr Carr, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Singh, Cllr Gooch, Cllr Spikings, BCllr Rose, M Hilton Clerk.

Public: two

Apologies CCllr Dawson

MINUTES

- 1. Welcome and Opening remarks:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. To consider and approve apologies for absence:** these were approved
- 3. To declare any conflicts and pecuniary interests on any items on this month's agenda:** None declared
- 4. Public Forum (ten minutes only):**
 - BCllr Rose informed the Council there were issues with buses turning into Three Holes Village Hall carpark to turn into. Hall hirers and users have priority over the car park. He informed Council that the Borough Council are dealing with this matter.
 - Two members of the public came to inform the Council regarding issues with land next to Fir Tree Farm (Old School House) in Lakes End. Builders are using the land without permission. This is, however, a civil matter. The parishioner said the builders had connected a water supply and were going to pull a caravan onto the site. There has also been several bonfires which have been left unattended and the fire brigade had been called out. The Clerk has reported to enforcement at the Borough Council. CCllr Dawson has reported the issue and they are dealing with the matter.
- 5. To approve the Minutes from the last meeting:**

Cllr Pope disputed Cllr Fairbrother's report in the minutes, however, as the Clerk pointed out this was what was reported in the meeting. Cllr Fairbrother said these issues had been updated for the magazine and he had also spoken with Cllr Pope after the June meeting with Council's permission. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 6. To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:**
 - The Neighbourhood Plan review, this will stay on the action log until more information is received when the Borough Council adopt the Local Plan. Cllr Harrison recently attending a planning update session and Upwell's Neighbourhood Plan is deemed excellent. The Local Plan should be completed within the next two years.
- 7. To discuss Gov.UK emails and approve the IT Policy:**

The Clerk informed the Council the Clerk's gov.uk email is free of charge. The Council's email addresses would be £220 per annum. There is no need to change the domain on the website as the Council owns this site name. This was proposed by Cllr Aston and seconded by Cllr Pope, six Cllrs voted in favour of the motion, so this is carried. The Council approved the IT policy.
- 8. Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk**
 - i. To consider planning applications:
 - Planning Application Consultation 25/00908/F. Demolition of existing rear single storey extensions and first floor flat roof to replace with new two storey rear extension, single storey side extension, first floor replacement roof, internal alterations and proposed double car port at Stratford House Back Drove Upwell Wisbech PE14 9EX.

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The Upwell Council Planning Group supports this application. The existing dwelling is relatively unmodernised, and the proposal will greatly enhance the dwelling and its surroundings. Drainage scheme subject to Borough Council approval.

- ii. To receive an update on the riverside railings and discuss replacement of railing outside the church: *Cllrs Fairbrother and Robinson*. A quote for the rails and posts was circulated with a cost of £15865.20. this does not include installation. Three options were put forward regarding railings opposite Church
 - Replace all the old railings to match rest of village. The plus side of this is some of the posts and rails could be used elsewhere in village, many of these are near water courses in village, that would need tidying up in the future. Also no traffic management would be required for installation.
 - Replace the wooden rails as these will rot in time but with concrete that would last, the Council could order a few spare posts and rails for repairing future accident damage.
 - Due to costings shelve the replacements at the present time.BCllr Rose informed the Council there would be no CIL funding this summer. Parish Partnership Scheme could be applied for but the Clerk will require three quotes to apply.
Cllr Robinson asked how much the current repairs had cost. This was £42650. CIL and PPS grants awarded were £25632.40. The Clerk was then questioned why she had used the savings accounts to fund this project. She advised Councillors to read the Financial Regulations. Cllr Spikings also asked why the Council were not informed this money would be used. The Clerk explained that the Finance Committee sets the budget.
- iii. To receive an update on the permanent takeover of Upwell Cemetery and extension: *Clerk*, no update received. Charlotte Castell-Smith left the Borough Council on the 27th June. Cllr Spikings will find out who has replaced her.
- iv. To discuss a family bench at the Cemetery and trees: Cllr Shorting. It was agreed for a bench owned by the Council to be moved to another location at the cemetery. The parishioner will be informed that she must purchase a bench from English Brothers to match the one in the memorial building and she must complete all maintenance on the bench. Cllr Shorting is waiting for and up to date quote from a tree surgeon to remove nine trees. It was agreed to start the process of removed the TPO on these trees. Cllr Shorting also getting three quotes for replacement of the tarmac which has been damaged by the tree roots.
- v. To discuss the amalgamation of Upwell Playing Field with Upwell Parish Council: *Cllrs Shorting and Fairbrother*. Upwell Football Club want to get more involved. Cllr Shorting has contacted the Charity Commission regarding changing the name of the charity to Upwell Town Playing Field Committee. This can be done by closing the Playing Field Charity and starting again with a new Charity Commission number.
- vi. To receive information regarding the Small Lode Garden sale: *Cllr Fairbrother* the prospective purchaser offered £9K although the land was valued at £10k, she would also pay £1K towards the legal fees. She also asked if the land could be purchased in instalments but use the land immediately. The Council agreed payment must be the full £10K as this is what the land was valued at and all legal costs. Also from the plan it does not look as if the neighbours plot is being considered for purchase, which would cause more of a dog leg. The Council would only be willing to sell if both pieces are purchased. It was also agreed the purchase price would need to be paid in full and not part payments.
- vii. To receive an update on Upwell village Hall: *Cllrs Aston and Shorting*. Cllr Aston explained how the Hall Managers role is currently being split now that R Shaw has resigned. C Hilton is doing an excellent job on the administrative tasks. The telephone has been passed round on a weekly basis by the committee. Very few calls have been received. A key safe has been installed which is a recommended brand by insurance companies and the Police. This has worked well with no issues. The code is changed regularly. Cllr Shorting said hirers need to lock the gate before returning the keys to the safe. If hirers do not return the keys 50% of their security deposit will be retained. There was an issue with a recent hire and the bar staff did not arrive. The bar manger apologised, this was an error on her part. C Hilton will continue to send reminders to her regarding bar requirements as R Shaw did previously. Cllr Aston and the Clerk met with Alan Gant (he applied to become a Councillor a few months ago) it was discussed with him if he would consider taking on the role to show potential Clerk to the Council; Melanie Hilton (CiLCA Qualified). Mobile; 07368 420237 Email; upwellpc@gmail.com

