

Upton Magna Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 18th of June, 2026 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall

26/074 REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE and APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Present: Councillors Gareth Thomas (chair), David Carter, Ann Fowler, Andy Pillow, Bob Newton, Jeana Bennion.

Apologies: Councillor Michael Dawson, Shropshire Councillor Mallon.

Parish Clerk: Karen Smith-Wells.

Attending: Sundorne Castle Estate Manager Huw Williams. Four members of the public.

26/075 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS – Councillor Thomas opened the meeting by outlining a number of impactful issues that have emerged in the Parish since the last meeting, and he wished to give reassurance that the Parish Council are aware of them and will address them. These include the changes planned for the school and Shropshire Council's Local Plan. At this point, he welcomed Ms. Ashton (Chair of Uffington Parish Council) who was in attendance, wishing to work alongside Upton Magna Parish Council with regard to the Local Plan.

26/076 PUBLIC SESSION – The Chairman opened the floor to the public, and the following questions were asked:

- **Shropshire Council's Local Plan #1** – It was felt that very little information had been made available for the public. Although the map showing sites put forward by the Sundorne Castle Estate was available, other criteria such as what the development will be, when it will take place and for whom it is intended, was not available. Members of the public were advised that Shropshire Council's "Activity Log" (timetable) shows that the initial site assessment process will take place between November 2026 and March 2027, and the finalisation of the site assessment process will take place between September 2027 and March 2028.
- **Shropshire Council's Local Plan #2** – The reasoning behind the sites put forward to Shropshire Council by the Sundorne Castle Estate was questioned. The Chairman opened the floor to the Estate Manager, Mr. Williams, who said that the Estate had been put in a position, by Shropshire Council, where they had to submit sites, due to the failure of the previous Local Plan. Shropshire Council had asked how the Estate will develop over the next 20 years, not just with regard to housing but also mineral extraction, leisure and commercial plans etc. Mr. Williams said that the Estate "has to think about the long-term future – not protecting its interests but blue sky thinking". Mr. Williams' comments were disagreed with as it is known that Shropshire Council does not force landowners to put forward sites for consideration, and each one that the Estate has offered will now be considered for development. This will cause worry and uncertainty, and it was agreed that putting forward the Memorial Hall field will particularly antagonise parishioners.
- **Shropshire Council's Local Plan #3** – It was suggested that the current improvements to infrastructure in the parish (road resurfacing, new nursery at the school) could be in preparation for development, even though no sites have been approved. It was agreed that parishioners should be

surveyed by the Parish Council (by means of a flyer) as soon as possible, asking for their opinion on possible development of any kind, in the future.

- **The school #1** – The Parish Council was advised that parents had been called at very short notice to a meeting at the school. Part of the meeting advised parents that they had been warned of child exploitation and gang activity that was affecting Harlescott and Sundorne, and that Upton Magna was “firmly on the radar”. This information had distressed parents and it was agreed that the Parish Council would first find out the source of the information and more of the facts, before discussing what can be done to safeguard the children of the parish. **ACTION:** Clerk to firstly email the school, and then the police and Shropshire Council.
- **The school #2** – The aforementioned meeting also covered the future of the school, including classroom sizes, and the provision of a new demountable on site. It was noted that, although information suggested that the new demountable will be in place in November, no planning application had been put forward to date.

26/077 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None.

26/078 MINUTES – It was proposed (JB), seconded (AF) and resolved that the Chair should sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th of May, 2026, as a true and correct record of that meeting.

26/079 LOCAL PLAN – Covered in minute 26/076 above.

26/080 THE HAUGHMOND – The new owners have confirmed that the Haughmond will reopen on the 26th of June.

26/081 REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MALLON (SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL) – Councillor Mallon’s report (presented in his absence) was accepted. **ACTION:** Clerk to place on the website.

26/082 REPORTS:

- a) **West Mercia Police** – Nothing to report.
- b) **SALC** – Nothing to report.
- c) **Memorial Hall** – Nothing to report.
- d) **Footpaths** – The Chairman opened the floor to the Estate Manager, Mr. Williams, who explained why some of the paths and bridleways had inadvertently been ploughed over. It was a mistake by outside contractors and they had now been reinstated.

