

Debenham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Monday 18 November 2024, Dove Cottage, Debenham

Present: Cllr Winrow Giffin (Chairperson), Cllr J Sweet, Cllr L Cockerton, Cllr K Grimshaw, Cllr I Collins, Cllr L Robbins, Cllr Phipps

District Councillor T Davis and County Councillor M Hicks, Peter Grogan (Temporary Clerk), Brian Mansfield (RFO) and 6 members of the public

Chairpersons Announcement – *Welcome to this meeting of Debenham Parish Council, The Council, members of the public and the press my record / film this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Parish Clerk. Please switch all mobile phones to silent. May I remind all those present to be courteous and not to have private conversations whilst the meeting is in progress.*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank County Councillor M. Hicks for attending many extra meetings and for all the help and support he has provided to this council.

DPC/24/154 To Receive and consider apologies for absence: Cllr K Barlow (Vice Chairman), Cllr J Baldwin, Cllr G Helm. All apologies were approved as legitimate absences.

DPC/24/155 To receive members declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda:

Cllr Sweet, Cllr Collins and Cllr Robbins declared an interest in item 24/162 (d) expenses. Cllr Winrow Giffin in grass cutting.

DPC/24/142 Public Participation:

- a) A member of the public expressed concern that the new housing development, by Danbury Homes, had not laid the footpath into the village which necessitated members of the public walking in the road. **Cllr Hicks** (County) commented that this was due to delays were due to the developer not receiving necessary permissions (Natural England) regarding conservation of water voles. **Cllr Davis** (District) added that conservation of otters was also an issue. She confirmed that not having the permission breached the planning conditions, but no enforcement would be carried out as the developer would create the footpath when permissions had been obtained.
- b) On a second matter regarding meetings about flooding Cllr Hicks said he was happy to meet members of the public at any time.
- c) A member of the public raised the issue of hedge trimming in the vicinity of URC as it formed a welcome barrier to road noise and pollution and an excellent nesting habitat, (**Agenda item DPC/24/162 (k)**). After some discussion it was determined that the hedge was not included in the quotes to be discussed, and the last cut had been attempted by the Highways Department. Cllr Phipps provided valuable information in respect of maintenance of the hedge. It was decided to move this to a future agenda to determine Riparian rights and how best to manage the hedge.
- d) Two members of the public, one by tele-conference, addressed the meeting to provide information concerning planning application **DC/24/04567 for construction of a chicken farm**. The owner made the case for the farm not being intensive, as it would fall below the number 40,000 chicken determined by DEFRA. He also explained that the noise and smell had been estimated as “negligible” using approved measuring techniques.

He answered questions as follows, no slaughtering would be done on site, the site of 14 acres was described as managed to the highest possible standards from DEFRA and Red Tractor. There would be 7 flocks of > 40,000

chickens a year, they spend 26 days, as chicks, indoors before going outside. Manure would be sent off site ideally as fuel for power plants. Lorries would not travel through the village. There would be no further employment opportunities as this was a one-person operation. **(See Agenda item DPC/24/160)**

- e) A member of the public raised the issue that another Parish Councillor had left the committee and asked if PC were concerned? The Chairperson replied that there was always a turnover of Councillors due to a variety of personal circumstances and that the Council was not unduly concerned.

DPC/24/157 To receive reports from the District and County Councillors

- a) County Cllr Hicks addressed the meeting. His report had been sent prior to the meeting but he wished to highlight the work done by Highways dept in its survey of traffic speeds in the village (Avg 24mph) which gave him grounds to move forward with the issue. He also spoke about flooding and the £20 million pounds needed for all the work required in the County and the £1.5 million set aside by ESCC for urgent works. He was awaiting a response from Central Govt on further financial support. There would be a meeting on Tues 26th Nov in the Leisure Centre between 3:30 – 6:30 to discuss flooding issues. Finally, he addressed the housing targets set by Central Govt some 87% increase on current house building in East Suffolk. One of the biggest issues is that there has been no mention of the infrastructure needed to support this level of development.
- b) District Cllr Davis addressed the meeting. Her report had been sent prior to the meeting but she wished to highlight the work being done following storm Babet and the surgeries being held on Mondays between 10:00 - 12:00. There was also more work being done regarding helping people get more active, to stop smoking and to lose weight.

