
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 8th September 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, Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Judd, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Pope, Cllr Carr, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Gooch, Cllr Singh, Cllr Dawson, M Hilton Clerk.

Public: two

Apologies Cllr Spikings, given to the Chair.

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. **To approve the Minutes from the last meeting:** these were approved and signed by the Chair.
5. **Public Forum (ten minutes only):**
 - A parishioner reported there are a couple of places on Pius Drove that have overgrown hedges. One falls in Outwell Parish Council. The Clerk has previously reported both hedges. Now we have moved out of bird nesting season, hopefully these should be cut soon.
6. **To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:**
 - The Neighbourhood Plan review. The Borough Council Local Plan has been in place more than six months as per a recent email from the Borough Council. BCllr Spikings had previously reported it would not be until next year. The Council asked the Clerk to contact Mrs Lester to see if she would help the Council with a review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
7. **To approve the Equality and Diversity Policy:** The Clerk explained that this was an updated policy from last month. She also explained that an Equality Policy is a must have document for all town and parish councils. The Equality Act is broad and impacts all functions of a parish council, therefore, a parish council needs an Equality Policy to do anything to prevent it falling foul of the Equality Act. Without the policy the Council would fail the internal and external audit, cannot apply for grants, and would not be able to sell parcels of land or other assets. The policy has been in place for many years and is a standard UK Government policy. Cllr Robinson declared he had not had time to read it. Cllr Pope asked for an amendment to postponing the vote to approve the policy until the next meeting. Five votes were in favour of this, therefore not carried. A vote then took place in favour of approval of the policy this was five for and five against. The Chair used his casting vote in favour. The policy has now been approved.
8. **Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk**
 - i. To consider planning applications:
 - Planning Application Consultation 25/01308/F. Retrospective application for external cladding to building facade at The Old Barn The Stables 71 School Road Upwell. The Upwell Parish Council Planning Group support this application in principal but would like to see the white cladding replaced with a more toned-down colour. The current white cladding creates a very stark appearance/contrast against the adjoining blue/grey cladding, and in the Planning Group's view does not compliment the street scene. A vast majority of existing painted render

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dwellings in the vicinity are detached so are one colour, but it is appreciated that this effort has been to identify two different dwellings.

The Council approved the decisions made by the planning working group.

- ii. To discuss Low Side land sale: Cllr Robinson reported a potential contractor had been busy and working away, so had not yet come forward with a proposal. The potential sale will need to go out to tender as reported last month.
- iii. To discuss sale of land rear of 37 Small Lode: It was agreed the Clerk would write to one of the residents to see if they are still interested in purchasing the land. Cllr Pope made a proposal to gift the other parcel to the resident who has attended recent Council meetings.
- iv. To discuss Freebridge property at Small Lode: Cllr Fairbrother has been in contact with Freebridge, also BCllr Spikings has also contacted them. The bungalow is still very overgrown. Cllr A. Harrison will engage our groundman's to cut this back, and to trim brambles along the pathway to the Health Centre.
- v. To discuss the Safety Camera Team Partnership: Cllr A. Harrison wished for the camera team to be asked to move to different areas such as School Road and in Lakes End. The Clerk will make contact.
- vi. To discuss Lakes End pavements and safety mirrors: Cllr Fairbrother will meet with a resident shortly to ask if the mirror can be attached to their fence. Cllr A. Harrison will ask the groundsman to trim back vegetation on the pathways.
- vii. To discuss the Financial Regulations: Cllr Pope asked Cllr A Harrison if he had anything to say on the matter. Cllr Harrison said a recent meeting of the Finance Committee had been held to discuss the Regulations. All Regulations have been followed by the Finance Committee and the Responsible Finance Officer. The Clerk had emailed Cllr Pope to ask what specific issues he had with the Regulations but received no response. Cllr Carr agreed with Cllr Harrison and said the Clerk had shown them all the paperwork for the finances. Also, the Clerk explained the accounts are rigorously scrutinised by both the internal and external auditor. Cllr Pope refuted this. The Clerk explained the paperwork she sends every month to all Councillors is the same as the previous Clerk's. Cllr Pope started to read a statement which he said would take about ten minutes. The Chair soon realised Cllr Pope thought that the Chair signed off all the payments. The Clerk explained she uploads the payments (she is not a signatory) and two members of the finance committee sign off the payments. The Committee scrutinise the payments in line with the budget set for the year. Cllr Carr suggested that all members of the Council join the finance committee, this would then stop the current issues Cllr Pope has with the finances. This proposal was voted on and unanimously agreed. Cllr Aston said it must be mandatory for all Councillors to join the committee. The date for budget setting meeting is 20th October 2025 7pm.