26/083 PROGRESS REPORTS:

- a) **Shropshire Council Energy Scheme** – Councillor Carter advised that this is nearing a conclusion and switching to Shropshire Council energy should produce a 50% reduction in energy costs. However, an early change had been put in jeopardy when it was discovered that, a few years ago, the Parish Council had been signed into a contract with the current suppliers that does not run out until March 2027. Councillor Carter is hopeful that he will be able to secure an early release (without penalty) from the contract. **ACTION:** DC to continue to progress.
- b) **War Memorial and Plaque Wording** – Councillor Carter reported that the stone was now at Church Farm. Mr. Brooker had worked to make it, and its final site, ready for installation, and it is planned to put it in place on the 19th of June. The competition for the plaque wording had received 15 entries, with many coming from children at the school. Councillors then voted on the entries (with the entrant’s names removed) and the wording “Let their sacrifice be the foundation of our peace” was

chosen. Councillor Carter had obtained four quotations for the plaque and it was proposed (DC), seconded (AF) and resolved that the quotation in the sum of £143.00 be accepted. **ACTION:** Councillor Carter to arrange for the plaque to be made.

- c) Traffic Issues – Councillor Fowler reported that she had received a complaint about speeding vehicles on the road running from the fingerpost towards Haughmond Hill (beyond the Business Park). It was agreed to ask the police to put a Trucam there occasionally. **ACTION:** Clerk to contact PCSO Roberts. At this point, the proposed school car park was also discussed. **ACTION:** Clerk to ask the school Head for an update on progress, funding source, and the reasoning behind changing the location to the other side of Pelham Road. It was agreed to check whether the school provides bicycle/scooter safety lesson for pupils, at the same time.

26/084 MEMORIAL HALL FIELD – Councillors discussed the inclusion of the field in the sites put forward for the Local Plan by the Sundorne Castle Estate. It was noted that the Parish Council had already had the land declared as an Asset of Community Value (until mid-January 2027) so it was agreed that the Parish Council should investigate the feasibility of purchasing the land, via fundraising. **ACTION:** Clerk to formally write to the Estate Manager to open the lines of communication, in the first instance.

26/085 COMMUNITY “NEWS” – The Parish Council had received complaints about its advert in the Community “News” sometimes being placed close to a political advert, thereby giving the impression that the Parish Council is connected to that party. It was emphasised that the Parish Council is non-political. **ACTION:** Clerk to write to request that Parish Council information is not situated close to political material, in the future. In addition, it has also been noted that changes have been made to the information submitted by the Parish Council. **ACTION:** Clerk to also request that material written by the Parish Council is not altered prior to publication.

26/086 LAND VALUATIONS FOR TRANSPARENCY CODE – In order to comply with the legal requirements of the Transparency Code, it was proposed (DC), seconded (AF) and resolved that the areas owned by the Parish Council are given a value as follows: green opposite the Haughmond £3,500; Lychgate Green £3,000; grass mound with the signpost £500; tree and land at the front of Porch House £1000.

26/087 FINANCE:

- a) **Authorisation of payments** - It was proposed (DC), seconded (JB) and resolved that the following June payments be approved:

AMOUNT	PAYMENT DETAILS
£11.99	Hugofox – website
£328.48	Clerk’s May salary and expenses
£72.02	HMRC – PAYE
£7.00	Unity Bank charges
£52.20	Streetlight electricity
£15.00	Hire of Upton Magna Memorial Hall
£33.92	Printer cartridges (repayable to Parish Clerk)
£75.00	Community New advertising
£264.00	Insurance premium
£100.00	Internal audit fee

It was noted here that £211.75 Vat refund for 2025/26 had been received.

- b) **Internal Audit Report**– The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council accounts for 2025/26 had been successfully internally audited. It was proposed (DC), seconded (AP) and resolved that the internal audit report be accepted. **ACTION:** Clerk to place on the website.
- c) **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** – As a result of the internal audit, it was proposed (AF), seconded (DC) and resolved that the Chairman should sign the AGAR for 2025/26. **ACTION:** Clerk to also sign where required and then place on the website.

26/088 PLANNING:

- a) **25/01638/FUL Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)** – Nothing to report.
- b) **26/01048/FUL Siting of war memorial in Upton Magna** – Permission granted 19/05/26.
- c) **26/02035/LBC Addition of rooflight at Walnut Cottage** – Agreed that no comment is required.
- d) **Planning decisions published in advance of this meeting** – none.

26/089 GENERAL PARISH & HIGHWAY MATTERS:

Please note: Most highway and general repair matters are best reported using fixmystreet.com as this will usually get the quickest results.

- a) The hedge at 4 Pelham Road requires cutting back as it is impairing visibility for road users. **ACTION:** Clerk to write to the owner.
- b) Councillor Bennion reported that the roads were still not been cleaned regularly. **ACTION:** GT to contact Highways Portfolio Holder to ask for assistance.
- c) It was noted that both the hedge belonging to Cruck Cottage and the verge and hedge at Haughton Crossroads had been cut.

26/090 CORRESPONDENCE – None.

26/091 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA – The school and child safety.

The meeting closed at 20.59.

Date of next meeting: 9th July, 2026 at 7.30pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

K.M Smith-Wells – Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Upton Magna Parish Council
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