

Minutes of a meeting of the Debenham Parish Council held on Monday, 18th April 2016 at 7:30 at Dove Cottage, Debenham.

Present: Cllr F Winrow-Giffin (Chairman), Cllr R Blackwell, Cllr L Cockerton, Cllr A Cushion, Cllr J Feeney-Howells, Cllr J Baldwin, Cllr G Helm, Cllr E Bowman, Cllr K Murray, Mrs D Bedwell (Clerk) and one member of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies had been received (and were approved) from Cllr M Loveridge, Cllr S Phipps and Cllr S Palframan, as well as County Cllr M Hicks and District Cllr K Guthrie.
2. **To consider the co-option of new members onto the Council:** Following a brief presentation to members, it was resolved to co-opt Mrs Karen Murray onto the Council. Cllr K Murray was invited to join members and duly completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
3. **Declarations of interest with regard to items on the agenda, additions to register and dispensation requests:** Cllr F Winrow-Giffin declared a pecuniary item on any grass cutting contract matters; Cllr J Baldwin declared a pecuniary interest on any matters pertaining to her allotment plot and non-pecuniary on any items pertaining to item no. 23.
Cllr R Blackwell requested dispensation to speak on, advise members on and work with the Clerk on matters pertaining to upcoming pension arrangements, as this was his area of expertise but he also happened to manage a company that did such work. Cllr R Blackwell's help would be on a free of charge basis. Members agreed to give Cllr R Blackwell a dispensation for the items listed for a period of four years from this date or until he ceased to be a parish councillor.
4. **Reports**
 - 4.1 District Councillor's report: A report had been circulated ahead of the meeting and was noted by members.
 - 4.2 County Councillor's report: A report had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting and was noted by members.
5. **Suspension of standing orders:** *Meeting open for 5 minutes to allow members of the public to speak* -**Meeting open:** Mrs Alison Jones was in attendance as an observer, as she was interested in being considered for co-option onto the council.
6. **To approve Minutes of the meeting held 14 March 2016:** It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting held.
7. **Finance and Administration**
 - 7.1 To review the insurance policy renewal (due 1st June 2016): Deferred.
 - 7.2 To receive the third quarter accounts (to 31 December 2015): Deferred.
 - 7.3 To consider and approve the annual accounts for year ended 31 March 2016: Deferred.
 - 7.4 To consider and approve the Annual Return for year ended 31 March 2016: Deferred.
 - 7.5 To consider application for funding from the Friends of the School towards the purchase of a new school bus: Deferred. It was suggested that a member of the Friends of the School should be invited to attend the next meeting in order to be able to answer any questions raised.

7.6 To approve expenditure for APM (refreshments and catering): It was resolved to approve expenditure of up to £80.00. Clerk to organise.

7.7 To approve accounts for payment: It was resolved to approve the following accounts for payment:

Payments PC:

7.7.1 Clerk salary April 2016	£1,256.70
7.7.2 HMRC tax and NI for April 2016	£310.80
7.7.3 Clerk's expenses (BT, postage, subsistence)	£109.64
7.7.4 Startafresh charges (March 2016)	£632.44
7.7.5 Itgen- website editor	£100.00
7.7.6 M Sillett (street warden)	£584.83
7.7.7 G Sillett (street warden)	£396.43
7.7.8 Small Lottery licensing fee (Q90th)	£20.00
7.7.9 ICO data protection registration	£35.00
7.7.10 Mr R Giffin (grass cutting 05.04.16 to 11.04.16)	£359.00
7.7.11 Environment Agency (rates)	£27.84
7.7.12 Hitachi Capital (Greenacres- felled tree at the churchyard)	£540.00
7.7.13 East Suffolk Internal drainage Board (Agric. Hold.)	£6.62
7.7.14 Anglian Water (public conveniences)	£368.72
7.7.15 Anglian Water (allotments)	£81.98
7.7.16 Mr R Hartfield (allotment deposit return)	£50.00
7.7.17 Claydon Skip Hire (clearance of pc shed)	£185.00
7.7.18 National Allotment Society	£66.00

Receipts:

7.7.19 Vat refund for 2014/2015 and first half of 2015/2016	£5,829.78
7.7.20 MSDC cleansing grant 2 x 2 quarterly payments- to 31.03.2016	£3,322.80

7.8 To consider proposal for pensions provision from 1 August 2016: A report had been circulated to members detailing how the new changes would affect the parish council and included recommendations for the service provider. It was resolved to approve the recommendations within the report. Clerk to send relevant information to Cllr R Blackwell so that the process could be started. Members asked that a formal vote of thanks to Cllr R Blackwell for his work on this matter was noted.