Cllr Davis also said she would follow up on the following issues raised by Parish Councillors. The rapid approval of “screening” for planning application DC/24/04567 (this is a planning procedure); interim measures to improve safety by the Danbury Homes development (lollipop lady); the accommodation and staffing costs incurred at the Leisure Centre during the flooding (amount to be determined).

DPC/24/158 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21st October 2024.

Proposed by Cllr Collins and seconded by Cllr Sweet and were approved. Cllr Winrow-Giffin and Cllr Phipps abstained.

DPC/24/159 Action Plan of Outstanding Matters: No further report.

DPC/24/160 Planning to consider planning applications for recommendations to MSDC:

Proposal DC/24/04567 – Kenton Hall, Debenham Road, Kenton – Chicken farm buildings.

A discussion was held referencing the information provided by the owner / manager at the beginning of the meeting. The Council considered this presentation in support of the application alongside the need to encourage farms in the area, the fact that a chicken farm in the area had recently closed, that this was a young farmer with local connections. Arguments against the application were the 16 objections raised against the application; the potential noise, smell and visible impact of the farm, and its buildings; HGV increase traffic, animal welfare concerns.

Proposal to support the application – Cllr Collins, Seconded Cllr Grimshaw. For 4 Against 3. It was agreed to support the application.

DC/24/04496 – Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Removal to ground level of Oak Tree– 8 Gracechurch Street – Cllr Cockerton agreed to this being deferred pending further discussion.

DPC/24/162 Finance and Administration

- a) **Report on appointment of Debenham PC Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) 5 hours per week.** The Chairperson introduced Brian Mansfield to the Council. There was a discussion about the need for approval for training and some basic office equipment.

- b) **To consider and approve training and equipment for the RFO:** It was agreed that Mr Mansfield would attend SALC training in the RIALTAS finance software (RBS). Also, for RFO to be added to SLACK and this would be facilitated by Cllr Helm. The cost would be £280 but this could include a further 3 other participants, Cllrs Grimshaw, Cockerton and Sweet asked to attend the training. Mr Mansfield explained he had lived locally (Nacton) since 2012 and was already RFO for Nacton PC. Further expenses would be a laptop with Windows 11, Office 365 a mouse and mouse pad. This was estimated at some £350.

Proposal to purchase the equipment listed and the RBS training - Cllr Winrow-Griffin, Seconded Cllr Sweet, approved unanimously.

- c) **To consider a donation to the Royal British Legion (RBL) Poppy Appeal:** Following the purchase of a metal wreath there would be no need for further plastic wreaths. It was agreed to have the metal wreath engraved with "Debenham Parish Council". It was also proposed to donate £20 to the Local RBL and £20 to the RBL poppy appeal at Central office.

Proposal to have metal wreath engraved and £20 donations to local RBL and RBL Central Office: Cllr Sweet, Seconded Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Approved unanimously.

- d) **To consider accounts for payment and note receipts, bank balances and reconciliations.** The list of payments for approval is attached. The closing balance on the current account was reported as **£19,473.63. bank statements were provided.** No other documentation was submitted.

Proposal to accept the figures presented: Cllr Grimshaw, Seconded Cllr Cockerton; Approved unanimously.

- e) **With regard to items (e) to (i) –** due to the new RFO being appointed it was decided by the Chairperson to defer these items to the Finance Sub-Committee and the next Committee meeting.
- f) **CIL funding application claim:** Cllr Sweet reported that the works to the various play areas would be completed by the end of the month at which point he would be asking MSDC for the CIL funding monies.
- g) **To agree a contractor based on quotes received for various hedge/tree works around the URC:** During discussion it extended to the issue raised earlier in the agenda of the hedge bordering the road with the URC raised by the member of the public which was not included. It was agreed to fully discuss this and associated riparian rights at a future Committee meeting. Also raised were associated problems with the bridge which appears to be cracked by encroaching roots of hedges and young trees. Cllr Sweet agree to raise the issue of the bridge with SCC Highways.

