
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 9th June 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 Aston, (arrived 19.02pm), Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Judd, Cllr Fairbrother, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Pope, Cllr Carr, BCllr Spikings, BCllr Rose, CCllr Dawson, M Hilton Clerk.

Public: none

Apologies Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Singh, Cllr Gooch

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:**

Cllr Robinson for Five Bells planning application.

4. **Public Forum (ten minutes only):**

None in attendance

5. **To approve the Minutes from the last meeting:**

These 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. Update given by Cllr Spikings...

The Government has launched a consultation on introducing a national scheme of delegation for planning decisions, requiring separate smaller planning committees for strategic development and mandatory training for planning committee members. The Government is proposing to introduce a scheme of delegation which categorises planning applications into the following two tiers:

- Tier A which would include types of applications which must be delegated to officers in all cases; and
- Tier B which would include types of applications which must be delegated to officers unless the Chief Planner and Chair of committee agree it should go to committee based on a gateway test.

7. **To discuss Standing Orders/public forum:**

It was agreed that at each meeting the Chair will decide on how long members of the public speak for within the ten-minute period allotted. No change to the Standing Orders is required.

8. **Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk**

i To consider planning applications:

- Planning Application Consultation 25/00612/F. Proposed single-storey extension to existing building including the demolition of existing lean-to at Five Bells Inn 1 New Road Upwell Wisbech PE14 9AA The Upwell Council Planning Group supports this application. It proposed work is out of view and is of benefit to a well-used business for tourism in the village. It is noted that the Conservation Department has no objections.
- Planning Application Consultation 25/00521/F. Proposed wood-built Cattery sitting on a concrete pad. The Cattery contains a kitchen/ office space leading on to six 6 pens. Within the pens there will be a sleeping area and a separate action area for each individual cat. A corridor will give access to all six pens at The Cottage The Common Upwell Wisbech PE14 9AW. The Upwell Council Planning Group supports this application, as no material grounds appear to be relevant. The Council approved the decisions made.

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ii. To receive an update regarding the Environmental Agency at the Cemetery: Cllr Fairbrother.

The Environmental Agency have approved the extension of Upwell Cemetery into the allotments. The Clerk will contact the Borough Council and ask them to formalise the permanent takeover of the cemetery. Cllr Fairbrother will apply for the change of use through the planning portal.

iii. To receive an update on CIL (report received): Clerk

The Clerk forwarded a report to the Council.

Cil Money received £8187.91

Expenditure

- Installation of four new noticeboards £295
- Repair to war memorial £490
- Cemetery development £3750. The balance will be spent in the coming year on the riverside railings repair.

iv. To receive and update on the riverside railings: Cllr Fairbrother

The concrete fence that has been there since the 1920's has become very damaged through subsidence. One solution was to remove it completely, but the County Council strongly recommended not to pursue this route, for risk of litigation if a vehicle was to enter the water. Quotations were arranged with potential contractors, two companies refused to quote, which suggested this was a challenging project. All companies highlighted the active subsidence and bank collapse between Pius Drove and Ransome's close. The Borough Council reminded us that Upwell's fence was in the conservation area and subject to different criteria than Outwell, thus removal would require further applications and cost. The bank in Upwell is significantly narrower than Outwell, you will observe Outwell have removed their 'old fence' by lifting the posts cutting them off and leaving a considerable chunk of old post in the ground and moving their new fence closer to the road on a different line, Upwell simply has not got the space to do that. Renovation of the existing fence is by far the most sensible strategy. Both in practical application and retaining a key heritage feature of Upwell. The structural engineer for the project strongly advised, in no uncertain terms, that this method of cutting posts would cause "significant problems" for the bank, attempting to dig fresh holes next to the old holes, the bank in Upwell is simply not wide enough. It is obvious not everyone will be happy with the choice, especially now a direct comparison to Outwell can be made. However, the same fence that Outwell has chosen, or had chosen for them has been installed in the layby outside Upwell church in the last decade; and it is in a terrible state of repair. The slim line concrete posts and rails allows for very limited movement and quickly the posts fall out. They are only held in with 20kg bags of post mix. Upwells posts are having in places 150kg of concrete, which is providing essential bank reinforcement. The concrete fence is older than any living resident in Upwell and will outlive any current resident of Upwell. It will not be back on the Parish council's agenda for maintenance, which it would seem evident the new type fencing will be. The original quote was for repair not replacement so there is no issue with administration. This method has allowed for the retention of the established Rose's and trees outside Russell's and the Cafe, it would have been terrible to have to remove these natural features in the heart of the village. In short, the whole project is a difficult and unwanted task, but when all of the factors are considered, the correct solution has been employed.

