



MINUTES OF UPCHURCH FULL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 07 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 19:30PM IN UPCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Ripley, Cllr Lewin, Cllr Rosewell, Cllr Berntsen, Cllr Bodycomb, Cllr Denny, Cllr Horton
Officer: Clerk, Nina Henley
External Attendees: None
Apologies: Cllr Sheppard, Cllr Boakes,
External Apologies: Cllr C Palmer, Cllr R Palmer, Cllr Baldock

266-FCM/11/24 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Sheppard (holiday) Cllr Boakes (unwell)

267-FCM/11/24 To receive declarations of interests and lobbying

Cllr Horton declared an interest agenda item 272.FCA/11/24 II planning application 24/504410

268-FCM/11/24 Minutes

To receive as correct and approve for signature the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 3 Oct 2024.

Members RESOLVED to approve the minutes. Proposed by Cllr Rosewell, seconded by Cllr Lewin. Unanimous.

269-FCM/11/24 Public Participation

There were 10 members of the public present.

Members of the public discussed various objections to the planning application 24/504410

270-FCM/11/24 External Reports and Updates

None

271-FCM/11/24 Correspondence

- I. Email correspondence from SBC Local council Forum Meeting. Noted.
- II. Email correspondence from Swale Borough Council – review of polling districts. Noted.
- III. Email correspondence from KCC Rail Summit. Noted.
- IV. Email correspondence from KCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Noted
- V. Email correspondence from resident re parking in the bus stop. Noted.
- VI. Email correspondence from Cllr Palmer offering grant support for parish initiatives to support loneliness and isolation within the community. Noted
- VII. Copy of email from resident sent to SBC planning breach Poot Lane. Circulated. Noted.

272-FCM/11/24 Planning

To receive updates on planning matters

- I. 24/504336/FULL Yew Tree Cottage Poot Lane Upchurch Kent ME9 7HJ Conversion of garage to form elderly persons annexe with extension to rear and replacement of log store with side extension.
UPC request that this application be sympathetic to the current form of the property.
- II. 24/504410/OUT Land East of Holywell Primary School, Forge Lane, Upchurch. ME9 7AD
Outline application (access and layout sought) for the erection of 16 dwellings with associated

parking and gardens and formulation of additional dual purpose fenced parking / drop off area for Holywell Primary School with creation of new access and egress points onto Forge Lane. UPC objects to this application. See Appendix 1.

- III. Any reports from Cllr Rosewell. Cllr Rosewell reported that application on the portal for prior notification of grain store – no comments needed.

273-FCM/11/24 Upchurch Parish Council Reporting

- I. Paddock and Recreational Ground – to receive update.
 - (a) Play area new equipment. Cllr Denny reported that the plan had been approved and date for installation to be confirmed. Noted.
 - (b) Update on play area new signs. Cllr Rosewell that the paddock signs will be placed in the same positions and the recreation ground signs to be confirmed with Cllr Denny.
 - (c) Recreation groundwork on entrance barriers. Deferred to December meeting.
 - (d) Update on options for goal posts. Clerk to investigate grant options available for this project. Deferred to December.
 - (e) Update on new tree. Installation confirmed for Monday 2 December.
 - (f) Tap to be disconnected in Paddock. Clerk has arranged with water company. Noted.
- II. Burial Ground & Churchyard – to receive update.
 - (a) Request for interment of ashes. Members RESOLVED to agree for former resident ashes to be interred at Burial Ground as plot is not a new space.
- III. Highways & Street Lighting – to receive update.
 - (a) Update on traffic calming Oak Lane. No updates.
- IV. Footpaths – to receive update. No updates.
- V. Environment – to receive update.
 - (a) Hedge trimming completed.
 - (b) Sewage leak reported on Poot Lane. Clerk to report to KCC.
 - (c) Cllr Horton reported the clock repaired and working well.
 - (d) Update on weed maintenance on Windmill Hill. Clerk advised this had been chased with KCC as urgent attention is required.
- VI. Allotments – No updates. Fees for 2025 to be discussed at Budget Working Group. Clerk reported new plot mapping system to be actioned 2025. Noted.
- VII. Village Defibrillators – No updates.
- VIII. Community Events
 - (a) VE Day May 2025
Cllr Rosewell reported that Beacon lighting event planned for VE Day Thursday 8 May 2025 in line with national timings. Beacon lighting / food vendors / bar. Clerk reported that event had been submitted to Swale Borough Council with road closures / event plan / risk assessment.
 - (b) Remembrance Day
Cllr Lewin reported that the service will be Sunday 10 November at the church. UPC has purchased and sent wreath to twin town Ferques. Cllr Ripley gave thanks to councillors who set up the poppies in the village. Cllr Rosewell agreed to take poppies down week after the event. Noted.
 - (c) Supporting community initiatives to combat loneliness and isolation. Deferred to December.
 - (d) Christmas. Cllr Ripley reported that the tree will be installed by councillors weekend 8 December 2024.

