Minutes of a meeting of Upleadon Parish Council held on Thursday 1 September 2016 at Upleadon Village Hall, at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr M Manning (Chairman), Cllr H Dunn (Deputy Chairman), Cllr E Wood, Cllr D Leighton, Cllr Paul Dallow

Also present: District Council P Burford

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3.00 Apologies

Cllr Mrs A Bassett had forwarded apologies due to personal family matters.

Approval for apologies was accepted.

3.1 Declaration of Interests

None

3.2 Cllr Manning advised that he had received a resignation from Cllr Mrs Woolfrey due to family illness. A casual vacancy was therefore declared, to be reported to the Forest of Dean District Council. If an Election was not called within the prescribed timescale, advertising to take place to fill the vacancy by co-option.

3.3 Approval of Minutes of Council meeting held on 12 May 2016

Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 May 2016 was proposed by Cllr Wood seconded by Cllr Dallow and unanimously agreed.

3.4 Matters Arising

P.3 Insurance – the Clerk reported that the three year option had been accepted as proposed and that further investigation with the alternative company had not proved satisfactory.

P.4 Highway matters

It was reported that the public footpath between Forge Lane and Gloucester Road had been cut and also the boundary hedge.

It was agreed to report the damaged sign post at Upleadon Cross again.

3.5 Approval of Minutes of Council meeting held on 9 June 2016

Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 June 2016 was proposed by Cllr seconded by Cllr Manning and unanimously agreed.

3.6 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

3.7 Finance/sundry payments

Payments for consideration:-

1. Community Heartbeat – defibrillator/casing - £1,890 (inc carriage/vat)

The Clerk advised that she had forwarded a copy of the invoice to FoDDC to request the agreed grant funding of £500. A similar letter to be sent to the Village Hall Committee to request their agreed contribution of £250.

2. Printerland – replacement toner for printer - £66.60 (inc carriage/vat)

Cllr Manning proposed approval to the payments which was unanimously agreed.

3.8 Correspondence

3.8.1 Pauntley Parish Council – visibility issues at Upleadon Cross

Advise of visibility issues when parishioners from the Pauntley direction negotiate Upleadon Cross. Enquire if similar concerns are made by Upleadon residents and of any suggestions to improve safety at this junction – possibly traffic safety mirrors in order that traffic from Brand Green could see traffic approaching from both Tewkesbury and Newent direction.

Cllr Manning advised that he had looked at this matter and had approached the residents of the property known as The Steps with a view to requesting their hedge be cut back which would improve the visibility issue. He advised this was to be done. Members considered the introduction of traffic safety mirrors but felt where both the Tewkesbury and Newent roads at this junction formed the brow of a hill, they would add little to improving visibility to traffic approaching from the other direction. It was agreed however to request that the white road lining be repainted and consideration be given, subject to highway criteria, to a stop instead of give-way sign to be installed.

3.9 Business

3.9.1 Planning applications

The Clerk reported there were no applications at this time to consider. The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from the Planning Department however with regard to the calling of site meetings. Advise “the determination of most planning applications is delegated to the Strategic Group Director as set out in the Council’s constitution. Larger scale applications or where a District Councillor calls the matter to committee are the exceptions and in such cases are determined by the Planning Committee itself. **A Parish or Town Council does not enjoy a right to call a matter to committee.**

Confirmation is given that planning applications are visited by the designated case officer. However, if the meaning of the request for a site visit is that the Parish Council wishes the Planning Committee itself to visit the site, this is not something that the Parish or Town Council can decide upon. Only planning applications which are to be determined by the Planning Committee are visited by members of the committee as part of a formal Sites Inspection Panel meeting. The Chair of Planning in discussion with Officers determines which sites to visit and these sites are viewed on the Tuesday before the Planning Committee (usually the first Tuesday of the month). Parish or Town Councils will continue to be invited to any Site Inspection Panel visit to an application in their area.”

3.9.2 External Auditor Report – End of year accounts – 2015/16

The Clerk advised that the External Auditor’s report had yet to be received. She had contacted them recently and they had advised the audit had not yet been completed. This matter to be deferred until the next meeting.

3.9.3 To give consideration to seeking Internal Auditor following resignation of existing Internal Auditor

Cllr Manning reported that he had actively tried to make contact with a lady in the village whom it was considered would have a suitable background to undertake the work of an Internal Auditor but had to date been unable to do so. He advised he would do so in preparation for the next meeting. A further alternative name was also suggested by Cllr Dunn if this should not prove successful.

3.9.4 Progress on acquisition of defibrillator

The Clerk advised that the defibrillator and casing had recently been delivered. It was agreed to enquire with a couple of local electricians if they would give their services free of charge to the community to connect an electricity supply to the defibrillator. Cllr Manning advised that he would also speak with the Village Hall Committee to agree a suitable location for the siting of the defibrillator on the wall of the building and to complete the form to be returned to Community Heartbeat when this had been undertaken, when training for its use could be pursued.

3.9.5 NALC Salary Awards

The Clerk advised that the new salary awards had been made for 2016/17 (backdated to 1 April 2016) and 2017/18 (1 April 2017). Cllr Manning proposed approval which was unanimously agreed.

3.9.6 Transparency Fund – website/laptop

The Clerk advised that the Transparency funding was still available for the provision of a Council website/laptop/scanner/internet connection and Glos Assoc of Parish and Town Councils were urging smaller Councils to take up the grant funding available for this purpose.

Members considered it would advantageous to have its own web-site and a laptop. Cllr Manning proposed that the Council pursue the acquisition of these items via the Transparency grant which was unanimously agreed.

3.9.7 Revision of Standing Orders/Financial Regulations

The Clerk advised that the Council’s Standing Orders/Financial Regulations should be regularly reviewed. This to be undertaken by the Clerk and Chairman for review and discussion at the next meeting.

3.9.8 Fastershire fibre broadband

It was agreed that the Council would seek an update from its County Councillor and District Councillor Patrick Molyneaux given the increasingly likelihood that fibre broadband would not be taking place in Upleadon. The Fastershire website gave no indication if or when this would happen , stating it was still under review as to whether the cabinet could be upgraded. It was further considered that the Community Fibre Partnership would be cost prohibitive for the parish.

3.9.9 Highway matters

The Clerk advised that the missing “Hooks Lane” sign inserted in the hedge on the corner of the lane had been reported and a replacement sign requested.

Concern was expressed that whilst the Council had reported the dangerous condition of the causeway near to Upleadon Church whereby the edge of the road fell steeply away with no protective barrier, no further action had been taken other than a number of temporary cones placed alongside the road. It was noted that the other side of the road was now breaking away. This matter to be reported again requesting an update on when attention would be given to this matter.

Further concern was raised about the condition of Middletown lane – a further update requested as to when it was to be resurfaced.

Cllr Manning reported that the road repairs in Gloucester Road previously reported had now been completed.

3.9.10 Any Other Business

Cllr Leighton highlighted the noticeboard was becoming wet inside – Cllr Manning to investigate.

3.9.11 It was agreed that the date of the next meeting of the Parish Council would be on Thursday 1 December 2016.

This concluded the business of the meeting and it was declared closed at 8.40 pm.

*Minutes are in draft form until verified at the next Council meeting*