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## Upwell Parish Council

### Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 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, Cllr Hartley.

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

**Public:** two

**Apologies** none received

#### MINUTES

- 1. Welcome and opening remarks:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and our new Councillor, Paul Hartley.
- 2. To consider and approve apologies for absence:** none given.
- 3. To declare any conflicts and pecuniary interests on any items on this month's agenda:** Cllr Hartley for planning application 25/01542/F.
- 4. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings:** The minutes from the September Full Council meeting, the October Full Council meeting, and the October Finance meeting were formally signed by the chair.
- 5. Public Forum (10 minutes):** Two parishioners requested Council approval to reinstall a bench by their son's grave, which was previously removed by the Council due to lack of permission. The Council agreed to vote on the agenda item 8ii.

Cllr Dawson is seeking quotes to clean up the area from the bridge to the playing field in Three Holes. He requested that the Council consider applying for a Parish Partnership Scheme grant to help fund the project. The Council agreed to apply for the grant and then discuss whether to proceed with the project.

#### 6. Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk

##### i. To consider planning applications:

- Planning Application Consultation 25/01511/F. Erection of 2no. semi-detached dwellings with demolition of existing dwelling and garage, and formation of access points. at Holly Dene 1 Baptist Road

Upwell PE14 9EU. Grounds for objection as follows: -Insufficient parking provision for each 3 bedroom dwelling. There should be a minimum provision of parking for 4 vehicles for each dwelling, to ensure the potential of a three bedroom dwelling being occupied by three individual drivers, plus visitors, is adequately catered for, & to lessen the concern of on road parking. Whilst NCC Highways now have no concerns with regards to visibility splays being achieved, Baptist Road is heavily used by HGV traffic serving two well established businesses, & large agricultural vehicles. This section of Baptist Road is very narrow, leaving no place for two large vehicles to pass parked cars. There is no pedestrian footpath. During construction (if approved) & occupancy, Upwell Parish Council envisages conflict & confrontation with vehicles parking on the road, especially during delivery of building materials etc. Also, new residents would be unaware of the usage of the road, and again Upwell Parish Council envisages complaints about the amount of HGV's & large vehicles, noise & flashing lights passing within feet of the front of these dwellings, especially during the hours of darkness. This type of usage is beyond any authority's control, but inevitably, people do not accept or understand the rural nature of the area. Also, vehicles entering Baptist Road from the junction are noted to do so with some degree of speed.

The rear path/patio seems rather narrow. According to the Idox measuring tool, part of the rear path to the left dwelling appears to be approx. 300mm, and the rear path to the right dwelling appears to be approx. 600mm. This width is insufficient for maintenance of the rear of the dwellings (gutter clearance etc) & is too close to the boundary fence.

The design is contrary to Upwell Neighbourhood Plan Housing Policy H3: Design - All development will be designed to a high quality, reinforcing and complementing local distinctiveness and character. Design which fails to have regard to local context and does not preserve, compliment, or enhance the character and quality of its immediate area and the wider Parish will not be acceptable. Proposals should therefore be of an appropriate density, height, variety, scale and layout. This is not intended to discourage innovation, with will be welcomed. The Parish Council is of the opinion that limitations of the site does not meet the requirements of the Upwell Neighbourhood Plan for a dwelling.

There is only one ground floor bathroom which is not sufficient for a 3 bedroom dwelling in this modern age. If the proposal is approved, Upwell Parish Council insists that a condition is attached requiring the addition of dummy chimneys to enhance the aesthetics of the dwellings & reflect the local character of adjacent dwellings. The inclusion of a false front door with window for the bathroom, along with false windows to the rear, are not a characteristic feature of any other neighbouring dwelling.

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The existing dwelling has character & compliments the area, & despite various additions in the past, has provided adequate family accommodation decades. It's retention & obvious modernisation/renovation, would benefit from substantial off road parking provision & large amenity space not achievable with the proposed dwellings.

- Planning Application Consultation 25/01542/F. Change of Use from Agricultural Land to a Dog Walking Field and associated car parking, access, storage container, lighting, mobile field shelter, fencing and landscaping at land at E551371 N297621 Horsehead Drove Lott's Bridge Three Holes. The Upwell Parish Council Planning Group support this application. This type of amenity is often seen to be requested. The Council would however like to ensure that the site & structures etc. are kept in good order.

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

*Item ii and 1 swapped over by the Chair.*

**ii. To receive an update on the change of use planning application for the cemetery/garden allotments:**

- Cllr Spikings read an email she had received this evening from Christian Wilson (senior valuer) which said: *Our new interim surveyor will be looking at this case but it will take time before everything is arranged with a proposed transfer of the cemetery and allotment land to the Parish (subject to council approval). In the meantime, I have spoken with our legal team and they say they would be able to apply for first registration of the land, but it will take perhaps a year before the Land Registry do this. But at least the ball would be in the Land Registry's court then, and they could then be asked to expedite the matter at the point of any transfer happening. We would need to instruct our legal team to do this first registration which involves some paperwork in our office needing to be raised.*
- Cllr Fairbrother agreed to submit the Change of Use planning application. This concerns the extension into the allotment area. Cllrs Spikings and Fairbrother will liaise on this.
- The Council held a vote regarding the parishioner's bench at the cemetery and decided it could be reinstalled alongside the other benches on left hand side of the cemetery.

