

UPPER CLATFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 7.00 pm 9th July 2025

King Edward VII Memorial Hall Upper Clatford Hampshire

Council Members Present

Cllr Peter Heslop, Chair, (PH) (Apologies)
Karin Bennett Clerk & RFO (KB)
Cllr Richard Bennett (RB)
Cllr Gerry Dawson (GD)
Cllr Charles Eyre (CE)
Cllr Nigel Freemantle (NF)
Cllr Robert Hawkins (RHk)
Cllr Richard Hydes (RH)
Cllr Patrick Littlehales (PL)
Cllr Cynthia Williams (CW) (Apologies)

TVBC & HCC

Cllr Maureen Flood TVBC (MF)
Cllr Susanne Hasselmann TVBC (SH) (Apologies)
Cllr David Drew HCC (DD) (Apologies)

1. Welcome, Declarations of Interest and Public Participation –

- a. Chairmans welcome – Cllr RB as deputy chair
- b. Apologies for absence from TVBC Cllr SH, HCC Cllr DD, Chair PH, Cllr CW
- c. The members of the public present were invited to speak.
 - i. A number of residents spoke about the issue of shooting in the village environs commenting on the frequency being daily including on a Sunday evening. They were finding it upsetting and disturbing. The impact is particularly felt in the Above Town area where elderly residents were finding it frightening. Comments were also made about the effect on pets and also the finding of injured birds in their gardens which was distressing for residents. Some residents said they had lodged complaints with the council. The residents collectively asked if the council could do anything about it. Following significant discussion on the issue by those present Cllr RB responded saying the council would look into it, noting that the council had no powers in this regard however the council would raise the matter with the resident thought responsible for the shooting, as well as the local shoot, and also with the borough council. **Action** Clerk.
 - ii. Two residents raised the issue of the junction of Foundry Road and Balksbury Bridge Rd being dangerous to navigate citing the growing hedge as an obstacle to visibility. Discussion followed commenting on the speed of road users adding to the problem. Cllr RB said the council had instructed the grounds maintenance to cut the hedge. Cllr PL agreed to ask for the hedge cut to be brought forward and for the hedge nearest the junction to be cut much lower to help visibility. Cllr RH agreed to seek a road assessment from HCC, as the road experts. **Action** PL and RH. **Update 18/07: Matter reported to HCC for a splay assessment to be undertaken.**

2. Borough Councillor's Update: Cllr MF referred to the TVBC Draft Local Plan and the consultation period. MF provided an explanation to council and members of the public

present of what TVBC have been tasked to do re housing and what they have done in terms of the Draft Local Plan. Cllr MF urged people to go online and feed in comments, emphasising the importance of feeding into this consultation. Planning elements like the village 'gap' had been recognised in the draft plan as being vital in order to protect village identity but it was important for residents to support these concepts through their feedback so that TVBC had some evidence to draw upon when making planning decisions. MF provided hard copies of the consultation survey for those at the meeting. (Details of the consultation and how to add feedback are on the UCPC website or go direct to [Test Valley Borough Council](#) .) The window for feedback closes **5 September 2025**.

Cllr MF went on to cover the **local government reorganisation** and the recent proposals from Hampshire that TVBC be merged or subsumed into Southampton/Eastleigh. This was not the preferred outcome for TVBC who feel they would be a better 'fit' with Winchester & New Forest who have a similar rural outlook. Cllr MF asked residents to feed into the consultation, emphasising the importance of residents having their say. Cllr CE asked if the parish council should be storing up our funds? MF said no indication we should need to – the precept will still be provided.

The survey closes on 27th July - go to : [Have Your Say Today - Our Place Our Future - Commonplace](#)

3. **County Councillor's Update:** Cllr DD gave apologies - his report was sent to councillors.
4. **Minutes of the June meeting:** Cllr RB asked if all present were content to accept and agree the minutes of the June meeting , all agreed. Proposed by PH and seconded by NF. Cllr RB signed the June minutes.
5. **Clerk's Update: Annex A was provided to councillors with the agenda, the clerk drew attention to the following on the update:**
 - a. Agreement needed to the purchase of new batteries for the speed monitor, the sterling work of the volunteer who manages the monitor and proposal that a gift from the Chairs fund be presented on behalf of the council. New batteries purchase and gift (sums were provided) agreed unanimously.
 - b. The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) have asked for more information on the demolition of the Chalk Pit. Clerk has provided but we still await a decision on the business rates by the VOA the payment of which is ongoing despite the absence of a building.
 - c. Clerk has provided a reminder to councillors of their role as a council and also of the council's powers to act which did not include the general power of competence.
 - d. The council has received the first instalment of compensation from the courts for the flytipping near the Chalk Pit. The council pursued this against the individual with TVBC taking on the prosecution and were successful.
 - e. The Clerk has advised membership of the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) should be taken up to provide much needed support for the clerk and the council generally especially in terms of keeping abreast with changes in legislation, and policy in respect of council administration. This proposal was

accepted by the councillors present and the expenditure unanimously agreed.
Cost provided.

