

Debenham Parish Council
DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Monday 27th July 2026
Dove Cottage, Debenham

Present: Cllr Collins (Chair), Cllr Alexander, Cllr Cockerton, Cllr Haddon, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Potter, County Councillor Hicks (arrived 7.24pm), District Councillor Davis, Parish Clerk/RFO Ginny O'Hegarty, and 7 members of the public.

DPC/26/641: Apologies for Absence Cllr Grimshaw (apologies approved). Cllr Faggionato was absent without consent.

DPC/26/642: Declarations of Interest with regards to items on the Agenda Cllr Hughes declared an interest in DPC/26/648.3 and DPC/26/651.5

DPC/26/643: Public Participation section

- A member of the public outlined how the funding sought by Debenham High School would support planned improvement projects at the school. The matter was covered later in the Agenda under item **DPC/26/651.4**.
- A resident requested the details of Councillors and the areas they oversee be listed in the Debenham magazine, and that each councillor identifies what they are planning to do during the next month and at the following meeting to report on what they have done and what they are planning to continue to do in their area. The resident noted the new container for the remembrance day crosses and hoped the crosses would not be left to deteriorate in future. The resident also requested remembrance wreaths be disposed of in a respectful manner and that future poppy wreaths be the correct colour of red.
- A resident commented on potential development sites identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and the likely impact on flooding if new developments were to proceed.
- A resident queried when the resurfacing is to take place after the shoring up of the river. Cllr Hicks confirmed the resurfacing works and reinstatement of the double yellow lines are expected to take place quite quickly subject to unforeseen issues. The resident also queried whether the closed off WC could be used for storage for the scouts/guides, but Council noted the available space was insufficient. The resident had been investigating support for a zebra crossing and asked if Highways were to agree to it would the Parish Council pay for it.

DPC/26/644: Reports

1. District Councillor's report

The District Cllr's report is available on the website and includes information about the success of river week, better recycling, and the new REACH team. As regards the question of a zebra crossing raised by a resident, Cllr Davis mentioned that if the Parish Council is looking to improve walking and cycling access to schools for children to get more confident on the road, then the Parish Council can apply for District CIL funding of 75% towards a project or up to £100,000, or use Neighbourhood CIL. County Cllr Hicks noted that power is needed for zebra crossings, and that a tiger crossing would be considerably cheaper. Cllr Hicks also noted that when the planning application came forward it was deemed that a crossing was not necessary for the number of people living on the site. Cllr Alexander volunteered to investigate this topic further with Highways.

2. County Councillor's report

A140/A1120 junction: the government has set aside approximately £6m for the work. Timelines and other information is awaited, as well as whether the speed camera will be reinstated as part of the process. Suffolk County Council (SCC) received a good rating for adult social care from CQC when it inspected the service. SCC continues to oppose EcoPower Suffolk very strongly for a variety of reasons and SCC considers the scheme is not fit to come forward. Cllr Hicks noted there is currently a minerals and waste local plan call for sites taking place. Tree branches came down recently in Lock Close which had been attended to and the team will return shortly to put the debris through a mulcher. Cllr Hicks had been asked about cycling signs on lamp posts and had sent through to the Clerk a list of all the lamp posts that SCC is responsible for, and the one the Parish Council is responsible for. Cllr Hicks advised that a process is required to be followed of completing a relevant form and he had sent the details to the Clerk.

DPC/26/645: Minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2026 The Minutes were agreed and signed.
Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Hughes, **Approved** Unanimously

DPC/26/646: Applications for co-option to the vacancies on the Parish Council Mr Edward Bell was co-opted following a unanimous vote of agreement, having first introduced himself and expressed an interest in supporting the community. Cllr Bell completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting. The Register of Interests will be completed in due course.
Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Haddon, **Approved** Unanimously

DPC/26/647: Action Plan of Outstanding Matters (Resolved)

1. Water Lane "No Through Road" Signage. Works ordered; will be completed by 20th August.
2. Registration of the Village Green. Ongoing.
3. Installation of a streetlight at Gardeners Road. Works ordered with a provisional installation date of 20th August.
4. Repair of railings at recreation ground and missing down post in the Urn Garden. Works due to take place on 3rd August.
5. Overhanging trees at Cherry Tree Green. Application for works to trees in a conservation area has been submitted; decision due 5th August.

