

UPLOWMAN PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council : Robert Hodgson
Lower Beer,
Uplowman,
Tiverton EX16 7PF
Tel/fax: 01884-821239
E-mail : UplowmanPC@btconnect.com

12/03/16

All Parish Councillors

Dear Councillors,

UPLOWMAN PARISH COUNCIL - NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 11th May 2016, starting at 7.30pm in Uplowman Village Hall

The next meeting of this Council will be on **WEDNESDAY 11th May 2016**, starting at 7.30pm in Uplowman Village Hall with any comments from the public. Draft Minutes of the last meeting have been circulated and can be found at <https://new.middevon.gov.uk/Uplowman> - our NEW website active since 1st April. Please also note the new email address as above.

We will need to agree our Annual Governance and Accounting Statements at this meeting. These form part of the Annual Audit. I attach the Statements for your consideration, together with the Internal Audit report just completed and our explanation of the differences between 2015 and 2016 figures. The receipts and Payments report has not changed materially from what was circulated in draft at the last meeting. The statements will be posted on our website after the meeting as part of the Audit process and will then be available to anyone who wishes to look – so please give them careful attention before we sign them off.

As agreed at the last meeting, Trevor has redrafted the UPC Reserves policy. He will advise you of the minor changes made at the meeting and I hope that may be finalised then. Trevor has also drafted the attached proposals for changes to the way UPC deals with planning applications. The planning consultation process needs to be transparent and Trevor asks that you consider the proposals carefully before the meeting, please.

Please note that the following dates have been booked for meetings in 2016 in Uplowman Village Hall: 21 July, 15 Sept and 17 Nov (all Thursdays).

Yours sincerely,

Robert Hodgson (Clerk to Uplowman Parish Council)

UPLOWMAN PARISH COUNCIL

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, UPLOWMAN, ON WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2016 at 7.30pm

The evening will start with an open session at which the Chairman will present his report for 2015-6 and parishioners may raise matters of concern. All are welcome to observe the council meeting, which will start at about 7.45pm.

1. Attendance
 - 1.1 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2016-7
2. Procedural matters:
 - 2.1 Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of last meeting (17 March 2016)
4. Matters arising from Minutes of last meeting not covered elsewhere

5. Finance and procedures

5.1 Current position :

Bank balance at last meeting :		£4082.83
Income since last meeting (Precept + TAP for 2016)		£3125.31
Expenditure authorised on 21 Jan:		£1415.04
Current balance:		£5,793.10

- 5.2 Payments for approval:
 - Community First Trading (Annual Insurance premium) £180.21
 - R Hodgson (Clerk's Expenses) £8.95
- 5.3 Approval of Annual Governance Statements
- 5.4 Approval of Annual Statement of Accounts
- 5.5 Agree UPC Financial Reserves Policy (attached)
6. Planning and Licensing Applications (plus applications received after this notice) :
 - 6.1 16/00189/HOUSE Uplowman House: swimming pool. Approved by MDDC
 - 6.2 16/00326/LBC Uplowman House: Internal alterations. UPC had no objection
 - 6.3 16/00351/FULL: Chillomene: conversion of redundant building. UPC had no objection.
 - 6.4 16/00272/FULL: Church View, Uplowman, replace porch. Approved by MDDC
 - 6.5 16/00318/HOUSE: Jasper's Green, Convert garage, has been refused by MDDC
 - 6.6 16/00382/FULL: Widhayes, new cattle shed. Has been approved by MDDC
 - 6.7 16/00503/HOUSE: Hatherlands: revised drawing of extension.
 - 6.8 Review of procedures for dealing with Planning Applications (paper attached)
7. Correspondence (See attached list plus any correspondence received after this notice)
 - 7.1 Environment, SWW, etc:
 - 7.2 Local Plans and Surveys.
 - 7.3 General Correspondence
 - 7.5 Village projects
8. Hall & Recreation Association
 - 8.1 Report.
9. Emergency Planning & Neighbourhood Watch
 - 9.1 Neighbourhood Watch Report
10. Community Projects and matters.
 - 10.1 Telephone kiosk – update – Tap has been received
 - 10.2 TAP 2015 – Goal Posts: arrange a photo for report to MDDC
 - 10.3 UHRA Playground/Sect 106: Work completed. Invoice sent to MDDC
 - 10.4 Options for Parish Social Event
 - 10.5 Repairs to Church entrance – request from PCC to assist with the costs.
 - 10.6 Update on parking at school. Proposal to procure signs.
11. Parish Transport/Paths.
 - 11.1 Condition of roads in Parish.
12. Date of next meeting (Thursday 21 July, to be confirmed).

CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING (17th March 2016) Points to discuss in Bold

5. FINANCE

Ser No	Date received	From/to	Subject	Date replied/sent
411	17/03/16	Grant Thornton	Papers and arrangements for annual Audit	
412	04/04/16	MDDC	Remittance of £2825.01 received =- Precept – DALC Subscr	
413	22/04/16	MDDC	20165 TAP fund awarded	
414	27/04/16	Community First	Insurance renewal - £180.21	
415	02/05/16	R Norman	Invoice for sect 106 project at Hall – forwarded to MDDC	

6. PLANNING

Ser No	Date received	From/to	Subject	Date replied/sent
565		MDDC	16/00382/FULL: Widhayes Uplowman, Cattle Shed	18/03/16
566		MDDC	16/00272/FULL: Church View Uplowman	18/03/16
567		MDDC	16/00318/HOUSE: Jaspers Green Uplowman	18/03/16
568	18/03/16	MDDC	16/00189/HOUSE: Uplowman House swimming pool approved	
569	23/03/16	MDDC	16/00326/LBC: Uplowman House internal alterations.	
570	30/03/16	MDDC	16/00326/LBC: Chillomene. Convert shed, UPC no Objection	18/04/16
571	15/04/16	MDDC	16/00272/FULL: Church View Uplowman, Approved	
572	25/04/16	MDDC	16/00382/FULL: Widhayes, new cattle shed. Approved by MDDC	
573	29/04/16	MDDC	16/00318/HOUSE: Jaspers Green Uplowman. Refused	

7.1 ENVIRONMENT, including Sewerage, Recycling, Roads & rivers

Ser No	Date received	From/to	Subject	Date replied/sent
306	06/05/16	Devon Badger Gp	Presentation about Badger cull, Heathcoat centre 10 May	

7.2 LOCAL PLANS & SURVEYS, including HRA

Ser No	Date received	From/to	Subject	Date replied/sent
292			Nothing	

7.3 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Ser No	Date received	From/to	Subject	Date replied/sent
1621	18/04/16	Healthwatch	newsletter	
1622	19/04/16	Broadband	Voucher scheme for fas broadband in rural areas	
1623	19/04/16	MDDC	Update of Registers of Interest – forwarded to those involved	
1624	03/05/16	C&C D	Clerks & Councils Direct magazine	

7.5 Village projects.

Ser No	Date received	From/to	Subject	Date replied/sent
319	24/03/16	Various	Emails arranging photo op at signpost	
320	19/04/16	UPCC	Requesting help with funding repairs to road	
321	24/04/16	Mrs Holley	Further discussion of church entrance	

Plus about 146 incoming emails. Support for councillors: <http://www.ntselearning.co.uk> for information and on-line courses.

UPLOWMAN PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council : Robert Hodgson
Lower Beer,
Uplowman,
Tiverton EX16 7PF
Tel/fax: 01884-821239
E-mail : R.L.P.Hodgson@exeter.ac.uk
Web pages: www.middevon.gov.uk/uplowman

19/04/16

Messrs Grant Thornton UK LLP
Hartwell House
55-61 Victoria St,
Bristol BS1 6FT

SIGNIFICANT VARIANCE EXPLANATION

Please find attached summary sheets explaining significant variations plus a summary of Receipts & Payments with a Bank Reconciliation and a copy of our year end bank statement.

All these funds are held in a single account and we hold no petty cash.

I trust that this clarifies the Statement.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Hodgson, Clerk

UPLOWMAN PARISH COUNCIL 2015-6

Box Number: 2, Precept	£
Figure in 2015 column	2329
Figure in 2016 column	2803
Variance (2016 less 2015)	474
Reasons (all apply to 2016):	£Amount
Total Precept + Council Tax Reduction (CTR) grant request was increased by £400 from £2500 in 2014/5 to £2900 in 2015/6 to mitigate the potential expenses of a contested PC election in May 2015. The election proved to be uncontested and the additional Precept will be held in reserves for future election expenses.	474
The CTR has reduced in 2015/6 and therefore the difference in Precept is more than the £400 allowed allowed by Uplowman PC for the 2015 election	
Therefore, unexplained=	Nil
Confirm that 'unexplained is less than 15% of 2015 figure	2016 now = 2015 = NIL

Box Number: 3, Other Receipts	£
Figure in 2014 column	1061
Figure in 2015 column	1077
Variance (2015 less 2014)	16 (1.5%)
Confirm that 'unexplained is less than 15% of 2014 figure	16/1061 = 1.5%

UPLOWMAN PARISH COUNCIL 2015-16

Box Number: 6 All other Payments	£
Figure in 2015 column	3749
Figure in 2016 column	2613
Variance (2016 less 2015)	-1136 (-30.3%)
Reasons :	£Amount
In 2010/11 Uplowman PC funded the construction of a permissive footpath to reduce traffic at Uplowman Primary School and to provide a safe walk to school for the children. £1800 remained in hand from grants received at the time, which was spent in 2014/5 on improvements to the Village Hall car park, used by parents taking children to school.	-1800
A dog waste bin was erected during 2014/5	-455
Catering was provided for a Social event/Annual Parish Meeting in 2014/5	-150
Sports equipment was bought for use in the village recreation ground (2015/6)	358
The historic cast iron village sign post was repaired and refurbished in 2015/6	805
Unexplained/remaining expenditure	£-1242 in 2015/6
Confirm that 'unexplained is less than 15% of 2015 figure	Variance now=- 1242+1136=106 106/3749=2.8%

Planning Application Procedures and Policy -Discussion Document

Background

Parish Councils do not have power to grant or refuse planning permission. The Local Government Act 1972, section 101 does however, require local authorities to consult parish councils on certain matters affecting their parish and a parish council is a statutory consultee on the development plan, local plans and structure plans.

