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## Upwell Parish Council

### Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 11th May 2026, 6.30pm

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

**Those Present:** Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Judd, Cllr Carr, Cllr Hartley, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Pope, Cllr Spikings, Cllr Gooch, Cllr Aston, BCllr Rose, M Hilton Clerk.

**Public:** none

**Apologies:** Cllr Fairbrother, Cllr A Harrison.

#### MINUTES

**As neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair was present, Cllr Aston chaired the meeting.**

- 1. Election of Chair for the coming year and sign the declaration of acceptance of office:** Cllr Spikings was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Pope and voted unanimously as Chair for the coming year. Cllr Spikings signed her Declaration of Office.  
Cllr Spikings assumed the Chair.
- 2. Election of Vice Chair and sign the declaration of acceptance of office:** Cllr A. Harrison was proposed by Cllr Aston, seconded by Cllr Judd and unanimously voted as vice-chair for the coming year. He will sign his Declaration of Office at the next meeting.
- 3. Welcome and opening remarks:** The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked the Council for its commitment to the Parish of Upwell.
- 4. To consider and approve apologies for absence:** approved.
- 5. To disclose any conflicts or financial interests related to items on this month's agenda:** Councillor Spikings has declared an interest in all planning applications.
- 6. To approve the minutes from Previous Meeting:** these we approved.
- 7. Public Forum (10 minutes):** none in attendance.
  - BCllr Rose was invited to join the Parish Council as a co-opted member. Having previously served as a Parish Councillor for many years, he was unanimously approved for co-option.
  - The Chair reported that CCllr Dawson had lost his seat at the local elections and thanked him for his service to the ward. The Clerk will write to him with the Council's thanks.
  - The new County Councillor, Tina Kiddell, was invited to attend, but was unable to do so as she was signing paperwork in Norwich this evening.
- 8. To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:**
  - Townley Close grit bin: Highways has approved a new location; Cllr A Harrison will site it in the coming weeks.
  - Cemetery Tree issues: The Clerk emailed Brian Ogden twice but has not received a reply about meeting at the cemetery to discuss the trees. The Chair will contact him and arrange a meeting about a half an hour before the June meeting begins.
  - Dodds Style memorial board: please send any information to Cllr Aston so she can finalise the article for the summer magazine.

Clerk to the Council; Melanie Hilton (CiLCA Qualified). Mobile; 07368 420237 Email; [clerk@upwell-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@upwell-pc.gov.uk)

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**9. To review the Risk Management Policy:** The Clerk advised that this was a review of the existing policy, which the Council approved.

**10. To review the Assets Register:** The Clerk reported that the riverside railings had been added to the register, which the Council approved.

### **11. Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk**

- The Chair reported the shape and size of the wards for unitary elections to the new West Norfolk Unitary Council in May 2027 would change. She circulated a map and ward data that will be used for those 2027 local elections. It is proposed that Upwell will be joined with Welney.
- i. To consider planning applications:**
  - Planning Application Consultation 26/00518/F. Temporary retention of 2 monitoring boreholes and their associated headworks (retrospective) at Land East of Wisbech Road, Lakes End. The Upwell Parish Council Planning Group support this application as there are no material grounds for objection & the installation does not affect any neighbours.
  - Planning Application Consultation 26/00477/F. Planning Application for internal alterations and associated changes to glazing, extension and new garage at The Old Apple Store 176 Small Lode Upwell PE14 9BL. Upwell Parish Council Planning Group supports this application. The proposal already benefits from an approved application 'Conversion of fruit store to dwelling 05/01629/F'. The proposed alterations have no impact on the surroundings.
  - Planning Application Consultation 26/00586/F. Full planning application for proposed 2-storey self-build dwelling and detached garage at Manor Lodge 40 Small Lode Upwell PE14 9BE. The Upwell Parish Council Planning Group support this application. This is now a self-build proposal, not for open market as with previous proposals on the site. The scale & appearance fits well within the area, & the size of the plot easily accommodates the proposal, which the Council believes benefits from an extant planning approval. A robust & detailed drainage solution has been submitted to address issues of previous concerns. The Council approved the decisions made by the planning working group.
- ii. Cemetery grave staking/repair (post-topple test):** the Council received a £1,300 quote to stake and band high-risk gravestones. The Council would also like a quote for metal stakes (rather than wooden) and photos showing how the work will look once completed.

Cllr Pope noted that several gravestones in the churchyard were also leaning. Cllrs Spikings and Shorting advised that this is a Parochial Church matter and not the Parish Council's responsibility. The Chair noted that a Parochial Church meeting is taking place this Thursday and asked Cllr Pope to attend and raise the issue.
- iii. To receive an update on the planning application for extension of the extension into the allotment area:** Cllr Fairbrother submitted a report stating the Council has successfully performed a drainage assessment in line and in conjunction with the Environment Agency and therefore, this is satisfactory for future burial plots and mitigates drainage concerns. The change of use planning application is unnecessary because the primary use is and has always been cemetery. The biodiversity will be unaffected because habitat will be unchanged as maintained burial plots are comparable to maintained allotments.
- iv. To discuss the report received regarding Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972:** Cllr Pope requested that this item be deferred for personal reasons and did not provide further detail when asked by the Chair. The Chair agreed to defer the item to the next meeting. Cllr Pope had declined the Clerk's request for a report to be circulated in advance; the Chair stated that a report must be provided for the next meeting to enable an informed discussion.
- v. To receive an update on Dodds Style:** the Clerk has contacted Lawrence Malyon and his response was... 'I regret that I do not have anything further to report at present due to many competing priorities in this department. That said, I am intending to start considering the matter in full toward the end of this month of April.'