**iii. Land Sale Rear of 37 Small Lode:** The Clerk updated that one party offered £1,000 without a valuation, but land can only be sold at its appraised value. No further response from that party has been received. The other residents confirmed their intent to purchase for £10,000 as previously agreed. The Clerk will remind all parties that they are responsible for related fees, so the Council incurs no costs. Cllrs Aston and Pope proposed and seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**iv. To discuss the riverbank cutting:** budget limitations mean no funds are available for additional cuts. Councillor Gooch expressed strong dissatisfaction and questioned both the allocation of funds and the high cost of the riverside barriers. Cllrs Judd and Robinson will obtain quotes for an additional cut. Cllr Dawson said he may be able to assist if the cost is reasonable.

A discussion was held regarding the budget setting. It was noted that the precept will need to be increased next year due to rising costs for streetlights, dog waste bins, and other expenses. The village hall was allocated £50K in the 2025-26 budget; however, only £30K has been spent to date this financial year. The cost of repairing the riverside railings was previously approved at a Full Council meeting and included in the budget. While it was reported that repairs would be more expensive than replacement, Councillor Gooch expressed disagreement with this.

Cllr Pope said that a yearly 2.5% increase over the last three years would have avoided a large precept rise now.

**v. Discussion on the December meeting (Christmas nibbles):** Everyone agreed to contribute and liaise with what to bring.

**vi. To discuss correspondence given to Cllr Pope – cemetery, burial of ashes:** Cllr Pope requested that the ashes of the late Fred Kitchen, a parishioner for 85 years before moving to a care home, be interred in the cemetery. The Council approved this proposal, and the Clerk will notify the undertakers.

**vii. To discuss Orchard Gardens defibrillator:** Cllr A. Harrison asked for permission to purchase a sign giving directions to the defibrillator at Orchards Gardens. This was approved.

**viii. To discuss the Planning Working Group membership and planning responses:** Cllr A. Harrison noted that the Planning Group requires at least five members as per the Terms of Reference, but currently has four, with only

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three regularly responding to planning applications. Cllr Hartley agreed to join the group and complete any training needed. Cllr Gooch explained her lack of recent responses was due to internet issues, which are now resolved.

- ix. **To receive an update on the Christmas lights and vehicle run:** Cllr Robinson informed the Council that, under Section 137, the Council is permitted to send donations to a charity for funds raised by this event. He noted the Clerk had contacted various Parish Councils regarding the event. Cllr Shorting advised Cllr Robinson to inform the Police of the event. Leaflets have been distributed to inform parishioners about the event, which will also be announced in the Winter edition of the Parish magazine.

### 7. To note any Health and Safety issues: None.

### 8. Finance

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

#### Payments for November 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	3496.43	0.00	3496.43		
Melanie Hilton				EP	105 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Charlotte Hilton				EP	35.5 Village Hall cleaner hours
HMRC	832.40	0.00	832.40	EP	Month 7
Nest Pension Scheme	133.79	0.00	133.79	DD	Clerks pension
Tim Dewdney				EP	60 Groundsman Hours
Kelvin Judd				EP	12 hours garden cemetery
Upwell Village Hall	55.00	0.00	55.00	EP	Meeting room hire 13/10 and 20/10
ASB	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Bus stops cleaned
Limetree	937.23	0.00	937.23	EP	Autumn magazine printing
All Pests Controlled	70.00	14.00	84.00	EP	Wasp nest at War memorial
LEVH	40.00	0.00	40.00	EP	Hall hire 11/8/25
Purple Graphic Design	410.00	0.00	410.00	EP	Magazine design and production Autumn magazine
Nurture	390.87	78.17	469.04	EP	Cemetery grass cutting Sept
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
Wave	41.87	0.00	41.87	DD	Water supply for Cemetery
Veolia	168.72	33.74	202.46	DD	Waste disposal
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,740.31</b>	<b>147.51</b>	<b>6,887.82</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 approval of Internal Auditor 2025-26:** The Council approved Robin Goreham to conduct the internal audit for the 2025-2026 accounts.
- v. **2026\_27 Budget and Precept:** On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October Finance meeting, the Council approved the budget and precept, proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr A. Harrison.
9. **To propose any items for the next agenda:** please advise the Clerk at least a week before the next meeting date.
- Cemetery to stay on future agendas
10. **To note the date of the next Parish Council meeting –8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.**
11. **Close:** the meeting closed at 20.08pm

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