The quotes for listed works were discussed and J W was deemed best value. The work to be done before the end of January whilst the trees are dormant. Any work to the Willow tree to be deferred until spring.

Proposal that J W be contracted for the work: Cllr Sweet, Seconded Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Approved unanimously.

Committees, Working Groups and Representative's reports:

DPC/24/163: Debenham Neighbourhood Review: Cllr Barlow has published the report which had been circulated.

DPC/24/164: Allotments: Cllr Robbins reported that some plots were still vacant, that rents are coming in and there are no significant problems at present.

DPC/24/165: Cemetery: Cllr Sweet reported that there had been an incident of anti—social behaviour but the new gates at the entrance to Recreation Ground should mitigate any future recurrence.

DPC/24/166: Eco/Green Projects: No update

DPC/24/167: Public Conveniences:

- a) **Consider installation of CCTV,** Cllr Sweet reported that as the anti-social behaviour had ceased, probably due to cold weather, and as the taps turned themselves off there was no need to pursue this. Review in 6 months.

b) Report, nothing further to report

DPC/24/168: Recreation Ground: Cllr Sweet reported the works to play areas etc would be finished by the end of the month.

DPC/24/169: St Mary’s Churchyard: An arrangement has been made for the large trunks to be removed, the first to be paid for by a resident on whose land the tree is based and the second had previously been paid by the PC. The wood will be cut into logs and a donation made to the Church. This arrangement was challenged in that if the PC paid for the work should it not receive the donation?

DPC/24/170: Woodland: rewilding of the top field: To be revisited in the spring to assess new plants etc. As the soil is so poor it might suit an orchard?

DPC/24/171: To consider TRO Highways proposals: Deferred to end of meeting.

DPC/24/172: Emergency Plan: Deferred to future meeting as work needs to be done on listing requirements and items to ordered.

DPC/24/173: Flood report: As Jane Baldwin is not available defer to next meeting. District Cllr Davis asked if in Cllr Baldwin’s absence another Cllr might consider filling in? Councillors to consider replacement.

DPC/24/174: Dog bin emptying: There is a discrepancy between the bins MSDC and DPC think they are emptying, and the bins that are being paid for. A reconciliation is required to sort it out.

DC/24/175: Parish Council Bier: It has been proposed that it be moved to Debenham as it can no longer be accommodated in its current location in Bressingham museum. If no permanent location can be found immediately Cllr Collins offered to keep it secure in his warehouse.

DC/24/176: To agree arrangements for Christmas trees on Market Green and St Mary’s Churchyard: Cllr Sweet has tried to arrange for the trees to arrive on the 30th of November. It was agreed that volunteers should assemble at Dove cottage at 9:30am on the 30th to set the trees up and to add lights and decorations

DC/24/177: Parish Council Poppy Wreath: Already discussed under **DPC/24/162 (c)**.

DPC/24/178: To consider correspondence received: All correspondence had been circulated.

DPC/24/179: To receive any report from Cllrs and accept items for Future Agenda:

- a) B/F There were requests for an item regarding the bus shelter’s land ownership.
- b) Cllr Cockerton: Extension of Hedge forming a boundary to URC – riparian rights and cutting

DPC/24/180: Date of Next Meeting – Monday 9th December 2024 at 7pm at Dove Cottage.

DPC/24/181 – Exclusion of the Public – All public left the meeting and the Temporary Clerk at 9:50pm

DPC/24/182 & 183

Confidential section: DPC24/171 TRO proposals deferred to December meeting

Signed ...F WINROW-GIFFIN..... Chairman Date ..NOV 20 th 2024.....