7.9 To note notes of the meeting held 11 April 2016: The meeting notes were noted by members.

7.10 To consider the approval of a new Contracts Policy: To automatically put all contracts out to tender every 3/5 years commencing in 2017 rather than to carry out an annual review: Cllr F Winrow-Giffin expressed her concern with contracts not being reviewed annually as part of this proposal, as they currently were. Any issues were currently able to be flagged up very promptly. She also expressed her concern that the Parish Council benefitted from excellent contractors, all of which had in the past received Community Awards for their efforts and consistency of good service, and that putting those contracts out to tender could alienate or

undermine them. Cllr J Feeney-Howells stated that he himself had raised this issue at the last FAWG meeting, in the interest of transparency more than anything else, and that it did not mean that they should no longer be reviewed annually (wording not reflective of what was intended). The knowledge that a contract would last for a period of 3 years may increase the confidence of the contractors. The Parish council had a duty to get value for money. Cllr F Winrow-Giffin explained that although her spouse was one of those contractors, she had always observed the Suffolk Code, declared a pecuniary interest whenever such matter was up for consideration and did not, at any point, get involved in any discussions or proceedings. Cllr J Feeney-Howells agreed that this had never been in question.

Cllr J Baldwin was concerned with what measures would be put in place whilst the contracts were being put to tender and it was explained that a caveat would be included in the contract to allow a period of time for the tender process to go through, whilst still receiving the agreed level of service from the ongoing contractor. Having a 3 year contract would also make it easier to plan the budget for those years.

Cllr J Baldwin insisted that the parish council needed to be secure in the knowledge that the current contractors would not be upset by this decision and Cllr J Feeney-Howells replied that, as long as the parish council informed them that it was happy with the service provided and that it was only following due process, that should not be an issue.

It was resolved to constantly monitor contracts, as was currently the case, and to go to tender every three years, with formal annual review. Process to start at least six months in advance, which meant that this process would be initiated in October 2016. All contractors to be notified with immediate effect.

- 7.11 To consider the appointment of a surveyor to accurately value the public conveniences building for asset register and insurance purposes: Cllr F Winrow-Giffin continued to make enquiries with Clark & Simpson and would provide an update at the next meeting. It was agreed that three quotes would be necessary therefore this matter was deferred to the next meeting.
- 7.12 To consider and approve the electronic communications disclaimer: It was resolved to approve the amended disclaimer.
- 7.13 To note Councillors approval to receiving the meeting summons via e-mail: With the exception of Cllr E Bowman, who would prefer to receive a postal summons, all councillors present approved receipt of summons electronically. Clerk to check with absent councillors at the next meeting.

8. Planning matters

8.1 Applications received for recommendation to MSDC:

- 8.1.1 1164/16 2 Gracechurch Street-** Erection of two timber display cabinets on south facing wall. Addition of hanging sign under existing signage: It was resolved to recommend the refusal of this planning application.
- 8.1.2 1061/16 Top Barn, Aspoll Road-** Erection of garage, workshop and cartlodge with accommodation over the living space: It was resolved to recommend the approval of this planning application.
- 8.1.3 0963/16 Land adj. Village End, Little London Hill:** erection of a dwelling with parking and alterations to access: It was resolved to recommend the refusal of this planning application. Detailed comments to be sent to the Planning authority.

8.2 To note Approvals/Refusals:

8.2.1 0007/16 Old Hall Farm- erection of a horse walker: Planning Permission Granted

8.2.2 0027/16 Land adj. to Village End, Little London Hill- erection of detached dwelling with basement garaging and creation of vehicular access- Planning Permission Granted

8.3 Planning Correspondence:

8.3.1 4374/15 and 4375/15 The Angel Inn, 5 High Street- Partial change of use, erection of first floor extension to re-instate former two storey rear wing and former separate dwelling, internal alterations including the relocation of toilet facilities, to retain the public house as a community facility (revised scheme to that submitted under ref. 2494/14 and 2475/14)- To consider notification that applicant is appealing against the decision made by the planning authority and agree any actions: It was resolved that a robust response, opposing the appeal by the applicant, would be sent to the Planning Inspectorate. Cllr R Blackwell agreed to prepare a draft for circulation to members.

9. Queens 90th birthday event in June 2016- to receive update and consider any further actions needed: A brief report was received from members of the working group. Clerk to produce risk assessment once in receipt of list of activities from the working group.

10. To receive report from Cllr J Feeney-Howells on the Suffolk Trail Runners and consider their request to have their first waymark grid in Debenham: A brief report was received. It was resolved to approve the request put forward by the Suffolk Trail Runners.