- f. Training opportunities had been taken up by two councillors. Cllr CE reinforced the need for all councillors taking training to provide brief feedback on the training to benefit all councillors.
- g. There is a potential applicant for the clerk's role.

6. Planning:

- a. Cllr RH provided a further brief explanation of the **TVBC Draft Local Plan**, what is happening and why it is important for residents to feed into the consultation exercise and the importance of our own **UCPC neighbourhood plan** how this feeds into the TVBC plan. RH said there was a need to update it and work would commence soon. Cllr CE reminded those present of the presentation on the **TVBC Draft Local Plan 31st July** in the Upper Clatford Village Hall and the need to respond to the consultation survey which was an opportunity to participate and influence. Comment from the public regarding the ability to influence the size and type of houses built – Cllr MF responded to this saying this should be fed into the consultation feedback survey as it was helpful for planners to have this, it may then be taken account of however if it isn't fed into the council via the survey then it couldn't be taken account of .
- b. Crook and Shears planning application (25/01412/LBWN)- Cllr RH provided a brief explanation of the planned changes and recommended no objections, all present agreed.
- c. Roseberry House Farm planning application (25/01466/FULLN) – Cllr RH provided a brief summary of the proposal and advised no objections, all present agreed.

7. Finance:

- a. The financial statements (Annex B)) for May and June were provided by the Clerk who ran through the key expenditure and income items.
- b. Authorisation of the payment for the new batteries was confirmed and purchase of gift for the speed censor operator. **Action** Clerk
- c. The Clerk provided a summary of the proposed new Reserves Policy (Annex C) and the note accompanying it which provides the rationale for the reserves figures. The Reserves policy had previously been provided to the councillors in May and discussed. The Clerk advised some updates to the policy in response to the auditor's comment about not holding a specific named reserve unless it was for a specific project thus removing the playpark and pavilion reserves funds and adding a sum of £6,000 to the *general reserve* fund to cover 'unforeseen expenditure iro playparks, pavilion'. Also the provision of an election reserve which was standard practice should an election be needed. All present agreed the proposed General Reserve amount of £20,000. The proposal to accept the policy and reserve amount suggested in it was proposed by Cllr CE and seconded by Cllr PL. All Cllrs unanimously agreed.
- d. Clerk said it would be prudent to consider some higher interest bearing accounts for reserve sums. Cllr CE proposed that the general reserve sum should be separated out and deposited in a higher interest bearing account, this was seconded by RH , all councillors agreed to the proposal. **Action** Clerk.

8. Playing Fields and Play Equipment:

a. Actions from previous meeting arising from RoSPA report.

- i. **Fix wooden border to Anna Valley Park climbing frame** – Cllr RB offered to look at this and report back on the requirement. **Action** Cllr RB
- ii. **Balksbury Park fix picnic bench** – Cllr PL will look at this report back on requirement. **Action** PL
- iii. **Balksbury Park river signage** – Cllr PL will purchase new signage for the river. **Action** PL

b. Pavillion

- i. regarding clarification of payment for interim grass cut it was discussed and agreed by all present that the UCYFC would only be asked to cover the payment if the TVBC contract excluded that period ie. there should be no double payment for the same period.
- ii. The treasurer from UCYFC who was present at the meeting was invited by Cllr CE to provide an update on the club for the councillors. The club treasurer provided a comprehensive brief on the club covering grants received including a £23,000 sum awarded which can be drawn on over 5 years for pitch improvement, membership numbers, club committee changes and plans for the future which included seeking charitable status. The poor state of the pavilion building was noted as not being fit for some aspects of the club's operations; they are hoping to come back later this year with some proposals for discussion with the council. Cllr RH suggested the club should apply to the Community Asset Fund – (Clerk's note the Pavillion is a Parish Council Asset so any such application in respect of the Pavillion should be from this council).
- iii. Cllr RHk asked the club if they were happy with the current agreement between the parish council and the club, they confirmed they were.
- iv. Re the storing of Parish Council documents/filing cabinet (s) in the Pavillion, which has been the subject of discussion outside the meeting, the club confirmed agreement to store the filing cabinets in the building .

