

UPPINGHAM FIRST

Community Partnership

Chair: Edward Baines Vice Chair: Mark Shaw Secretary/Treasurer: Ron Simpson BEM

Uppingham Webcam



Uppingham Hopper

Minutes of a Board Meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday December 12th 2023 in The Falcon Hotel

In Attendance

Business Directors: Edward Baines, Kath Gilbert, Damon Le Geyt, Ron Simpson BEM, James Torbell and Nick Townsend

Community Directors: Trevor Colbourne, Mark Shaw and Janet Thompson BEM

Statutory Sector Directors: Lucy Stephenson (Local Government) and Geoff Thompson (Education)

1. Apologies for Absence

Business Director: Trevor Ellis **Statutory Sector Director:** John Leslie **Community Liaison:** Chritine Edwards

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

Edward Baines welcomed everyone to this final board meeting of 2023.

3. Declarations of Interest

Board member interests in various businesses, councils, charities and community groups within the town and the county were noted.

4. Minutes of a Board Meetings held on July 6th and August 17th 2023

Circulated and approved as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

Add Trevor Colbourne as being present at the last meeting.

6. Secretary/Treasurer Report

- a) **Finance and Budget Update** - In accordance with insurance requirements, transactions for the period July 7th to December 10th 2023 were witnessed and signed by an attending director. Current bank balance was £15504.38 (Incorporates the Hopper, UNF, Rutland Lottery, Project, Event, VAT and Defibrillator funds). Credit Card balance is zero). An updated 2023 work programme and budget revealing 2023 income to date of £34053.82 and expenditure of £33835.25 was received and approved.
- b) **2024 Budget** - a draft 2024 expenditure budget of £39,225 was approved by the board. This excludes the possible renewal of the Uppingham Hopper which is subject to a grant bid.
- c) **Executive Director Role Specification** – An initial draft was circulated for board member perusal. Subject to any update, it was agreed that this would be signed off at the next meeting (Feb 24)
- d) **Market Town Statistics** - Rural Market Towns statistics founded on the 2021 census data were received and viewed with interest. The environmental, social and economic consequences of the town's high level of motor vehicle ownership and very low level of cycle ownership was noted with their consequential relevance for the emerging new Rutland Local Plan.
- e) **Rutland Deprivation Survey** - Publication of this survey by Citizens Advice Rutland was noted and discussed. Although containing useful data, the small sample size and conclusions drawn were of concern as some board members felt it presented a distorted picture of Rutland's true social and economic status.
- f) **VCS Structure Report** – Board Member Geoff Thompson, who chaired the task group preparing the report, summarised some of the issues emerging from the published final draft of this study.
- g) **Significant Correspondence, Events and Meetings** - Highlights since the last meeting included:- i) Discussion with developer representatives regarding the funding and viability of a future north/south relief road for the town ii) Dialogue with town centre property owners and local business proprietors with regard to the future of the Post Office iii) Dialogue with Uppingham Surgery and Rotary regarding a new joint health initiative iv) Discussion with Deputy Mayor David Ainslie BEM and the National Lottery regarding a possible bid for a new electric hopper bus v) Joint meeting with RCC Highways Department to update all parties on a range of matters relevant to the RCC Levelling Up Fund bid.

7. Social and Economic Forums

- a) **Business Forum** – Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday December 5th 2023 were received.
- b) **Neighbourhood Forum** – It was noted that the next meeting of the UNF will be held on Thursday December 14th 2023.
- c) **Vanguard Board** – It was agreed that the next meeting of the Vanguard Board (See Minute Footnote) will be held on Thursday January 4th to enable further dialogue on both the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan and the Rutland Local Plan Options public consultation.

8. Planning, Environment and Economic Development Matters

- a) **High Street Update** – Amid reminders of director business owner declarations of interest, Business Director Damon Le Geyt tabled a useful report on the state of the local high street and the economic challenges that lie ahead in 2024. The need to address the visual impact of empty shop windows was addressed with some window decoration possible if business premise owners requested the service.
- b) **Rutland Crematorium** – Business Director Nick Townsend provided an update on his conversations with interested parties and the pursuit of additional land by the prospective site purchaser. It was agreed that the Secretary confirm the town's continued interest in the project and NT's offer of support where appropriate.
- c) **Uppingham Post Office** – The Secretary reported on the action taken following the last meeting of the Uppingham Business Forum and the partnership's support for the present Postmaster's efforts to identify a successor. Confirmation that the present post office building was to be sold has been received. Following discussion on how the partnership could help to maintain a postal service in the town it was agreed that the top priority was to find a successor for Robin Bromiley. It was therefore resolved that the partnership launch a joint campaign with the post office to find a new Post Office Business Owner for Uppingham. It was further noted that the Town Council had the power to seek registration of the current post office building as a community asset, noting however that a new business owner may prefer an alternative building in the town.
- d) **Station Road Signage** – It was noted that no site visit had yet been undertaken by RCC highways due to staff shortages.
- e) **Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan** – A range of questions from the Plan's External Examiner were noted and are due to be addressed at a special meeting of the Plan's Advisory Group (NPAG)
- f) **Rutland Local Plan** – Public consultation on this draft plan is now live and the issues emerging for Uppingham will be presented to the community at the Uppingham Neighbourhood Forum.