9. To note any Health and Safety issues:

- The top of Listers Road/New Road overgrown verge. Cllr Harrison will speak with the groundsman and get this cut back.
- Hall Bridge Road path is very overgrown.
- Baptist Road the verge is overgrown, Cllr Harrison will get the address, and Clerk will write to them.
- March Riverside has been reported on the Highways '*report a problem*' portal, still nothing has been done. Cllr Shorting will speak with the owners.

10. Finance

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

Payments for September 2025 Authorisation

Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	41.63	0.00	41.63	EP	HMRC allowance for home working, paper
Salaries	3123.92	0.00	3123.92		
Melanie Hilton				EP	97 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Cleaner				EP	16.5 Village Hall cleaner hours plus holiday pay
HMRC	874.20	0.00	874.20	EP	Month 5
Nest Pension Scheme	142.37	0.00	142.37	DD	Clerks pension
Groundsman				EP	42 Groundsman Hours
Cemetery Gardener				EP	6 hours garden cemetery
ASB	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Bus stops cleaned
Nurture	390.87	78.17	469.04	EP	Cemetery grass cutting July 2025
English Brothers	124.31	24.86	149.17	EP	Metal gate for the allotments
Parish Online	160.00	32.00	192.00	EP	Gov.UK email addresses
Gold Land Surveys	450.00	0.00	450.00	EP	Monitoring survey points for possible road and bank movement
Gallagher	4711.67	0.00	4711.67	EP	Insurance 2025-26
Upwell Computers	979.99	0.00	979.99	EP	New Clerks laptop and setup fee (pd 27/8)
NPTS	8.00	1.60	9.60	EP	October seminar (shared cost with CPC and WPC)
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
WAVE	97.36	0.00	97.36	DD	Water for Cemetery
SSE	594.52	29.73	624.25	DD	Streetlight Energy
Veolia	210.90	42.18	253.08	DD	Waste disposal
TOTAL	12,047.74	230.14	12,277.88		

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.

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

- Cllr Fairbrother said he had been in contact with a parishioner with an issue at the cemetery reference concrete kerbs she has laid. The Clerk said this has been an ongoing issue. The Clerk explained the parishioner had laid concrete sleepers around the grave without permission from the Parish Council. The parishioner's solicitor has been emailed with this information, but the parishioner went ahead and did it anyway. A letter has been sent saying the Parish Council will remove them. This will still take place. The parishioner has been given by hand the terms and conditions as set out by Mintlyn which clearly states this information. No one can lay concrete kerbs without the permission of the Council and the appropriate fee paid. The leaseholder of the plot needs to engage a stonemason, who will contact the Council for approval and ask for an invoice. A stonemason is the only one who can install headstones and kerb sets.
- Cutting of the banks on Welle Creek: Cllr Gooch
- Co-Option
- Christmas lights: Cllr Robinson
- Remembrance Sunday: Cllr Pope
- Primrose Farm: Cllr Fairbrother

Cllr Carr asked if at the December meeting the Council could bring nibbles for the meeting.

12. To note the date of the next Parish Council meeting –13th October 2025 at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.

13. Close: the meeting closed at 20.50pm

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Signed by the Chair Date