

# DRAFT

## Upton Snodsbury Parish Council

### Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025, 7.30pm Upton Snodsbury Village Hall

**Parish Councillors Present:** Alan Grainger (AG), (Vice-Chairman), Debbie Waters (DW), Paul Seymour (PS)  
District/County Cllr L Robinson

**Clerk/RFO:** Nicola Harding

**In attendance:** Five parishioners

**25/1: Appointment of Chairman:** Following the recent resignation of the Chairman, Cllr Grainger chaired the meeting. Cllr Seymour agreed to undertake the role of chairman thereafter, to be formally approved at the next meeting.

**25/2: Apologies:** There were none received.

**25/3: Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations.

**25/4: Proposal to fill casual vacancies by co-option:** Two applications had been received and circulated – all Cllrs approved to co-opt M. Hobson & Z. Collins onto the Parish Council. Cllr Hobson joined the meeting and expressions of interest were also confirmed by two other parishioners present – this was agreed in principle, with formal co-option to take place at the next meeting as an application will require completion.

*Action: Clerk to forward a register of interest's form to the newly co-opted Cllrs for completion and forwarding to Wychavon District Council. Request completed application from two other interested candidates.*

**25/5: Parishioner's Comments:**

None received from the Clerk. A parishioner in attendance requested updates regarding progress with the Legacy Project, Lengthsman and VAS sign – it was confirmed that full updates would be provided during discussions under item 25/7, Progress Reports.

**25/6: Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024:**

Proposed Cllr Waters, seconded Cllr Seymour, all in favour to approve the minutes as a true record.

*The Chairman moved the meeting to Item 25/11, District/County Cllr reports.*

**25/7: Progress reports from Parish Activities: brief updates:**

- a. NH – Grass-cutting: The Clerk had requested quotations for the 2025 season from three contractors, however only one response had been received. Cllrs agreed to approve Smart Cut Ltd to continue cutting the verges and play area in the parish for the new 2025 season.

*Action: Clerk to forward details of quotation to Cllr Seymour, who agreed to liaise with Smart Cut ahead of the first cut.*

Cllr Grainger drew attention to a parishioner's request to consider the grass verges in terms of encouraging wildlife at appropriate times within the cutting season. It was agreed that Cllr Grainger would share details for the Clerk to forward to Cllr Robinson, in order to liaise with WCC Highways ahead of finalising their cutting schedule.

*Action: Cllr Grainger/Clerk/Cllr Robinson.*

A meeting of the village wildlife group has been scheduled for Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January at 7pm.

- b. AG – Lengthsman: There has been no communication with the current lengthsman since September, nor any invoices received, despite work undertaken last year on footpaths and filling in pot holes at the car park. It was also noted that village signage and the two sets of white gates require cleaning – Cllr Grainger agreed to pursue the lengthsman to confirm his ongoing interest in the role and attend to signage cleaning. Cllr Robinson confirmed that for safety reasons, WCC Highways would not approve the lengthsman cleaning the village gates on the A422, however in the interim, Cllr Grainger confirmed the gates on the B4082 could be attended to by footpath volunteers.

*Action: Cllr Grainger to provide further updates ahead of the end of the financial year.*

*Footpaths:* Minimal cutting back has been required due to the season, and thanks were extended to two parishioners who had tended to fallen branches from the tree by the bus stop. Cllr Grainger reminded the meeting of WCC's health and safety protocols regarding the use of power tools in line with their insurance requirements. Attention was drawn to the condition of the footpath at the bottom of Upton Meadow which has deteriorated over the Winter and been churned up by horses, although this is not officially a bridle path. Footpath volunteers have, however, created a footpath through the nearby trees. WCC has confirmed that there is to be no further development of the official footpath, therefore any future issues should be reported to the Parish Council for the attention of the Senior Public Rights of Way Officer at WCC. *Action: Monitor.*

*Neighbourhood Watch:* There has been a lapse in interest in the group, despite further advertising in the village newsletter. It was also noted that there had been a disappointing attendance from parishioners at last year's home security event, organised with the local police's Rural & Business Crime manager, despite canvassing the village. It was suggested that the group may be resumed in the future if a new Cllr may be available to resurrect.