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hirers around, liaise with hirers if they have any issues, keep the Health and Safety folder up to date, and to complete small maintenance tasks as necessary. He agreed he would be interested in doing this, using his own telephone which would save the Village Hall money as the current phone is not fit for purpose. He will work on a self-employed basis. A heated debate then ensued regarding the recent hall committee meeting.

The Chair said the hostility and corrosive nature of the Councillors over the last 6 months or so needs to stop.

9. To note any Health and Safety issues:

- Two hedges on Pius drove need cutting back, Cllr Rose will speak with one of the owners. The other one the Clerk will report.
- Red Hart Corner hedge is overgrown. The Clerk will report.
- Cllr Carr reported Bull Bridge sign is obscured, and the hedge opposite his property is also overgrown. He has volunteered to cut both back with the permission of the Council.
- Huddleston footpath has overhanging branches; Cllr Judd will trim this back.
- Priory Barn on March Riverside also has an overgrown hedge. The Clerk will report.

10. Finance

i. To note payments made since last meeting: these were noted.

Payments for July 2025 Authorisation					
Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	479.16	4.23	483.39	EP	HMRC allowance for home working, magnets for Dr's noticeboard, website domain
Salaries	3059.07	0.00	3059.07		
Melanie Hilton				EP	95 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Charlotte Hilton				EP	32 Village Hall cleaner hours plus holiday pay
HMRC	710.43	0.00	710.43	EP	Month 3
Nest Pension Scheme	114.14	0.00	114.14	DD	Clerks pension
Tim Dewdney				EP	47 Groundsman Hours
Kelvin Judd				EP	10 hours garden cemetery
ASB	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Bus stops cleaned
NPTS	48.00	9.60	57.60	EP	Understanding Charities training
Nurture	390.87	78.17	469.04	EP	Cemetery grass cutting May 25
Nurture	390.87	78.17	469.04	EP	Cemetery grass cutting April 25
Mundo Mac	16500.00	3300.00	19800.00	EP	Town St fencing repairs payment 1 (pd 6/6/25)
Mundo Mac	19625.00	3925.00	23550.00	EP	Town St fencing repairs payment 2 (pd 20/6/25)
Andrew Harrison	25.00	0.00	25.00	EP	new padlock lock at Cemetery
Upwell Village Hall	27.50	0.00	27.50	EP	Hall Hire June 25
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
WAVE	92.32	0.00	92.32	DD	Water for Cemetery
SSE	896.64	44.84	941.48	DD	Street light energy
Veolia	173.28	34.66	207.94	DD	Waste disposal
TOTAL	42,670.28	7,496.27	50,166.55		

- ii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled from the previous month:** these were noted.
- iii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled for the Village Hall account:** these were noted.
- iv. **To note the QPAB:** this was noted
- v. **To discuss the rolling figures at the bottom of the cashbook.** It was decided these were no longer required.
- vi. **To discuss a new laptop for the Clerk:** the clerk explained current issues with her laptop. It was approved for her to purchase a new one and have it set up.

11. To propose any items for the next agenda: please advise the Clerk at least a week before the next meeting date.

- Co-Option of new Councillor
- Low Side land sale

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- Dodds style

Cllr Fairbrother passed on a thank you from Upwell and Outwell Youth Club. Currently there are sixty-five children on role with a waiting list.

12. To note the date of the next Parish Council meeting –11th August 2025 at 7pm at Lakes End Village Hall.

13. Close: the meeting closed at 20.49pm

Signed by the Chair **Date**