Debenham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held at 7pm on 19th October 2026, Dove Cottage, Debenham

Present: Cllr I Collins (Chair), Cllr T Faggionato (Vice Chair), Cllr Edward Bell, Cllr L Cockerton, Cllr Ken Grimshaw, Cllr Morgan Potter, Former Temporary Acting Parish Clerk John Sweet, new Parish Clerk and RFO Naomi Cain and 6 members of the public; one member of the public was successfully co-opted to the Parish Council and Cllr. Nicole Ker-Gibson joined the meeting following this.

Chair's announcement:
Welcome to this meeting of the Debenham Parish Council. The Council, members of the public and the press may 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 off or to silent. May I remind all those present to be courteous and not to have private conversations whilst the meeting is in progress. Thank you.*

DPC/26/686 – **To consider apologies for absence**
Apologies from Cllr D Haddon and BMSDC Cllr T Davis.

DPC/26/687 – **Declarations of Interest with regard to items on the agenda**
None declared.

DPC/26/688– **Public Participation section 10 minutes** (3 minutes for each speaker)
One member of the public, representing a group of 3 residents in attendance at the meeting, raised concern regarding several large trees on Moores Close. There is concern about the large tree roots causing reported raising of the pavement and property damage, and questions regarding ongoing maintenance. These trees were included in the last tree report conducted in Spring 2026 and no issues were identified. The Clerk spoke to inform of communication with a resident last week (present this evening) who was concerned regarding the proximity of a large branch brushing on a residents roof. The contractor of the recent tree report was contacted and has visited and reported that the branch is a minimum of 3m from the roof and no work was required.
There was a discussion regarding responsibility for the trees and Action Point for the Clerk to contact David Pizzey of BMSDC to query responsibility and report the concerns raised.

DPC26/689 – **Reports**

a. District Councillor's report
b. County Councillor's report

Not present.

DPC/26/690– **To approve the minutes of the meeting of 21st September 2026**
Proposed by Cllr E Bell. **Seconded** by Cllr L Cockerton. **Approved** unanimously. Signed by the Chair Cllr I Collins.

DPC/26/690a – **to consider Co-Options to join the Parish Council**
Cllrs confirmed they had reviewed the Co-Option application form submitted by Nicole Ker-Gibson and N Ker-Gibson provided a short statement. A vote was then held for co-option.
Proposed by Cllr L Cockerton. **Seconded** by Cllr T Faggionato. **Approved** unanimously.
Cllr N Ker-Gibson completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invited to join the table.
Action Point for the Clerk to send a Register of Interests form and request email and access to Slack is set up.

DPC/26/691 – **Action Plan of Outstanding Matters** (completed)
1. Public toilet hand dryer installed (agreed £1400 paid £110). Completed. Cllr I Collins reported that damage with attempts to pull the hand dryer off the wall after installation were made however this has since been repaired.
2, Public toilet consumer unit/ fuse box (quoted £840 paid £600). Completed.
3. Two benches to be installed by the street warden. On-going.
4. Installation of streetlight at Gardeners Road. On-going. Cllr I Collins to meet with resident.
5. Bollards / fencing on Priory lane to prevent parking. Completed.
6. Faded yellow lines by primary school. Reported to Highways.
7. Quotations for tree works. J W now has a list of urgent work to complete.
8. Should an Independent Hydrologist be considered. Independent Hydrologist found by recommendation and has local experience having completed a report on behalf of Framlingham. Action Point Parish Clerk to make contact.
9. Replacement Defib cabinet works ordered via First Responders.
10.Oak fencing and posts on Highroad fitted with steel screws should be stainless steel. Reported to SCC Cllr M Hicks.

DPC/26/692 **Action plan of Outstanding Matter.**
1. Installation of hygiene bin and programmable air freshener in the public toilets. Cllr I Collins reported that awaiting the installation of tap and pay before this will be completed.
2. Installation of tap and pay in the public toilets. Cllr I Collins reported this should be installed within the next few weeks.
3. Wall at 43 High Street Debenham. Structural report has been completed. Action Point Cllr N Ker-Gibson to seek 3 quotes for remedial works as recommended in the report and to contact homeowner to discuss solutions.
4. Leaning wall at Gardeners Road. Reported to SCC Cllr M Hicks who advised the wall is on the job list and will be fixed within the next 6 months. Action Point Clerk to contact SCC Cllr M Hicks to ask for letter confirming SCC are responsible.