c. **Balksbury Park** – Cllr RH asked if the donation of the soil for the small infill to Balksbury Park was able to be accepted by the council. Clerk advised there was no issue accepting gifts provided it was open and transparent and therefore should be declared. Noted therefore that this council is grateful for the gift of soil to rectify a dip in the Balksbury Park surface - received from Rock Recycling. Also grateful thanks to Norman Court Farm and from the May Fayre Committee for providing the equipment/ help to level the surface. **Action** Clerk to write letter(s)of thanks

d. **Play Park Proposal** – following the June meeting it has been agreed in principle that a new playpark will be developed in the Anna Valley Park. Cllr RH has looked into applying to the TVBC Community Asset Fund for a grant. Cllr RHk has sought advice from TVBC re a new playpark and as result has advised we should develop a specification of where and what type of equipment we wanted and approach a number of playpark companies to get them to design something. In order to do this we will need to have a vision for the playpark which includes the

target age group for it. The need for a reserve fund for the project was suggested by Cllr RHk, Clerk agreed and said she would provide an indication of what sum could be put to the fund in the next meeting. Clerk also advised that funding may be needed to cover a large proportion of the cost. A resident (named) has offered to help with this, activity, Cllr RH was asked to make contact with her. **Actions:** Cllr RH to source funding opportunities and speak with resident offering to help with fundraising and planning and provide a list of potential funders to next meeting. Cllr RHk to draw up spec. Clerk to provide budget info. All to provide update in next meeting. Clerks Note - planning permission will be needed for the project.

9. **Highways:** Cllr RH had circulated the highways report separately to councillors. Cllr RH said that the Church Lane issues had now been rectified. Also noted that 'warning frog/toad signs had been put up in both Watery Lane and Church Lane.

10. **Trees** – following request from Brook Way resident for work on tree it was agreed that as per the tree report provided to the council in September 2023 and referenced by Cllr RB , Cllr NF will review the report and decide on the action needed regarding the tree. **Action** Cllr NF to advise council on actions, seek quotes, and report back at the next meeting to gain agreement to expenditure unless there is a safety requirement in which case the work should proceed in consultation with the Clerk in the meantime.

11. **Footpaths** – no update

12. **Chalk Pit Update**

- a. Cllr RB has distributed a record of discussions of the working group.
- b. Alternative designs from architect being sought based on the agreed concept but moving some of the units on the site.
- c. A decision will be needed in the next council meeting on what to go for pre-planning on. Timing wise there is some pressure from TVBC - if they give a grant it needs to be spent within 2 years. The working group will provide updates to councillors on the options during August so that a decision can be made in the next meeting.
- d. The architect is visiting 4th Aug.
- e. Michelle Penn from TVBC has asked for a meeting with working group.
- f. Some fundraiser meetings planned - one with CRL director, ACORN energy have been approached but have said it is too early for them to commit to funding although they have expressed interest in the project.
- g. Cllr RH is looking into sewage connection for the site.
- h. New electricity meter (5th September) Cllr RB will look at the existing meter to establish access, Cllrs RH and PL have agreed to help. Note electricity will need to be cut for the period of the work (2 hours)– only affect the Chalk Pit site.
Action: Cllrs to advise Clerk if they are aware of any interdependency with housing supply in the location so that residents can be advised.
- i. Fencing has been placed around the Chalk Pit site preventing entering, following removal of the demolition company's fencing. Warning signage will be sourced by PL. **Action** Cllr PL to purchase signage for the site which will both warn about the dangers of entering the site and also who to contact regarding the site.

Following the Clerks Update Cllr CE was concerned about the powers of the council to develop business units in addition to the community units planned. . Cllr GD asked if cllrs held the CILCA qualification would that enable council to gain *general power of competence*? Clerk confirmed this was something that had to be held by the council's clerk or staff. **Action** – clerk to check about powers to develop business units

13. Resident's Items –

- a. Resident of Upper Clatford, has offered to host a bonfire during the bonfire season which will be for all residents of the parish area and include the provision of food and drink. Resident's request was for council to provide address of residents if possible and to publicise event. Clerk confirmed it was not possible to provide any residents/address information. Councillors had no objection to the event being publicised on the council's website as all events are. Organiser will need to provide details to the Clerk for posting on the website. Cllr RH commented that the Upper Clatford, Anna Valley & Red Rice Villages Facebook page was now up and running for posting events on. It was also made clear this site is not under the control of the council though so would have to be contacted by the organiser.
- b. Resident has requested whether the council would consider marking Remembrance with poppy/RBL insignia on the streets. This was warmly received by all councillors and agreed it would be a good thing to do although opinions differed on what and where. Cllr RHk proposed purchasing some street items from the RBL, he will look into costs and present a proposal at the next meeting – **action** RHk

14. **Next Meeting:** the next meeting will be on **Wednesday 3rd September**, a change from normal, to ensure that any decision required for the TVBC draft local plan response can be discussed and voted on.

Signed,

K Bennett