Cllr Pope had several questions regarding the report, the Chair said he would speak with him outside of the meeting. Council approved this.

Cllr Robinson has been getting quotes for new railings for outside the church (to match the ones outside Russells etc.) Cllr Robinson and Fairbrother will compile a report for the next meeting.

v. To receive an update on Dodds Style: CCllr Dawson

Cllr Dawson circulated an email with an update. Nothing can be reported at this time to the public. Cllr Pope asked CCllr Dawson to find out how long the issues have been going on.

vi. To receive an update regarding the VE day celebrations: Cllr Shorting.

The celebrations were a success and the spare medals are being distributed to senior members of the parish.

vii. To discuss adopting Gov.UK email address: Clerk

The Clerk circulated a report. Currently it is not mandatory to have a Gov.UK email address. The following information is taken from the **Practitioners Guide 2025**

Digital and data compliance

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- Data protection and security - Using authority-owned email accounts ensures that sensitive information is handled in a controlled environment with appropriate security measures. This aligns with GDPR principles such as data minimisation, integrity and confidentiality.
- Accountability and transparency - authority-owned email accounts provide a clear record of communications, which is essential for transparency and accountability. This helps in maintaining an audit trail and ensures all authority-related communications are accessible for review if needed.
- Consistency, trust and professionalism - it is best practice to use .gov.uk domains for smaller authorities' emails and websites (excluding parish meetings). This helps maintain a consistent and professional image for the authority and ensures all communications are easily identifiable as coming from the authority. This is increasingly important as cyber scams are on the rise. For support on setting up a gov.uk domain for your smaller authority you can follow the guidance on moving your parish council to a .gov.uk domain.
- Having authority-owned email accounts also makes Data Subject Access and Freedom of Information Requests easier to manage.

9. To note any Health and Safety issues: nothing was reported.

10. Finance

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

Payments for June 2025 Authorisation					
Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	80.16	0.83	80.99	EP	HMRC allowance for home working, envelopes, fee to MLC for barrier works
salaries	2872.58	0.00	2872.58		
Melanie Hilton				EP	90 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Charlotte Hilton				EP	21.5 Village Hall cleaner hours
HMRC	742.15	0.00	742.15	EP	Month 2
Nest Pension Scheme	121.31	0.00	121.31	DD	Clerks pension
Tim Dewdney				EP	39 Groundsman Hours
Kelvin Judd				EP	14 hours garden cemetery
Upwell Village Hall	27.50	0.00	27.50	EP	Hall Hire 12th May 25
CDS	950.00	190.00	1140.00	EP	Cemetery extension advice
AB Roofing	2850.00	0.00	2850.00	EP	50% deposit for felting flat rooves at Upwell VH (pd 12/5)
AB Roofing	2910.00	0.00	2910.00	EP	completion of works (pd 29/5)
AB Roofing	840.00	0.00	840.00	EP	Scaffolding for roofing works at VH
Outwell Timber	108.74	21.76	130.50	EP	Post and fencing village hall
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
Cozens	495.00	99.00	594.00	EP	232 Town Street replacement Lantern
Cozens	495.00	99.00	594.00	EP	137 School Rd replacement Lantern
WAVE	44.17	0.00	44.17	DD	Water for Cemetery
Veolia	215.84	43.17	259.01	DD	Waste disposal
TOTAL	12,860.45	475.36	13,335.81		

- 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.

- Amalgamating Upwell Playing Field with Upwell Parish Council. The Clerk asked Cllrs Shorting and Fairbrother to produce a report before the next meeting.
- Cemetery
- Cllr Pope asked for ash trees to be added, but did not specify where or what is to be discussed. The Clerk asked for a written report to be produced before the next meeting.

Cllr Fairbrother said the copy date for the next magazine is 20th June, and Cllr Aston now oversees advertising and Prue Lester oversees the collating of the magazine.

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- 12. To note the date of the next Parish Council meeting –14th July 2025 at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.**
- 13. Close:** the meeting closed at 19.35pm

Signed by the Chair **Date**