5. TRO update. Discussion regarding where we are and comment from a member of the public, with consent from the Chair, regarding his suggested contact. Action Point Clerk to contact SCC Cllr M Hicks to ask for update and a Teams meeting is then to be organised.
6. Registration of village green. On-going. Clerk awaiting documents from Solicitor for Council to sign and once signed and returned this can be registered.
7. Update regarding investigations into the feasibility of the construction of a flood mitigation structure on land near the Hoppit wood:
A. The recommendations contained within the natural flood management workshop.
B. Proceeding with investigating the design and costs of the project (the council has been advised that there will be no cost to the council).
Council previously approved. No update received. Action Point Clerk to contact UDOG to request an update and to seek regular updates as a future standing item on the agenda.

DPC/26/693 – **Planning Matters**
DC/26/04129 Notification of works to trees, to pollard 1 Ash tree @ 5 metres
17 High Street Debenham.
Cllr L Cockerton informed the council that this has already been approved.

DC/26/04137 & DC/26/04253 Change of signage and paint colour in a conservation area.
7 High Street Debenham
Proposed Cllr L Cockerton **Seconded** Cllr T Faggionato **Supported** unanimously.

DC/26/03313 Erection of one two storey detached dwelling with garage and vehicular access.
8 Gracechurch Street.
This is a renewal. No concerns. All Cllrs in agreement to reaffirm previous support.
Proposed Cllr K Grimshaw **Seconded** Cllr T Faggionato **Supported** unanimously.

DPC/26/694 **Planning decisions**
DC/26/03072 Planning application approved.
White Hall Barn Debenham
DC/26/03650 Works to trees
Hoglet House, Priory Lane, Debenham

DPC/26/695– **Finance and Administration**
Council to approve October payments as shown on the circulated schedule.
Proposed Cllr K Grimshaw **Seconded** Cllr E Bell **Approved** with 1 abstention as new Cllr N Ker-Gibson had not seen the schedule prior to the meeting.

Cllr L Cockerton raised that training for the new Clerk was not on the approved schedule and would require approval. Discussion followed and proposal that Clerk seeks and arranges all relevant training, including RIALTAS, and claims this back on expenses for submission to November meeting.
Proposed Cllr K Grimshaw **Seconded** Cllr E Bell **Approved** unanimously.

Millenium Gates post replacement expenditure for consideration.
One quotation has been received; this person is the son of the original supplier and has knowledge of the production and installation approximately 26 years ago. The existing gates are reported to be constructed from too thin a gauge steel and this quotation provides for increased thickness and an estimated 100 year lifespan. This will be funded by CIL funds held. There was discussion on whether the quotation includes painting – Action Point Cllr I Collins will contact to confirm.
Discussion on if there could be any comebacks to the original firm regarding the shorter than expected lifespan of the gates. Cllrs have been told by the firm who have quoted that a thicker steel was recommended but the council at the time needed to save money and hence a thinner gauge of steel was used; there is no one from the council at the time to ask.
Cllrs asked for clarification on whether additional quotations will be sought. Previous Temporary Acting Parish Clerk advised that 3 quotations should be sought. Discussion regarding the difficulty of sourcing quotations for a specialist product, Action Point Clerk to seek additional quotation from local firm prior for consideration at next meeting.
The condition of the existing gates has worsened, and Clerk informed Cllrs of correspondence received (with photos) expressing concern at the risk of harm and rapidly deteriorating condition. Discussion regarding the gates being made safe. Cllr I Collins asked if there was an objection to the gates and posts be removed as a priority under Emergency Health & Safety powers using funds of the Chair/Clerk and will contact to request a quotation for just this. All Cllrs agreed. Cllr L Cockerton suggested the area is taped off once the gates are removed. Action Point – Cllr I Collins will contact to request quotation for urgent removal of gates and posts to make safe. Emergency H&S funds will be used to cover this.

Purchase of 30 x 50mm x 1.8 m fence posts for use on the allotments.
Previous Temporary Acting Parish Clerk stated the posts were requested to enable the fencing to be straightened and the grass cutter to have a straight line to mow along.
Proposed Cllr E Bell **Seconded** Cllr T Faggionato **Approved** unanimously.

Small skip to remove concrete outside Council shed.
Proposed Cllr T Faggionato **Seconded** Cllr E Bell **Approved** unanimously.

Funding request from the DLC for fireworks insurance.
DLC have requested up to £600 as a contribution to fireworks insurance for upcoming event. Members debated the proposal at length and with reference to previous successful funding requests. This included discussion on specific points within the Funding Policy; waiting a period of three years before submitting any further CIL funding requests and the public benefits of a chargeable event.
Cllr L Cockerton expressed as a family event she proposes as a gesture of goodwill the funding is agreed.
Proposed Cllr L Cockerton **No Seconder**
Cllr T Faggionato proposed that the funding is declined.
Proposed Cllr T Faggionato **Seconded** Cllr E Bell **Approved** with 2 abstentions.

