

MINUTES OF THE UPTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 18th MAY 2015

Present: Cllr Bottwood
Cllr Earle
Cllr Robert Barrett
Cllr Hannah Barrett
Cllr George Barrett
Cllr Chauhan
Cllr Clarke
Cllr Evans
Cllr Ingram
Cllr Lawrence

In attendance: Mr A. Oakley (Clerk), 6 members of the public and PCSO Andy Wood.

1. Opening Procedures

1.1 Apologies/Absences.

Absent: Cllr Atkinson

1.2 Declarations of interest.

Cllr Evans is a NHFT Governor, Cllr Bottwood is NBC cabinet member for the environment, Cllr Ingram also sits on Duston Parish Council.

1.3 Confirmation of minutes of 13th April 2015.

The minutes of this meeting were proposed by Cllr Robert Barrett and seconded by Cllr Bottwood as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

1.4 Clerk's report on matters arising from the previous minutes.

It was reported that the Street Football Project has now started to deliver sessions in Upton as of 17th April.

Former Councillor Mike Caddy contacted the council to request that UPC seek alternative provision for the hosting of the website as it is currently occupying his personal server space. He expects this to have been established with three months.

The council wrote to Royal Mail to request a post box to be installed at the St. Crispins Retail Village. A reply was received stating that the Collections Planning Manager has determined that this area does not warrant the installation of a new post box at this time.

An email was sent to NCC Highways asking if a new bus shelter could be provided near the junction of Kent Road and St. Crispin Drive. The response was as follows:

"Thank you for contacting the County Council regarding a shelter near the junction of Kent Road and St Crispin Drive. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, the County is not in a position to install new bus shelters or infrastructure that subsequently incur high maintenance costs.

I appreciate that this may be a disappointment to you. However your request has been noted so that should funds become available we can reconsider your request.

The developer has a S278 obligation to provide shelters further down Kent road into the new development.

We would not remove the existing shelter opposite the retirement village because we could not say with certainty that a bus service will never pass that way again".

The council will request that the existing bus shelter outside the retirement village is moved to this location instead.

Andrew Leighton from NCC highways provided the council with a copy of the draft proposal for parking restrictions along Berrywood Drive as requested. This information was shared with the councillors.

A resident of the parish wrote to ask what could be done about the muddy and stony part of Upton Country Park down by the canal which is often flooded.

UPC will write to Stuart Docker at NBC to ask if this matter could be addressed.

2. POLICE AND PUBLIC SESSION

PCSO Andy Wood told the council that there were 16 incidents reported during April.

Nine of these involved people trespassing within the St. Crispin's Hospital grounds.

There were two thefts from vehicles both of which were parked at the St. Crispin's Social Club.

It was explained that there have been a large number of garden furniture/ornaments and hanging baskets stolen within the St. Crispin area recently. Residents are urged to report these thefts to the police.

The Police have been carrying out 'Operation Magnet' which has targeted dangerous and illegal parking outside schools in the Duston and Upton areas.

This has been successful and as a result tickets have been issued for obstruction and some vehicles have been seized for a number of different offences.

The ongoing matter of children entering the St. Crispin's Hospital grounds and buildings was discussed again. UPC will write to NBC Planning to request that the developer improves the security of the site.

It was also decided that David Kennedy of NBC should be contacted with regards to arranging a visit of the site with parish councillors present. This was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Earle.

Nicolette Bench from Upton Youth Club requested a grant of £500 towards the costs incurred of funding the May Day Fete.

All councillors were in favour of this request and it was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Bottwood that the grant will be made at the next meeting.

A resident expressed their concerns regarding what they suspect to be drug dealing in Area A.

They also reported that the green area by Roundwood Way is being used as a car park by visitors to Berrywood Hospital. Cllr Evans said that he would raise this matter with NHFT.

3. DEVELOPMENTS IN UPTON

Discussed in the Police and public session.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS / CONSULTATIONS

N/2015/0380 - No objections but wish to request that the work is carried out as soon as possible.

15/00013/CCDFUL - The following response will be sent to NCC:

"Upton Parish Council have considered this application and wish to say that although parking on site amounts to 41 spaces, we note that there will be 35 full time staff.

Nothing is mentioned about numbers of part time support staff and specialist staff. This is a 420 pupil school and we still consider that on site parking is inadequate.

We also have reservations with regards to pupil drop off provisions. The turning circle within the grounds we suspect, will not be workable and our past experience is that this will not be used after the opening of the school due to safety concerns.