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The Council noted that the entrance to Dodds Style has been altered within a conservation area and asked that the original entrance be reinstated to allow siting of the new Memorial Board. The Clerk will write to the Conservation Officer and to Lawrence Malyon to seek clarification and progress the matter.

### 12. Health and Safety Issue:

- Cllr Judd reported an issue at the junction of Pius Drove and the Common and will log it via the 'Report a Problem' portal.
- Cllr Shorting reported missing pointing to the brickwork at the old bridge site. Cllr Spikings will speak with the Well Creek Trust to confirm who is responsible.
- Cllr Gooch asked whether Cllr Judd had received quotes for cutting the riverbanks; Cllr Judd confirmed a quote of £800 per cut. Cllr Pope advised that, due to a shortfall in the precept for this financial year, there is no budget for bank cutting. The top of the banks are being cut monthly by the Middle Level Commissioners; in an email (March 2026) they stated: 'We have done one cut along the roadside as agreed last year to stop vegetation hampering driving conditions. This cut will be done about every 4 weeks to keep us compliant with the new environment laws.' They will also cut the lower part three times per year.

Middle Level's Sofi Lloyd in her email February 2026 said 'The reason we would not cut banks this time of the year is that there will be a high probability that birds would be nesting in them and it is a criminal offence to disturb nesting birds under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. If it were necessary for us to keep the vegetation on our banks low throughout the bird nesting season for flood risk and water level management purposes, we would begin cutting them as the grass grew in the spring before the 1<sup>st</sup> March and we would continue regular cuts throughout the nesting season to keep the grass very short in order to deter nesting birds from the area and allow our operations to continue compliantly. This approach is taken wherever there is an operational, rather than aesthetic need. Where there is no operational need, banks are left unmown to provide habitat for wildlife. Any contractors you will be engaging will be aware of these legal constraints and will be able to advise you on how the banks can be mown compliantly to protect you and themselves.'

## Upwell Parish Council

### 13. Finance

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

#### Payments for May 2026 Authorisation

Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	26.00	0.00	26.00	EP	HMRC allowance for home working
Salaries	3083.43	0.00	3083.43		
Melanie Hilton				EP	104 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Charlotte Hilton				EP	29.5 hours Village Hall cleaner hours plus 2 days holiday
HMRC	1018.87	0.00	1018.87	EP	Month 1
Nest Pension Scheme	132.30	0.00	132.30	DD	Clerks pension
Tim Dewdney				EP	49 Groundsman Hours
Kelvin Judd				EP	4 hours garden cemetery plus £5 spraying
Upwell Village Hall	65.75	0.00	65.75	EP	Hall rental 9/3/26 and 13/4/26
Outwell Timber	334.58	66.92	401.50	EP	Salt for grit bins
Limetree	937.23	0.00	937.23	EP	Spring 26 magazine printing
Purple Graphic Design	330.00	0.00	330.00	EP	Spring 26 magazine editing
BCKLWN	140.00	0.00	140.00	EP	Land rental allotments Stonehouse Rd
BCKLWN	3644.16	728.83	4372.99	EP	Dog waste emptying
BCKLWN	300.00	0.00	300.00	EP	Annual contribution Upwell Community Car park
HHA	400.00	80.00	480.00	EP	Grounds Maintenance April 2026
EFS	22.41	4.48	26.89	EP	Bin sacks
Robin Goreham	45.00	0.00	45.00	EP	Internal Audit 2025/26
Upwell Village Hall	2203.74	0.00	2203.74	EP	VAT Refund 2025_2026
ASB	60.00	0.00	60.00	EP	Bus stops cleaned March and April
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
Cozens	990.00	198.00	1188.00	EP	Streetlights replaced Pole 721 Mumbys Drove and pole 318 107 Croft Road
WAVE	4.03	0.00	4.03	DD	Water for Cemetery
Veolia	187.92	37.58	225.50	DD	Waste disposal
SSE	357.94	71.59	357.94	DD	Street Light Energy
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,391.36</b>	<b>1,137.41</b>	<b>15,528.77</b>		

- 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 final QPAB for 2025\_26: this was noted.
- v. To note the internal audit: this was noted. No advisory comments were issued.
- vi. To approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 *the Annual Governance Statement*: was read aloud and approved by the Council.
- vii. To approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 – *the Accounting Statements*. This was noted.

The Council approved for the Chair to sign both documents.

Cllr Pope queried an internal transfer of £35,000 on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026. The Clerk explained that this was precept funding moved to the savings account to earn interest.

**14. For agenda item proposals:** kindly notify the Clerk no later than one week prior to the upcoming meeting date.

- Add “Any Correspondence” to future agendas.

**15. To note the date of the Full Council Meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7pm at Three Holes Village Hall.**

**16. Close:** the meeting closed at 7.26pm

Signed by the Chair ..... Date .....

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