Current Account £7,431.12
DPC Deposit Account £328,499.95 (suggest moving funds to other banks re: £85k guarantee).
Cllr I Collins stated this limit has recently increase; it is now £120,000. Concern that the limit is per banking institution. Action Point Cllr T Faggionato to research options and to discuss at further meeting.
Still awaiting banking mandate to be updated to remove and add authorised signatories and to change address.

Woodland Current Account £1,243.42
Woodland Deposit Account £7,798.87

Receipts
Income this month £45,466.50 Precept.
MSDCCIL £12099.99
Income this month £1,350.30 Allotment rents. 36 plots paid.
Note: October 2nd Cheque number 102452 £1605.00 presented issued in April to the Primary school. This has now cleared.

Financial reports*
Trial balance available *
Detailed receipts and payments by budget heading available*
Earmarked reserves report available*
Cil expenditure to date available *
Previous Temporary Acting Parish Clerk suggests a Finance meeting is arranged for second quarter. Action Point Clerk to arrange.
Cllr K Grimshaw asked if new Clerk & RFO had received bank statements. Clerk authorised that handover for RFO role planned for 21st October when a meeting with Acting RFO has been organised.

Consider Laying of the remembrance day wreath.
Discussion regarding permanent wreath owned by DPC and reported concern that the poppies are the wrong shade of red and that the wreath should be collected after one week. Cllrs in agreement that the permanent wreath will not be replaced. Cllr I Collins and Cllr T Faggionato confirmed they will be available to lay the wreath during the service on November 8th.

Consider purchase of two Christmas trees. All Cllrs in agreement to the purchase of 2 trees, requested in advance to avoid the smaller trees of large year. Cllr T Faggionato offered to help with installation and lighting on November 30th. Former Temporary Acting Parish Clerk has arranged for the grass cutter to test existing lights in the next few weeks, but additional lights thought to be required.
Cllr E Bell proposed funding of up to £250 for additional lights.
Proposed Cllr E Bell **Seconded** Cllr L Cockerton **Approved** unanimously.

DPC/26/696 – **Committees, Working Groups and Representatives**

a. Debenham Neighbourhood Plan Review – Update meeting arranged for October 28th 5pm to 9pm at Dove Cottage. Ian Poole attending
b. Allotments –£1350.30 rents paid. All allotment rules and agreements posted to plot holders, and not all returned and not all paid. Action Point Allotment committee meeting to be arranged.
c. Eco/Green Projects. Think bike signs. Cllr D Haddon not present to provide an update. Deferred to next meeting.
d. Recreation Ground – report on metal goal posts already given, work to repair shelter organised.
e. Public Convenience – Tap and pay, hand dyer and consumer unit as reported earlier.
f. St. Mary's churchyard – PCC have requested funding for works to the ditch at the church (report posted on Slack). The work requested is to dig out the bottom of the ditch and place the spoil on the furthest bank to prevent flooding into neighbours' gardens and into a chicken run. Discussion regarding responsibility; PCC owns the land, but DPC has financial responsibility to maintain. Concern from Cllrs that any work could cause further flooding risk and the need to investigate and seek permissions prior to a discussion on funding authorisation and if this is above general maintenance.
   Cllr T Faggionato proposed that PCC is contacted and asked to contact Environment Agency for advice and permission and once sought returns to the Cllrs for discussion.
   Proposed Cllr T Faggionato **Seconded** Cllr E Bell **Approved** unanimously.
   Action Point Clerk to contact PCC and ask for them to contact Environment Agency and appropriate Drainage Board for advice and permission and to then return.
g. Woodland – Recent working groups taken place and 2026 calendar being produced.
h. Emergency Planning – to receive an update Chair has emailed latest EP to Mid Suffolk , no response yet.
i. Flood Report update : Flood retention structure mentioned earlier.

DPC/26/697 - **To note any further correspondence** (all correspondence circulated to members ahead of the meeting or included on the agenda for consideration)

Correspondence from resident asking for funding for transport to college.
Discussions regarding funding request, DPC does not have a hardship fund, recommendations of further funding sources made and Action Point Clerk to respond to residents email with this information.

Correspondence from resident re streetlight on Gardeners road.
Cllr I Collins is in contact with the resident and will arrange to meet with them.

DPC/26/698– **To receive any report from Councillors**/requests for addition to a future agenda (no decision can be made unless exempt or under delegated power)
Cllr T Faggionato clarified that he will conduct research regarding banking options to safeguard DPC funds and suggested this is discussed at a Finance Committee meeting.

DPC/26/699 - **Date of next meeting – 16th November 2026**
Advance notice that December meeting will be the second Monday of the month so – 14th December 2026. Cllr K Grimshaw provided apologies and advised he is unable to attend this meeting.

DPC/26/700 – **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.**

All public left the meeting at 20:26. John Sweet invited to remain to provide any updates from his role as Temporary Acting Parish Clerk.