We also note that there is no provision for a drop off lay-by outside the school and we suspect that there will be considerable numbers of pupils being dropped off by car as the public transport is in no way convenient for parents taking children to school".

5. FINANCE MATTERS

Accounts for payment:

i)	Cheque 000658	£369.43	Mr A Oakley	Salary
ii)	Cheque 000659	£63.00	Mr A Oakley	Stationery
ii)	Cheque 000660	£463.35	Aon UK Limited	Insurance
iv)	Cheque 000661	£100.00	Upton Youth Club	Funding

It was proposed by Cllr Earle and seconded by Cllr Ingram and duly resolved that the above accounts be paid.

The Council reviewed the parish insurance policy prior to its renewal next month.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

All communications received were made available to the Councillors.

7. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Bottwood reported that he had been re-elected as a Borough Councillor. He is now cabinet member for environment.

8. SERVICE REQUESTS AND REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Bottwood made the following statement:

"Certain election literature was circulated and amongst the words that were used, that were spelt correctly were scrutiny, accountability, impartiality and transparency but it was a shame that clarity, understanding and truth were not among them.

In my opinion page 2 is completely misleading as it has the Headline – Upton Parish Council and yet it was not approved by councillors.

On the second page the budget is referred to and poses the question:

DO YOU WANT EXCESSIVE TAXATION WITH A PARISH COUNCIL THAT PAYS LITTLE REGARDS TO YOU.

This Parish has maintained the lowest precept within the Northampton Borough for many years.

The current band D tax is still only £1477.92 but would be £3.77 higher at £1481.69 if the area was unparished. Personally I think that being lower rate and with the residents having the services of the Council represents great value even given the amount that has been put into reserves for future projects.

2. Playground – again I feel that the literature is misleading either deliberately or through lack of knowledge.

The Parish were part of a working party that were involved in looking at what the consultations highlighted and also what would be in the best interests of the residents.

The options were that a limited budget was available and decisions made concluded that it would be better to spend all of the monies on equipment rather than on full surfacing and fencing which at the time meant there would be little monies left for equipment.

Refer Abington Park and Racecourse etc.

3. Hospital - Again the opening statement “ Another developer calls time on Intransigent Council” but does not mention which one. Facts are again either deliberately misleading or are less than factual.

The Parish Council has very little control over developers and once plans are approved as long as the developer works within the approval there is little the Borough Council can do. There is no legislation in place to force any developer to complete a site. The Borough and Parish councils have continually monitored the Developer with little success and given that they wanted to turn there attentions elsewhere for a more lucrative project they subsequently put the site up for sale so it is again at a standstill.

As regards the clock tower itself it is not the Parish Council that wanted to keep it in place but the residents themselves who also had the backing of the County Councillors. Whether or not the Parish Councillors agree with this we are here to represent the electorate and not try to further personal aims.

Accusations have been made by one councillor recently both against the Parish Council and individual members. So far as I am aware they have been unfounded.

I would remind councillors that it is only in Local Government, Parishes and Districts, that where a decision is made in Council it becomes a Corporate Decision and as such must be upheld against the Majority decision whichever way you may have voted.

I believe that all past Councillors have acted in nothing but the best for the residents of Upton and have put in many working hours to achieve what has been done. The park area has yet to be adopted but we lobbied the Borough Council and Developer to get to a situation whereby the playing area could be laid out and equipment installed all under license so that at least progress was being made. Without the timely intervention of the Parish Council there is the likelihood that neither the Bowls or Cricket Clubs would still have their facilities.

I would personally like to have minuted my thanks to those re-elected time served councillors and also those that were not elected for all the hard work that they have put in over the years.

Unfortunately we all know that with a Parish Council it is like an iceberg with very little showing on the surface with hours of hidden work given freely purely because they feel they want to try to make a difference for the residents of the Parish

I would also ask that the clerk is shown the utmost courtesy when contacted either by phone or email. He is the only paid employee of the Parish and does not take part in any decisions or discussions other than in an advisory capacity. The clerk has full rights of employment as with any organisation and should be treated accordingly".

Cllr Robert Barrett wished that it be minuted that he felt that Cllr Bottwood's comments were "sour grapes".

9. TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will begin at **7.15pm on Monday 8th June 2015, at the Berrywood Hospital.**

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.52pm

Chairman.....

Date.....