
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 13th October 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 Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Judd, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Pope, Cllr Carr, Cllr Gooch, Cllr Spikings, M Hilton Clerk.

Public: six

Apologies Cllr Aston, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Singh, CCllr Dawson, BCllr Rose.

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:** Cllr Pope had many issues with the minutes. It was agreed to one line in the minutes to be removed. The Clerk said she would record the meeting and all future meetings. Cllr Pope said only two members attended the finance committee meeting this was untrue as three attended. The meeting was to discuss the Financial Regulations. Cllr Spikings said without the Equality and Diversity Policy the Council could still dispose of land.

5. Public Forum (ten minutes only):

Cllr Gooch introduced the six attendees from Well Creek Trust. Cllr Gooch sent this email recently... 'After at least 20, maybe more, years of receiving a very satisfactory commitment from the Middle Level Commissioners on the maintenance regime and well-kept banks plus other work and care from the Well Creek Trust we were suddenly left in a situation in 2024 where the MLC were unable to carry out the first cut to the banks until August of that year. The banks became very unsightly, and the boats were unable to pass (Outwell) in particular. There was also a health and safety risk in so far as due to the long grass harbouring rubbish the rat population increased, and the long grass was hindering the visibility of pedestrians and motorists when crossing the highways from the bridges. Both Parish Councils jumped into action represented by two from Outwell and two from Upwell along with two members from the Well Creek and joined two members of the MLC at meeting at their officers in March of 2025. This was a fruitful meeting, and it was agreed on health and safety reasons to cut the banks on the A roads from the Locke in March Riverside to the Aqueduct in Outwell where a large percentage of the villages live. This cut would be approx. a metre from the railings down towards the river every five weeks. This arrangement was brought back to each authority and was subsequently adopted. This situation has been monitored along the way, and the first cut will take place sometime this September. We are now asking for each councillor's opinion on this matter and any comments you may have received from the parishioners. If everyone is satisfied with this arrangement it will perhaps continue in the years to come. This cut in September will be considered the first cut and as last year the second cut followed on before Christmas. We do know this maintenance is not compulsory for MLC's and they do it at a cost of £4000 a year. The only commitment they have is to maintain the cutting of the reeds and fauna for the movement of the boats. I will just also remind ourselves that they will not now take of any hand cutting which of course does involve the verges roadside of the railings. Should our council come to the conclusion that they want to see the banks cut earlier we could follow a solution being used by other affected areas whereby they are employing their own contractors to do an earlier cut. This of course will be subject to some further expense on behalf of both Councils, but I do ask you to remind yourselves that the Well Creek plays a very important attraction in our villages and should be equally supported by its residents along with all other commitments that present themselves.'

The banks did not get cut until October. One member of the Well Creek Trust (WCT) said that parishioners should be made aware of their riparian ownership and keep their landing stages clean and in good repair. The WCT will write to those who currently are not maintaining their landing stages.

Upwell Parish Council

It was agreed for Cllr Judd will get three quotes for the cutting of the banks three times a year, and the Clerk will write to MLC to seek permission for these cuts.

6. To discuss Co-Option candidate: Mr P Hartley recently applied to become a Co-Opted member of the Council. The Council voted and approved this. The Clerk will send over the relevant paperwork to him.

7. To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:

- The Neighbourhood Plan review. Cllr Gooch will contact Mrs Lester to start the ball rolling.

Cllr Spikings reported from the Borough Council that there needs to be 60,000 new homes built in the next ten years. The new Local Plan will be completed in 30 months. Community Infrastructure Levy is to be replaced by the Spending Strategy and Policy Document. Applications for grants will open on the 1st March 2026 giving up to 20% grants on new projects.

8. To note 2026 meeting dates: these were noted.

9. To discuss and consider Terms of Reference for Upwell Village Hall: this was discussed at the village hall committee meeting, and they approved the policy: the Council ratified the decision.

10. Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk

- To consider planning applications:
 - Planning Application Consultation 25/01199/F. Proposed full application for barn conversion to dwelling (to extend and alter Class Q approved scheme). Including defining of proposed garden area at Commercial Buildings Northwest of 4 Millfield Town Street Upwell. The Upwell Council Planning Group support this application. No apparent material grounds for objection. There will be fewer buildings on the site, & existing buildings are well laid out. The site will be tidy.
 - Planning Application Consultation 25/01500/LDE. Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the existing use as a separate dwelling house at 44A Town Street Upwell Wisbech Norfolk PE14 9DA The Upwell Council Planning Group supports this application, as there is no reason not to continue to recognise this as a separate dwelling.

The Council approved the decisions made by the planning working group.
- To discuss the cutting of the riverbanks: this was discussed under the public forum.
- To discuss the village Christmas lights: Cllr Robinson said he would like recognition for the lights and vehicle run for the Parish Council in the magazine. The tractor run is being replaced with a vehicle run and will be a longer route. The Clerk will write to neighbouring Parish Clerks to let them know about the event. Cllr Shorting will produce a flyer for the event.
- To discuss Remembrance Sunday Service: Cllr Shorting will purchase a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Fairbrother will read the Role of Honour at the Remembrance Service; Cllr A. Harrison will lay the wreath.
- To discuss issues at Primrose Farm: Parishioners have reported being intimidated by people at Primrose Farm. BCllr Rose is discussing this at the SNAP meeting tonight. Hopefully, this will mean more police presence in the area.
- To discuss an offer received for the garden allotment on Small Lode: An offer of £1000 has been put forward, however, the Clerk has asked for the land to be valued as only bids at the current value can be considered. The parishioner has not yet responded.
- To discuss a new request for a Cemetery bench: a bench was chained to the chain-link fence at the bottom of the cemetery. This has since been removed as asked for by the cemetery working group. It was agreed no further benches could be installed at the bottom of the cemetery on this side as there are already four in situ. However, the Council did agree a bench could be sited at the top end of the cemetery. The Clerk will inform the family.

Clerk to the Council; Melanie Hilton (CiLCA Qualified). Mobile; 07368 420237 Email; clerk@upwell-pc.gov.uk 14th

October 2025

Upwell Parish Council

11. To note any Health and Safety issues:

- A willow tree is hanging over the footbridge. Clerk to ask the groundman to cut back. Cllr Shorting will get address and the clerk will write to the owners.
- There is a crack in the wall along St Peters Road, Cllr Shorting will get the address.
- From the top of Baptist Road to Dovecote the verge needs cutting. Cllr Dawson may help with this.

12. Finance

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

Payments for October 2025 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	2963.82	0.00	2963.82		
Clerk				EP	100 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Village Hall Cleaner				EP	29 Village Hall cleaner hours
HMRC	773.25	0.00	773.25	EP	Month 6
Nest Pension Scheme	126.39	0.00	126.39	DD	Clerks pension
Groundsman				EP	34 Groundsman Hours
Groundsman				EP	3 hours clearing overhanging foliage unoccupied Freebridge bungalow Small Lode
Cemetery Gardener				EP	12 hours garden cemetery
Upwell Village Hall	27.50	0.00	27.50	EP	Meeting room hire 8/9/25
ASB	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Bus stops cleaned
Nurture	390.87	78.17	469.04	EP	Cemetery grass cutting August 2025
PKF Littlejohn	420.00	84.00	504.00	EP	External Audit 2024/25
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
Veolia	168.72	33.74	202.46	DD	Waste disposal
TOTAL	5,034.55	217.51	5,252.06		

- 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 note the conclusion of audit:** this was noted.

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

- Cllr Pope said the Code of Conduct was the incorrect document on the website, the Clerk will update.
- Cllr Fairbrother wanted it minuted that the Parish Council had nothing to do with the decision regarding the buses no longer being able to turn in Three Holes Village Hall carpark as recently said on Facebook.
- Cemetery
- Christmas nibbles

14. To note the date of the next Parish Council meeting –10th November 2025 at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.

15. Close: the meeting closed at 20.29pm

Signed by the Chair Date