

Debenham Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Monday 15th September 2025, Dove Cottage, Debenham

Present: Cllr Winrow-Giffin (Chair), Cllr Sweet (Vice-Chair), Cllr Collins, Cllr Cockerton, Cllr Barlow, Cllr Grimshaw and Parish Clerk/RFO Brian Mansfield

County Councillor Hicks (arrived 7:55pm), District Councillor Davis and 12 members of the public.

Chair's 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.*

DPC/25/414: To consider Apologies for Absence. Cllr Phipps and Cllr Helm (no apology received).

DPC/25/415: Declarations of Interest with regards to items on the Agenda. Cllr Barlow and Cllr Sweet expressed interest in DPC/25/423(1) and DPC/25/423(2) regarding expenses. Cllr Winrow-Giffin expressed an interest in DPC/25/423(1) and DPC/25/423(2) regarding the grass cutting. Cllr Barlow also declared an interest in Planning Application DC/25/03327 where she has lodged comments separately.

DPC/25/416: Public Participation section (meeting open for 10 minutes).

1) Three parishioners made comments on the planned hedge cutting in Chancery Lane, requesting an environmental impact assessment to be undertaken and asking for feedback from the Bio-diversity survey to be considered before any irreversible action was taken. Reduction in hedge size might allow children to fall through causing injury. They were aware of some feedback from properties in Chancery Lane supporting the works but believe these properties are not actually affected by the planned works.

2) A parishioner commented on Agenda item DPC/25/439(2) regarding St. George's flags around Debenham. They believe this would be a great mistake for the Parish Council to support this initiative, considering recent UK news stories on similar topics and the perceived political statement.

3) A parishioner commented on the Planning Application DC/25/03327 – trying to keep 80% on the trees.

4) A parishioner commented on the Planning Application DC/25/03866 – removal of diseased tree that it is not on Church land.

DPC/25/417: Reports: a. District Councillor's report: The Report was received late and will be circulated after the meeting. The topics covered were the Tour of Britain, Local Government Reform continues, Mid Suffolk Taxi Bus Service, Rural Connect and the new Electrical Recycling banks. Parish Councillor question on the Post Box upgrade – further guidance to be obtained from MSDC Planning.

DPC/25/418: To approve Minutes of the meeting held 21st July 2025

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Unanimously

DPC/25/419: Action Plan of Outstanding Matters (Resolved):

1) Install new waste bin for outside the Coop (Resolved)

2) Revised signage around the outdoor gym equipment (Resolved).

3) Market Bridge brickwork repairs – Suffolk CC do not recommend any work at this time, but will monitor (Resolved)



4) Removal /replacement of tree on green near Wardlaw Court – MSDC have scheduled the work (Resolved)

DPC/25/420: Action Plan of Outstanding Matters (Ongoing):

1) Barleyfields Footpath – work expected during October. Monitor and review after the works are complete.

2) Barleyfields Hedging / Fencing at Recreation Ground/Cemetery Boundary. Works are being scheduled (as seen in emails supplied by a parishioner) – monitor and review over the coming weeks.

3) Foot Bridge Repairs (Low Road to Saxton Close) – update. Two parts to this repair, the remaining part was reported to Suffolk CC on 29-Apr-25 under Reference 00518234 – monitor and chase as appropriate.

4) Update on potential soft boundary between the Cemetery (cremation graves) and Recreation Ground (gym equipment / picnic tables). The Council have reviewed this topic and believe the existing fencing is sufficient – planting a further “living” fence is not appropriate. Therefore, No Action was agreed.

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Unanimously

5) Update on Parishioner correspondence regarding the Market Green surrounding the Market Green building. The Clerk has been in contact with SALC and the Land Charges team at Suffolk CC – this review is ongoing, and more details will follow. The Council may need professional advice on next steps.

6) Update regarding car parking on Green space at Coopersfield junction. The Clerk has been in contact with SALC and is reviewing the Commons Act 2006 around registering Town and Village Greens – review is ongoing, and more details will follow.

7) Painting railings along Aspell Road / High Street. Project almost complete and Councillors thanked Cllr Sweet for managing the works.

8) Update on potential TPO for oak trees in Gracechurch Street. Defer to next meeting.

DPC/25/421: PLANNING: to consider response to planning applications received from Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC):

1) APPLICATION FOR RESERVED MATTERS - DC/25/03327 Proposal: Application for approval of Reserved Matters following approval of Outline Planning Permission DC/21/03315 dated 10/11/2022 Town and Country Planning (Development Planning Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) details for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for the erection of 4 No. single storey dwellings and garages. Location: Land Between The Butts And, Little London Hill, Debenham, Suffolk. Deadline 16th September 2025. **Voted not support the application as it appeared to be a material change from the original submission.**

Proposed: Cllr Grimshaw, Seconded: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Approved: Majority (5 In Favour, 1 Abstention)

2) APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/03551 Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of single storey front and rear extensions. Location: 6 Lock Close, Debenham, IP14 6RS. Deadline 16th September 2025. **Voted to support the application, although the plan drawings were slightly unclear to review.**

Proposed: Cllr Barlow, Seconded: Cllr Collins, Approved: Majority (5 In Favour, 1 Abstention)

3) APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - DC/25/03700 Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent - Modifications to guttering and downpipes on front elevation, repairs to decayed timber framing on front elevation, repairs to first floor joists, re-rendering of front and side elevations of 64 Highs