DPC/26/648: Action Plan of Outstanding Matters (Ongoing)

1. **Installation of Defibrillator at Dove Cottage:** The Parish Council is required to apply for listed building consent.
2. Quotations for works to trees marked as urgent in the recent tree survey report had been obtained. Council approved a budget of £1,950 for works to trees that fall under the responsibility of the Parish Council. A request for the chippings to be delivered to the allotments was noted.

Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Cockerton, **Approved** Unanimously

3. **Update regarding investigations into the feasibility of the construction of a flood mitigation structure on land adjacent to Hoppit Wood and Lake** Council approved:
 - a. the recommendations contained within the natural flood management workshop report;
 - b. proceeding with investigating the design and costs of the project;
 - c. UDOG submitting funding applications to begin the draft design process.

Proposed Cllr Haddon, **Seconded** Cllr Alexander, **Approved** 6 in favour, 1 abstention

4. Council noted a site visit had been undertaken by County Cllr Hicks and the Community Liaison Engineer regarding the flooding at Water Lane. No further action could be taken due to cost constraints.

DPC/26/649: PLANNING: Council considered responses to planning applications received from Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC)

1) DC/26/02875 Erection of 4 self-build dwellings and associated works. Location: Land Between The Butts And Little London Hill, Debenham. **No objections.**
Proposed Cllr Alexabder, **Seconded** Cllr Cockerton, **Supported** Unanimously

2) DC/26/02685 Crown reduction of two oak trees. Location: Cherry Tree Green near 2 River Close Debenham IP14 6ST. The Parish Council was the applicant and therefore unable to comment.

3) DC/26/02415 Replacement of 2 windows. Location: 7 Water Lane, Debenham IP14 6QB. Council agreed to leave the decision to the Conservation Officer.

DPC/26/650: PLANNING: Council noted the following planning decisions:

1) DC/26/02384 Minor changes to external finishes, and relocation of doors and windows. An external low-level wall for flood protection to a timber structure. Location: 11 Water Lane, Debenham IP14 6QB. **Approved**

2) DC/26/00118 and DC/26/00119 Installation of up and over garage door to rear brick shed and removal of existing windows; Replacement of existing gate; Construction of brick arch and installation of wooden arched gate; Replacement/repair to attic bedroom space. Location: 12-14 High Street, Debenham IP14 6QJ. **Granted**

3) DC/26/00522 and DC/26/00523 Rebuilding of open lean-to into an enclosed lean-to. Retention of reinforcing works to existing riverbank and erection of access deck. Location: 6 Chancery Lane, Debenham IP14 6RN. **Granted**

DPC/26/651: Finance

1. Council approved the July 2026 Payments Schedule and noted receipts and bank balances / reconciliations

Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Hughes, **Approved** Unanimously

2. Finance Working Group report:

- i. Report including accounts to 3 July 2026:

The RFO reported total bank balances as £342,805.42 made up as follows:

- Current Account: £7,456.26
- Deposit Account: £326,327.23
- Woodlands Current Account: £1,243.42
- Woodlands Deposit Account: £7,778.51

The Finance Working Group had reviewed the spend against budget and the RFO reported an overspend of £3,750 in grants due to a funding request from The Debenham Project not qualifying for CIL funding, and an overspend of £375 for clock winding due to rectifying an underpayment in the previous financial year.

- ii. CIL Funding report update. The RFO reported there had been no change from the previous month and the CIL funding remained at £68,585.20 after the deduction of allocated CIL.

3. Council approved the provision of a commercial waste bin for use by the street warden to be sited at the shed at the recreation ground at a cost of £1,209 per annum for weekly collections.

Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Haddon, **Approved** Unanimously

4. Council approved a request for CIL funding from Debenham High School in the amount of £29,999. The amount was reduced from the original funding request of £37,110 due to an email sent to Council on 16 July with updated information regarding the funding amount requested.

- a. Canopy supply and installation: £12,999
- b. Soundproofing of the chaplaincy room: £5,000
- c. Contribution towards resurfacing the tennis courts: £12,000

Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Potter, **Approved** 6 in favour, 1 abstention

5. Council approved a request for CIL funding from the Upper Deben Owners Group ("UDOG") - in the amount of £2,000 towards:

- a. Insurance, web hosting, accounting: £1,075
- b. Design, printing, event hire: £2,150
- c. Education materials, workshop delivery: £3,160

Proposed Cllr Cockerton, **Seconded** Cllr Alexander, **Approved** Unanimously

- d. Council approved applying to Mid Suffolk District Council in support of UDOG for locality grant funding of £4,385.