*Action: Review.*

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- c. DW – VAS/Highways: The newly purchased VAS sign has been installed on the eastbound side of the A422 – thanks were acknowledged to Cllr Waters for organising the purchase and to Cllr Grainger & Seymour for erecting the sign. Both the public house and local neighbours have confirmed that the sign has already had a positive impact upon traffic speed. The other speed sign along the A422 often has a poor charge due to its location, therefore WCC Highways have confirmed an alternative location of a pole on Pershore Road, to maximise sunlight for the solar charge. As part of West Mercia’s Safer Roads Fund awarded in April 2024, spare batteries were also acquired, in addition to funding for the new sign. It was reminded that the new sign has the capacity to monitor speeds and allow data to be downloaded, which is a useful analysis tool over an annual period to be shared with WCC Highways. A parishioner agreed to assist in changing the VAS batteries as required.  
*Action: Cllr Seymour to liaise with parishioner.*
- d. Cllrs – Legacy Project: WDC have requested to meet with the Parish Council to provide updates on progress with the Community Hub project. Dates and times had been circulated to Cllrs for consideration and would be confirmed after the meeting. The Clerk had prepared and circulated a spreadsheet of current expenditure to date from the Platinum Jubilee Fund, awarded by Wychavon in March 2024, and it was noted that there are time frames in which monies are to be utilised in order for the original grant awarded to be drawn down. Cllr Waters agreed to check progress of the content of the original application and Cllr Seymour agreed to prepare a report about the car park element of the scheme.  
*Action: Cllr Seymour/Waters. Cllr Grainger to confirm convenient meeting date for the Clerk to update WDC/VHC.*
- e. Plot of land on corner of Pershore Road – there were no updates at present, but this can be revisited, given the £376.00 Community Infrastructure Levy funds available to spend on public open space within the parish.  
*Action: Review.*

## 25/8 Finance

### a) Current Balances at 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Business Account:		£55,421.03
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£55,421.33</b>

### b) Payments to report:

Clerk’s expenses: Ink/postage	£20.26	
Salary: November 2024	£323.92	
Pure Aluminium: VH windows/doors (Legacy Project)	£6,457.82	
Salary: December 2024	£323.92	
Clerk’s back-pay Local Government salary award 2024	£122.85	
Medlock Electrical: Heaters (Legacy Project)	£1,124.44	
Village Hall hire: October meeting	£21.60	
Salary: January 2025	£337.57	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£8,732.38</b>

### Income to report:

HMRC: VAT claim	£1,203.56	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,203.56</b>

\*The Clerk drew attention to two invoices received following circulation of the agenda, for final door/window replacements and heater installations & testing at the village hall. As these are to be financed by funding already secured from WDC, proposed Cllr Grainger, seconded Cllr Waters, all in favour, to approve the payments presented; the additional items as follows:

Pure Aluminium: VH windows/doors (Legacy Project) 50% final balance	£6,457.82
RHB Electrical: Testing & certification of VH heaters	£210.00

The Clerk confirmed that the final VAT element of the remaining balance for the doors and windows @ £1,076.30 would now be submitted to HMRC.

*Action: Clerk.*

- c) Bank reconciliation (iii) December 2024: The Clerk had prepared the third quarterly reconciliation of the 2024/25 accounts – documents were forwarded to Cllr Hobson who agreed to check and verify.

*Action: Cllr Hobson.*

- d) Proposal to consider expenditure @ £199.00 for extension of warranty for VAS sign for 3 years: Cllr Waters agreed to clarify the terms of the warranty and provide further updates.

*Action: Cllr Waters.*

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e) Proposal to approve expenditure @ £114.00 inc VAT for defibrillator electrode pack.

*Proposed Cllr Grainger, seconded Cllr Waters.*

*Action: Clerk to order and arrange for delivery to Cllr Waters,*

e) Proposal to approve 2025/26 budget & resultant precept request: Tax base figures 2025/26 & potential precept options for consideration & approval:

The Clerk had prepared and circulated a review of the 2024/25 budget at the third quarter of the current financial year – this was discussed and noted. It was agreed to forward receipts for village celebration expenditure to the Clerk, so that these could be reconciled before the year end. *Action: Cllr Seymour/ML.*

Attention was then drawn to predicted income and expenditure at the year end, existing earmarked reserves and the predicted year-end balance versus these reserves. Following receipt of the 2025-26 Band D levy figures from WDC, the Clerk had prepared a draft 2025/26 income and expenditure budget, which was circulated and discussed. Increases will be incurred in grass-cutting costs, insurance, subscriptions, salary/expenses and audit fees, therefore these are to be considered, balanced against the healthy reserves now being accrued. Using WDC's tax base formula, seven precept options were noted for consideration and a 6.9% increase was proposed, all Cllrs in favour:

This results in a precept @ £8,550 for 2025/26 and a band D levy annual increase of £2.77.

