



UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the meeting of Upton by Chester and District Parish Council, held on Monday 19 April 2021, 7.30pm, via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Cllr A Bennion, Cllr M Bryan, Cllr M Carter, Cllr J Egerton-Parry, Cllr T Egerton-Parry (Chairman), Cllr J Evans, Cllr P Greenhalgh, Cllr J Houlbrook, Cllr G Hulmes, Cllr M Keenan, Cllr N Poulton, Cllr F Samuel, Cllr B Southward and Cllr B Walker.

In attendance: Suzi Bull (Clerk/Proper Officer) and 5 members of the public.

36.21 OPEN FORUM.

The Chairman was notified of one person who wished to speak, however, due to difficulty gaining access to the meeting, this was deferred to agenda item 12.

37.21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Booth and Cllr Schmidt.

Resolved: noted.

38.21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Resolved: no declarations of interest were made.

39.21 COMMUNITY SAFETY.

No members of the community safety team were available to attend the meeting; a written report has been requested and will be circulated by the Clerk on receipt.

The Clerk reported on information from neighbours of White Gables, Plas Newton Lane, who have been witness to anti-social behaviour and damage to the empty property by youths.

This activity has been reported to the police and Cllr Houlbrook is following up with CW&C Planning Authority to try to expedite the proposed change of ownership of the property in order to make the site secure.

Resolved: noted.

40.21 YOUTH PROVISION IN UPTON.

Due to the postponement of this meeting from 12 April, CW&C Council's Cllr Richard Beacham was unable to attend; Cllr Beacham was due to join a conversation regarding youth provision in the wider area. This will now take place at the next Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Houlbrook and Cllr Bryan reported on the status of the vacant youth club building; there has been 18 bids for the purchase of the building, all will be assessed by senior CW&C property/asset managers.

Feedback from residents suggests that they would like to see a youth-based activity at the site.

Resolved: Senior managers from CW&C Council will by invitation attend the next meeting of the Parish Council to inform Councillors and residents of progress.

41.21 MINUTES.

Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 01 March 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman at the next opportunity.

Proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Houlbrook. All agreed.

42.21 CLERK'S REPORT.

Resolved: The Clerk's Report on action taken on resolutions made at the last meeting was received and noted.

43.21 COMMITTEE MINUTES.

Resolved: The Minutes of the following committees held since the last meeting were received and recommendations for approval considered:

General Purposes Committee 08 March.

Finance Committee 08 March.

The revised Facilities Pricing structure was considered.

Resolved: Approved.

Communications Committee 22 March.

QE II Sub-Committee 29 March.

The contractor tender process was noted and approved.

The FCC Grant fund requires Minuted approval for Clerk to apply for grant funding.

Resolved: Approved.

44.21 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

The Chairman of the NDP Steering Group reported:

The NDP consultation is now closed; there has been 350 written responses and more than 1,000 people - of a broad age range - making comments overall.

Cheshire Community Action – an organisation that provides professional advice and expertise on neighbourhood planning – is undertaking to examine and summarise all responses.

Due to the unexpected volume of responses, and subsequent workload for CCA, it will be necessary to spend an additional £684 from the NDP budget to meet the cost of this work.

The Chairman offered a tribute to Sue Stanley for the extensive work she has carried out on behalf of the NDP process.

The Steering Group Chairman requested a working party to be set up to review responses and identify a list of 'actions' for the Parish Council.

Resolved: Cllr Houlbrook, Cllr Bryan and Cllr Tom Egerton-Parry will be part of the working party.

45.21 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS.

The report from Cllr Houlbrook was received and further discussed for clarification. Cllr Bryan provided a written report at the meeting and gave a verbal explanation of its content.

Resolved: Noted.

46.21 FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS REPORTS.

Resolved: The payment of salaries and expenses, invoices for goods and services rendered were approved. Receipts and balances were noted.

Proposed by Cllr T Egerton-Parry, seconded by Cllr Greenhalgh. All agreed.

47.21 CYCLE PLAN FOR UPTON / LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS.

The Chairman invited a member of the public to speak:

It was reported that the 'Love Your Upton' working party is looking for additional volunteers.

Resolved: Members who wish to volunteer for the working party will either inform the Clerk or contact LYU directly.

Members were asked to reconsider action noted in Minute no: 07.21 / 15.21. Due to progress made by the Sustainable Traffic Task Force with the Cycle Plan for Upton and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

Resolved: The action resolved in Minute no: 07.21 and 15.21 will be cancelled – UPC will not form working parties to look into either of these projects.

48.21 USE OF THE PAVILION AS DROP-OFF/COLLECTION POINT.

It was reported that the Chester Wombles organisation has requested the use of the Pavilion as a drop off and collection point for litter picking supplies and waste for onward collection by the relevant CW&C Council department.

Members also discussed other charitable organisations and deserving causes that may benefit from having a local collection/drop off point for small items.

Resolved: That Upton Pavilion will be made available for storage and distribution of small items of equipment to assist the Chester Wombles and other charitable organisations.

Proposed by Cllr Bennion, seconded by Cllr Houlbrook. All agreed.

49.21 PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS.

Full Parish Council meetings are currently held on a 6-weekly basis. The Clerk requested that meetings be scheduled monthly to allow for improvements inc:

- Better community understanding of when to expect a meeting.
- Less complex meeting scheduling (in line with committees).
- Clarity when reporting financial matters.
- A more manageable agenda.

The annual meeting schedule is due to be approved at the Annual Parish Council meeting; the clerk requested 'approval in principle', to include the scheduled monthly full Parish Council meetings and for the purpose of adding some content to the website calendar for the benefit of Upton residents.

Resolved: Full Parish Council meetings will now be held monthly. The draft meeting schedule is approved subject to an amendment to meetings scheduled for November.

Proposed by Cllr Bennion, seconded by Cllr Houlbrook. All agreed.

50.21 VIRTUAL/IN-PERSON PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS.

The Clerk reported on the legal status of virtual Parish Council meetings; the provision for this is to cease on 6 May 2021. A court hearing is due to be held on 21 April at which a decision will be taken on how town and parish councils may proceed.

Members expressed a preference for continuing with virtual meetings, with the opportunity to hold 'hybrid' - in-person/virtual - meetings in the future.

It was acknowledged that advantages of virtual meetings include greater accessibility for those who may prefer not to travel, reduced costs and a possibility of increased attendance.

Resolved: UPC will await the outcome of the court hearing before deciding on how its meetings will be held after 6 May.

51.21 QUEEN ELIZABETH II PLATINUM JUBILEE.

Members were asked to consider a celebration event for the QE II Platinum Jubilee.

Resolved: This matter will be referred to the General Purposes Committee.

52.21 CHESTER ZOO 90TH ANNIVERSARY.

Members were asked to consider how the Parish Council may support the community to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Chester Zoo.

Resolved: This matter will be referred to the General Purposes Committee.

53.21 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH.

Members were asked to approve the following:

- To support the Community Speed Watch group by hosting a speed warning banner on the playing field railings.
- The Clerk/Proper Officer will apply for Upton Area Funding for the purpose of making supplies purchases on behalf of the CSW group.
- The Parish Council will hold ring-fenced funds on behalf of the CSW group.

Resolved: Approved.

Cllr Bryan stated that he will match-fund CSW costs from his Upton Area Fund Budget.

Cllr Greenhalgh requested his objection to this proposal be recorded on the grounds that in his opinion traffic speed is “a matter for the police; residents ‘policing’ neighbours is abhorrent”.

54.21 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Resolved: The date and time of the next meeting will be on 17 May 2021 at 7.30pm.

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