9. Health and Wellbeing

- a) **Surgery Update** – In his absence the Secretary circulated a surgery update presentation from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) Chair and UF Statutory Sector Director John Leslie. Acknowledging the progress being made at the surgery John was thanked for the report.
- b) **Collaborative Venture with Rotary and Community Health Volunteers** – The Secretary reported on a successful joint meeting with Uppingham Surgery to progress this project. It was likely that the project would progress further in February 2024.
- c) **Defibrillator** – The town now has a new market place defibrillator funded by Rotary in Uppingham and it will be installed by the Town Council in early January 2024.

10. Community Transport

- a) **Uppingham Hopper** – It was reported by the Secretary that , subject to the cost of any unexpected repairs, sufficient funds remained in the accounts to operate the Hopper for a further 6 months. It was however likely that more donations would be received over the next 6 months. Work on a bid to secure national lottery funding for an electric hopper continued, led by hopper volunteer David Ainslie BEM.
- b) **Hopper at Weekends** – The considerable support for the Hopper being shown by community groups in using it for their activities in the evenings and at weekends was noted with pleasure. Donations from these groups were helping to balance the books.

11. Events

- a) **LNS 2023** – RS reported on a very successful evening led by LNS Volunteer Paula Donaldson. The event had been a social and financial success.
- b) **Social Sundays 2024** – Next year's schedule of events which feature live music every Sunday during the summer was noted with pleasure.
- c) **Uppingham Feast 2024** – The date has been set for June 23rd 2024 with Directors Lucy Stephenson and James Torbell leading on the organisation of the event.
- d) **Stilton/Round Rutland Runs 2024** - The date for these are April 21st 2024 and September 1st 2024 with Directors Mark Shaw and Ron Simpson BEM leading on their organisation.

12. Community Safety

- a) **Monthly Crime Statistics** - These are now published online at www.uppinghamonline.co.uk when made available
- b) **Community Emergency Plan** – New support volunteers are needed for this plan and will be recruited via the UNF public meeting.

13. Any Other Business

Release Programme – The launch of a new programme at St Georges Barracks to support those grieving using some elements of boxing was noted with interest. The programme starts on January 25th 2024

Partnership Insurance – The board was asked to note that the partnership's annual insurance premium had risen to circa £2500 for the 2024 year. This excluded the Feast and LNS event premiums which would be extra as in previous years.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The date of an Extraordinary General Meeting to change the Chair of the Partnership was as agreed as February 13th 2024 in The Falcon Hotel.

Notes distributed: 14.1.2024

Copies to: social and economic partners; local and national government; media

Uppingham First is the 'all sector' Community Partnership for Uppingham which brings together the voices of community, business and statutory sector representatives. It incorporated as a limited company in January 2009. The objects for which the company was established are, "To protect and promote the interests of Uppingham Town helping to sustain its vitality and economic viability ensuring it remains an attractive place to live work and play."

Uppingham First is a member of Live & Local, the national charity Locality, and the Community Transport Association (CTA) and administers the Uppingham Business Forum and the Uppingham Neighbourhood Forum.

The partnership provides social and administrative support to a large number of residents and community groups and has helped deliver a wide of projects including Digital Uppingham, the Uppingham Webcam, the Rutland Lottery, the Uppingham Defibrillator Network, the Uppingham Hopper, UppWatch, Neighbourhood Watch and the Community Emergency Plan. It also supports the innovative Uppingham Vanguard Board which brings together developers, landowners, town and county councillors, schools and other agencies pertinent to the future development of Uppingham.

Events supported this year include the Midlands Women's Awards, the Stilton Cheese Run, Uppingham Feast Day, Social Sundays, the Round Rutland Run and Christmas Late Night Shopping.

The company is financially sound with grants and donations having been received from a wide range of sources including residents, businesses, community groups, national and local government, Locality and the National Lottery.

**UPPINGHAM
FIRST**

Unless otherwise requested please direct all correspondence to The Secretary, 7 Hawthorn Drive, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9TA

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