Planning authorities must inform local parish councils of applications affecting its parish and consider its views when deciding on planning applications. Planning authorities usually allow twenty-one days for a response.

It is important that local parishioners are able to put forward their views to the Parish Council as well as directly to the Planning Authority, usually Mid Devon District Council but could be Devon County Council for certain strategic matters.

Decision making

In order for the Parish Council to make an official decision there must be 3 things that must be in place:

- There be a Chairman of the meeting
- There must be a Quorum of 1/3 of all councillors or a minimum of 3 councillors
- The public must have access, by written notice, to the meeting to provide an opportunity to express views and to show transparency

At present not all our Planning Decisions may meet the criteria above.

We have 21 days to inform MDDC of our comments on a planning application, unless we ask for an extension.

Many applications will be submitted to the Planning Authority and a request will be made for our comments, as an official consultee, between our normal full meetings.

Current procedures are:

The Clerk is informed of all applications and notification is passed to the Chairman asking for the appropriate action.

Our current procedures (adopted in May 2006 are shown at the end of this paper. They may not necessarily be followed to the letter as the actual practice is given below.

As a guide, applications may fall in to 3 main types:

- Those that are non-contentious e.g. minor changes to a listed building

Those requiring comment but without the need for a site visit
Those where a site visit is required to ascertain certain facts and possibly to speak to other interested parties.

If a site visit is required then the Chairman will appoint 2 councillors to visit, together with the Clerk, and this will be advertised on the noticeboard and the web site.

Following a site visit the 2 councillors will give the opportunity for the public to make comments and will either make a “decision” for the Clerk to inform MDDC or will pass the decision to the next main meeting. If that is past the 21 day deadline then a request for an extension will be made, which to date has always been granted but may not be if other deadlines have to be met.

In the first 2 categories of application between main meetings the “decision” is made by the Chairman either directly or after consulting other Councillors by phone or email for their comments.

Only in the case where an application is passed to wait for the full Council meeting is the “decision” formally correct. In all other cases the “decision” does not formally meet the criteria required for an official decision. That is because the public have not had an opportunity to attend a meeting to make comments and there was not a quorum.

Future Options

It is important that we are transparent in our decision making and that it is done correctly.

There are 2 main options.

Firstly, as with some other Councils, a **Planning sub-committee** is established to meet between the full Council meetings to consider applications. For this to operate correctly it too must have the following:

Have a minimum of 3 Councillors, appoint a Chairman, be advertised for public access.

For this to work there may need to be a rota, a place booked for the meeting, and advertised.

There may be issues if an application requires a person on the rota to withdraw due to personal interest, in which case an alternate would be needed. Although Minutes are needed whether a Clerk should be present is another question to discuss.

Obviously, an additional meeting has time and cost issues. Should this option be agreed then the formalities would need to be established.

The second option is to continue as now and to **only make formal decisions at the full council meetings**.

That would mean that the Council could not make a formal decision between meetings for the reasons stated above.

However, the wording to MDDC may need to be amended to say that the Parish Council has reached an interim decision which is subject to ratification at the Full Council meeting.

It is not an easy decision to make. The best option is to have a Planning Sub Committee but this has time and cost implications. The second option is to continue but to add some extra safeguards and to make it an official policy.

The real question is does the Parish Council when it provides a consultee comment on an application do it fairly, take account of the public's views, and be honest in its dealings.

The issue of legalities and transparency is equally important.

The way forward needs to be reviewed and to either go for a Planning sub-committee or to amend the present arrangements and to accept that some "decisions" will require ratification at a future date.

Views on the above are for consultation.

Current Procedures

2. Procedure for Responding to Planning Applications (Adopted 19th May 2006)

The response period for applications is 3 weeks which does not usually allow consideration in a full council meeting, since these are at intervals of 2 months. Therefore, the procedure will be:

A. On receipt of a planning application from the Local Planning Authority (usually Mid Devon District Council or Devon County Council), the Clerk will inform the chair who will convene a subgroup of three councillors who do not have a prejudicial interest in the matter (that is, are not neighbours or relatives of the applicant).

B. The subgroup will arrange to meet on site. The time of the site meeting will be publicised on the Parish noticeboard at least 4 days prior to the meeting.

C. Neighbours to the applicant will be consulted and anyone may attend the site meeting to make a representation. Anyone who wishes to see the application may either contact the Local Planning Authority or inspect it by arrangement with the Clerk.

D. The subgroup will direct the Clerk who will respond appropriately to the Local Planning Authority. On 19 May 2006 the Clerk was delegated as the UPC Planning Officer to enable this procedure of ad hoc committees to be used.