11. To consider nominations for the Community Awards 2016: Members put forward three names and would continue to make recommendations in the next few days.

12. Clerk's action list (including to consider any further actions needed): The Clerk's action list had been circulated ahead of the meeting and was updated by members.

13. "Debenham Players" request to site a storage unit at the Recreation Ground:

11.1 To receive update and agree any action: New information had emerged which indicated that an alternative storage solution had been made available to the Debenham Players. However, the annual rent cost would be £500, which had been deemed an issue. The Parish Council had supported the group in the past year with funding of £3000 towards the purchase of new storage. However, there was a level of flexibility which would allow members to approve a request for those funds to be used towards the rent costs rather than the purchase of a unit. It was agreed that the Debenham Players would be informed of this as a much more practical and long term solution to their ongoing storage difficulties.

11.2 To agree terms for provisional storage of Debenham Players equipment in the Parish Council shed: It was agreed that if the Debenham Players did opt to rent the Parish council shed, this would be on a short term temporary basis, maximum of three months, at a cost of £50 per month. Group to be informed.

14. Committees and working groups: (only included if report received/considerations to be made)

- 14.1 Allotments: It was agreed that three quotes would be sought for the valuation of the agricultural holding land rent before it could be advertised to the public. It was also agreed that vacant plots could now be let to non-Debenham residents providing that two plots always remained available to residents. Allotment rules to be changed accordingly.
- 14.2 Cemetery, including to consider quotes and style of noticeboard (approved by the Cemetery Committee): Deferred to the next Cemetery Committee meeting.
- 14.3 Website, including report: A report had been circulated to members.
- 14.4 Trees and Greens:
- 14.4.1 To consider the purchase of a native tree to replace the Thuja recently felled in the churchyard: deferred as Tree Warden was absent from the meeting.
- 14.4.2 To consider the purchase of mobile/portable CCTV equipment for the assistance in the identification of inconsiderate dog owners: This matter continued to be discussed. Further suggestions were put forward: For the school to hold a competition for the design of a poster and for a competition of photos of inconsiderate dog owners in *flagrante delicto*. It was agreed that a full scope campaign should be organised, therefore it was agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.
- 14.5 Street Furniture and public conveniences: To consider the purchase of two dog bins for the bottom of Hilly Filly and on the library car park, near the information board: It was resolved to site one new dog bin at the bottom of Hilly Filly. As there was a spare one already in storage, further expenditure would not be needed.
- 14.6 Woodland and Waterways: To receive update on repairs to footpath/bridleway: There were no further matters to report.

15. Suspension of Standing Orders - Meeting open to the Public for 5 minutes- Mrs A Jones reminded members that parts of the Angel Inn were already deteriorating and that this could be added to the Parish Council letter to the Planning Inspectorate.

16. To note correspondence: Correspondence received already circulated to councillors or included on the agenda for consideration. All other administrative correspondence filed by the Clerk.

17. Reports from Councillors on matters not itemised on agenda/to be included in next Agenda: Cllr G Helm reported again the pot holes near the primary school, which were now getting quite dangerous. Clerk to continue reporting it to Highways.

Cllr F Winrow-Giffin also reported that the curbs in the junction of London Hill/ Chancery Lane and The Butts had been marked in readiness for repair works but nothing else had happened since.

Cllr G Helm referred to the problems sometimes Cllr L Cockerton appeared to have with missing attachments to her e-mails, sent by the Clerk, that other councillors do not seem to experience and asked if perhaps Cllr J Feeney-Howells could help shed some light on the matter.

Cllr R Blackwell informed members that the Library was hoping to move soon and open its doors to

the public sometime in June.

18. Chair's urgent business: any items not on this agenda but of such urgency as to merit, in the Chair's opinion, immediate action: There was no Chair's under business.

19. Date of next meeting: 16th May 2016 (APCM) and 23rd May (APM)

20. Temporary exclusion of press and public: *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*

21. To approve the confidential minutes of the meeting held 14 March 2016: It was resolved to approve the confidential minutes of the meeting held 14 March 2016.

22. Employment Committee:

22.1 To note the minutes of the meetings held 8th March and 11th April 2016: It was resolved to note the minutes of the meetings held 8th March and 11th April 2016.

22.2 To receive and approve recommendations received from the Employment Committee: deferred to the next meeting.

23. Youth Provision- Skatepark- To receive update and agree any actions: A brief report was received from Cllr R Blackwell.

24. To receive recommendations from FAWG and agree decisions regarding:

24.1 Startafresh contract: Deferred.

24.2 Street warden contract: Deferred.

24.3 Grass cutting contract: Deferred.

With no further matters to be transacted, the meeting ended at 10:35 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____