274-FCM/11/24 Finance Reporting

- I. Financial review – bank statement and reconciliation were received signed by Cllr Horton. Noted
- II. Payments received – VAT refund £ 3885.80 Allotments £35.00
- III. Cheques for approval litter picker: £ 60.00 Noted.
- IV. Schedule of payments for approval:

Payee	Date	Method	Reference	Reason	Amount
Hugo Fox	18/10/24	PAID DD	9322	Website hosting	£ 11.99
Majestic Trees	22/10/24	PAID	185050	Replacement Tree	£ 1300.40
St John College	07/11/24	BACS		Rent Allotments	£ 681.50
ICO	07/11/24	BACS		Subscription	£ 40.00
Eco Green	07/11/24	BACS	14166	Waste bags	£ 165.60
UVH	07/11/24	BACS	6990	Hall Hire	£ 40.00
Bearup	07/11/24	BACS	2425/091	Hedge Cut	£ 216.00
Business Strm	07/11/24	BACS	6263156	Water Allotments	£ 203.79
The Country Wy	07/11/24	BACS		Landscape Contract	£ 1512.00

L. Balcombe	07/11/24	BACS		Caretaker	£ 156.00
Expenses	07/11/24	BACS		Postage	£ 23.65
Staff costs					£ 1436.53

All Payments agreed proposed by Cllr Lewin seconded by Cllr Horton.
Members resolved to approve the schedule of payments.

275-FCM/11/24 Budget 2025/26

Budget Working Group meeting Monday 11 November – Members to advise any budgetary requirements for 2025/26.

276-FCM/11/24 Clerks updates

- I. Audit – Internal Audit – Interim 6 month audit Clerk reported no issues raised.
- II. Audit - External Audit - Members reviewed all comments from Mazars for minor improvements and these have been implemented and noted.
- III. Staff appraisal confirmed 11 November 2024. Noted.

277-FCM/11/24 Items to be considered for inclusion on the next Full Council agenda

Report from Budget Working Group.

278-FCM/11/24 Date of next meeting

Due to hall booking clash December meeting rescheduled for Thursday 12 December 2024.
January meeting confirmed for Thursday 9 January 2025. Noted.

279-FCM/11/24 Meeting closed 20.55

T. Ross

Visual Impact:

The proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the entrance to the village, compromising both the visual quality and the character of the area. The aesthetic impact of this development would not be in keeping with the existing rural surroundings.

Housing Needs:

The type of housing proposed does not align with the specific needs of the village, particularly the urgent shortage of affordable starter homes. A housing needs analysis commissioned by Upchurch Parish Council several years ago identified a particular demand for homes suitable for local young people who wish to remain in the Parish. Since the survey, no local developments have addressed this need.

Traffic and Road Safety:

The addition of new homes would significantly increase traffic and vehicle movements on already narrow, congested roads, which could create serious safety concerns. There are specific risks associated with the increased congestion, particularly near the primary school, where traffic already struggles to navigate during peak hours.

Infrastructure Strain:

The local infrastructure, especially the foul water drainage system, is already under strain, with frequent reports of drain overflows and localised flooding during heavy rain. The proposed development would exacerbate these existing issues, further taxing an already fragile system.

Environmental Impact:

The development would result in the further loss of valuable wildlife habitat, affecting the local ecosystem. Given the importance of these natural spaces, the proposal raises concerns about the long-term environmental consequences.

Light Pollution:

The introduction of additional lighting from the proposed development would contribute to increased light pollution, disrupting the natural environment and harming the rural character of the area.

Reptile Survey:

The reptile survey provided as part of the application is outdated and no longer valid, raising concerns about the potential impact on local wildlife. An updated survey should be conducted to accurately assess the presence of protected species.

Healthcare Provision:

The village is already facing a shortage of GP services, and this development would place further pressure on the overburdened healthcare facilities. Data on local healthcare demand and capacity should be included to demonstrate the potential strain on services.

Drop-off Area:

The proposed drop-off area is too small, presenting potential safety risks. Vehicles would be required to maneuver in tight spaces while children are present, increasing the likelihood of accidents or conflicts.

Parking for Parents:

It is unclear whether the designated drop-off spaces will be exclusively reserved for parents of children attending the school. This needs to be clarified to ensure that the parking facilities are used as intended and do not contribute to further congestion.

Section 106 Contributions:

In the event that the application is granted, we request that any Section 106 contributions be directed towards improvements in the village's infrastructure, including Parish facilities e.g. play equipment, village hall maintenance etc.

Policy Considerations:

Under the 2017 adopted local plan, Upchurch is identified as a parish where housing growth is not required. Furthermore, the proposed development lies outside the defined built environment of this part of the parish (see references 4.3.21 [2], 4.3.22, and 4.3.23). This reinforces the argument that the development is contrary to local planning policy.

Potential Impact on Local Education:

The proposed development could limit the ability of the local primary school to expand. The school already accommodates pupils from a wide area, including parts of Medway, which is undergoing significant housing development. The additional demand from the proposed development would further strain the school's capacity.