*Action: Clerk to forward request to WDC ahead of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025.*

## 25/9: Planning

**W/23/02209/FUL: Land off Chapel Lane** - Construction of 25 homes alongside provision of a new access road, SUDs and landscaping features – *a decision remains pending.*

**W/23/02447/SCR: Land At (OS 9463 5414) Naunton Road**, Naunton Beauchamp – 76 dwellings with access from the B4042 through its southern boundary. Request for a full environmental impact statement forwarded to WDC on 20/12/23. Objection completed on behalf of the parish council by planning consultant submitted July 2024 – *a decision remains pending.*

\*New footway proposals to remove all the hedging down the B4082 between College Road and Pershore Road were discussed – the Clerk had been in contact with a highways planning consultant who agreed to provide advice regarding the current plans, as it was confirmed that the Parish Council would wish to object to these. *Action: Clerk to provide updates as received.*

**W/24/01211/PIP at Land At (Os 9481 5346): Cowsden:** A planning appeal has been lodged with The Planning Inspectorate against the Council's decision for the proposed development. All correspondence and relevant documentation can be viewed on the Wychavon District Council website at [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk) under planning reference W/24/01211/PIP. The appeal will be determined on the basis of written representations.

As Cllr Seymour has a Disclosable pecuniary interest in this application, it was requested if there were any further comments to raise. As there were none, Cllr Seymour remained in the meeting: *no further updates at present.*

**W/24/01732/PIP: Land at (OS 9425 5448), Pershore Road:** Permission in Principle for 4 market dwellings and provision of public open space - comments of objection submitted to WDC 30/9/24. *This application has been approved for up to 2 market dwellings.*

**W/24/02469/LB: Linnet Cottage, Owls End Lane** - additional repair timber joints on the gable end and front elevation. – *a decision remains pending.*

**Coventry Arms development:** Cllr Waters & Cllr Grainger provided updates from a site meeting with the new owner in November 2024. The original public house is to be retained and turned into a dwelling, with plans to build a new dwelling behind in addition to four bungalows at the rear of the existing car park. It was noted that the scheme appears to be a positive use of the site which should enhance the entrance to the village.

*Action: Planning application to be circulated as received.*

## 25/10: Correspondence:

Flyford Parish Council      A road safety meeting originally planned for 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 at 7.30pm has been rescheduled for Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February. *Action: Cllrs to confirm if a representative(s) wish to attend.*

Pershore Education Planning Area Review      A notice of agreement has been received to extend the age ranges of all the first schools in the Pershore Education Planning Area to become primary schools. The middle schools in Pershore will no longer have a point of entry into Year 5 for September 2025, and Pershore High School's intake will be expanded to accommodate all Year 7 pupils in the area from September 2027.

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- SWDP Review Further to comments submitted in respect of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review, the Secretary of State has appointed two planning Inspectors to conduct an Examination into the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan. Ian Kemp will act as Programme Officer for the Examination and will be responsible for assisting the Inspectors with the administrative and procedural aspects of the Examination process & the primary point of contact for any queries. A hearing is due to be held in March 2025 – further updates to be shared as received.
- WCC Streetscape Design Guide A reminder of WCC's draft Streetscape Design Guide currently out for public engagement from Monday 4 November 2024 to Monday 27 January 2025 closing at midnight. Survey and design guide links: <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/StreetscapeDG2024>  
[https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-11/Public%20Engagement%20-%20Draft%20Streetscape%20Design%20Guide\\_1.pdf](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-11/Public%20Engagement%20-%20Draft%20Streetscape%20Design%20Guide_1.pdf)
- WDC A Town and Parish Council event will be held at Wychavon on Thursday 6 March at 6pm – two places are available per parish – it was agreed to circulate this email to new Cllrs.

## **25/11: District/County Cllr reports:**

Prior to the meeting, a new year report had been forwarded and circulated. Cllr Robinson shared her report and offered the opportunity for any questions to parishioners. This is appended to the minutes and available on the village website.

Particular attention was drawn to WCC's large tree planting project in Upton Snodsbury Parish – volunteers are warmly encouraged to assist in completing tree planting by the end of the Winter season. The site is currently being planted with trees to create a mixed native woodland nature reserve with a community orchard. This is part of Worcestershire County Councils 150,000 trees project where new woodlands are planted over several sites in the county. This will be part of an ongoing project throughout Winter using groups from the community to plant trees and as such, the following tree planting sessions will be held on:

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February  
Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February  
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February

**25/12 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7.30 pm**

Signed .....

Date.....

**Chairman**