Proposed Cllr Haddon, **Seconded** Cllr Alexander, **Approved** 5 in favour, 1 objection, 1 abstention

6. To review and approve the Funding Policy. Deferred to the September meeting.
7. Council approved the following online training course for newly co-opted Councillors: "Councillor Basics" online workshop comprising two sessions, £70+ VAT in total per person
Proposed Cllr Alexander, **Seconded** Cllr Haddon, **Approved** Unanimously

DPC/26/652: Administration

1. Council approved the response to Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils scoping consultation survey.
Proposed Cllr Hughes, **Seconded** Cllr Alexander, **Approved** Unanimously
2. Council approved establishing a social media presence noting that someone needs to be appointed to be responsible for it.
Proposed Cllr Bell, **Seconded** Cllr Hughes, **Approved** Unanimously

Committees, Working Groups and Representatives Reports:

DPC/26/653: Neighbourhood Plan

1. Update regarding the Residents' Survey. The survey had generated 303 responses, and the results would be summarised and distributed to news organisations and the Debenham community per the volunteer group's communication plan.
2. Update regarding the volunteer group's communication plan. The communication plan has been circulated to Council and the volunteer group and Council is now at the stage where it is reporting back to the community about the results of the Residents' Survey.

DPC/26/654: General Maintenance topics

1. Routine inspections of the parish play equipment: Cllr Collins will explore the cost of appointing a suitable person to conduct monthly inspections of the play equipment and report the findings back to Council.
Proposed Cllr Hughes, **Seconded** Cllr Bell, **Approved** Unanimously

2. Update on involving the High School in considering replacement equipment at the recreation ground. Deferred to the September meeting.
3. Council approved the following further repairs and maintenance of the public lavatories:
 - a. Installation of an electric hand dryer in place of paper towels. Cost: £950-£1,100 +VAT including electrical installation
 - b. Replacement of the consumer unit to provide 30mA RCD electrical safety device protection. Cost: £390.00
 - c. Serviced hygiene bin. Cost: In the region of £125 per annum for monthly collection
 - d. Programmable air freshener to include 5-year supply of fragrance. Cost: £109.00

Proposed Cllr Bell, **Seconded** Cllr Hughes, **Approved** Unanimously

Council approved the pay to use charge as 20 pence.

Proposed Cllr Bell, **Seconded** Cllr Alexander, **Approved** Unanimously

4. Actions to be taken to combat anti-social behaviour: Council agreed that the installation of CCTV at the recreation ground was not a viable option due to the associated costs and the absence of a power supply at the site.
5. Actions to be taken to prevent vehicles accessing the lane past the bollards on the south side of the lake. Council agreed to purchase three bollards to be concreted in.

Proposed Cllr Hughes, **Seconded** Cllr Bell, **Approved** Unanimously

DPC/26/655: Highways

1. Visits by the enforcement team: Cllr Alexander will continue to pursue a response regarding visits by the enforcement team and the number of tickets issued.
2. Faded double yellow lines by the primary school: Suffolk Highways have confirmed these will be reinstated. Cllr Alexander will follow up with West Suffolk Council regarding the County Service Level Agreement that is in place with Suffolk County Council.
3. Leaning wall at Gardeners Road: Cllr Alexander and the Clerk are continuing to pursue a response from Suffolk Highways.
4. Traffic Regulation Order: Council agreed to hold a Teams meeting with all councillors to consider and agree further actions to be undertaken.

DPC/26/656: To receive any report from Councillors/requests for addition to a future Agenda (no decision can be made unless exempt or under delegated power)

Adoption of a Vexatious Policy (Cllr Hughes)

DPC/26/657: Date of next Parish Council meeting – Monday 21st September 2026, 7pm at Dove Cottage, High Street, Debenham

DPC/26/658: To consider the temporary exclusion of the public and press: That pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission at meetings) Act 1960 the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

1. Contractual matters
2. Land matters

Meeting closed at 21.13pm