Street Debenham. Location: 66 & 64 High Street, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6QP. Deadline 17th September 2025. **Voted to support the Application.**

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously

4) APPLICATION FOR OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/03775 Proposal: Hybrid Planning Application consisting of: [Full] The re-erection of part of the building, and conversion of existing buildings to a single dwelling. Demolition of an existing rural building. [Outline] The erection of three dwellings including access, with matters of Scale, Appearance, Materials and Landscape reserved. Location: Hill House Barn, Thorpe Lane, Debenham, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 6NF. Deadline 22nd September 2025. **Voted not to support the Application for several reasons. Flood mitigation and the historic risk of flooding. More details on the application and information on the style of dwellings to be erected. Finally, the footprint of the existing buildings seemed to be increased greatly when considering the new buildings (separate from the barn).**

Proposed: Cllr Grimshaw, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Unanimously

5) APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/03866 Proposal: Notification of works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 1 No. Horse Chestnut (T1) Location: 14 Priory Lane, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6QD. Deadline 23rd September 2025. **Voted to Support this Application.**

Proposed: Cllr Sweet, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously

6) Street Naming and Numbering - SN/25/00279/SN Proposal: New Development at Land South East Of Low Road Debenham Suffolk. I would be grateful if your Parish Councillors could suggest 3 new road name(s) for the above development. The developer has not proposed any road names. **No deadline had been supplied, so Councillors asked for more time to consider this item – Defer to next meeting.**

7) APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/04008: Proposal: Planning Application - Change of use of building from Mixed Use Classes E and C3 to Dwellinghouse Class C3 only. Location: 48 High Street, Debenham, IP14 6QW. **The Clerk verbally asked for this item to be added to the Agenda as it was received after the official publication of the Agenda. Voted to Object to the Application, in line with the Councils original decision.**

Proposed: Cllr Barlow, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Majority (4 In Favour, 2 Abstentions)

DPC/25/417: Reports: b. County Councillor's report (item moved down the Agenda).

County Councillor Hicks joined the meeting at 7:55pm: The Report had been circulated prior to the meeting and includes topics such as Objection to the Pylon Project, Fire Service new fire control room, thatched roof/chimney fire prevention and Devolution pack available soon. Parish Councillor asked for an update on the TRO and Councillor Hicks talked through the three levels of enforcement. The Enforcement SLA is 100 pages of legalise, so not useful for the Parish Council.

DPC/25/422: PLANNING – Decisions to Note:

1) Application Reference: DC/25/02256: Proposal & Location of Development: Householder Application - Erection of a single storey rear extension. 10 Great Back Lane, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6PZ **(Granted)**

2) Application Reference: DC/25/03024: Proposal & Location of Development: Notification of works to trees within a conservation area -T1 - Horse Chestnut - Reduce height by 3m, radial reduction by 1m to shape T2 - Yew - smaller of two yew trees near house, reduction as per previous time to approx. 2.1m. Required for buildings insurance purposes. 8 Gracechurch Street, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6RA **(Granted)**

3) Application Reference: DC/25/02769: Proposal & Location of Development: Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of 3no. windows and window repairs Kiln Cottage, 8 Low Road, Debenham, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 6QU (**Granted**)

4) Application Reference: DC/25/02769: Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of 3no. windows and window repairs LOCATION: Kiln Cottage, 8 Low Road, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 6QU (**Granted**)

5) Application Reference: DC/25/02507 and DC/25/02506: Application for Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission - Underpinning the gable end of the rear outbuilding following the removal of the contaminated soils and the dismantling and reconstruction of a small section of the Southern boundary wall to enable the removal of the remaining contamination from this second area. 3 High Street, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 6QL (**Granted**)

DPC/25/423: Finance

1) To acknowledge August Payments (approved remotely) and note receipts (RFO). The Council duly acknowledged the Payments Schedule for August 2025.

2) To approve September Payments and note Receipts (RFO). The Payments Schedule for September 2025 was approved by the Council.

Proposed: Cllr Grimshaw, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Unanimously

3) Finance Working Group:

i) Report on Accounts to end August 2025.

Bank Account balances to 31-Aug-25:

Current Account	£7,681.57
Deposit Account	£281,886.34
Woodlands C/A	£1,048.11
Woodlands D/A	£7,688.80
Total	£298,304.82

ii) CIL Funding report update. No change since last meeting, £69,049.82 remains from 2024/25, £12,714.41 received in 2025/26, so running total is £81,764.23

iii) Approve NJC annual pay rise figures for Clerk/RFO salary. The Council duly approved the annual salary increase and instructed the Clerk to inform outsourced Payroll provider.

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously

iv) Approve costs for increase in Fidelity Insurance cover from £250k to £500k with Clear Councils. The RFO had circulated details ahead of the meeting and reported that the next level of insurance started at £500k. The pro-rata cost would be under £183. The Council duly approved the costs and instructed the RFO to contact Clear Councils to arrange the increased cover.

Proposed: Cllr Barlow, Seconded: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Approved: Unanimously

v) Approve adding four new financial institutions to allow reduction in exposure to Barclays Bank. Defer to the next meeting – members of the Finance Working Group requested time to review the RFO proposal.



Debenham Parish Council DRAFT Minutes 15th September 2025

vi) Consider CIL Funding Request from Primary School. The RFO commented that the CIL Funding Form (which handles funding above £500) states that amounts up to £5,000 require the Requesting Organisation to contribute at least 50%. On the Funding Form received from the Primary School, it states a zero contribution from own funds. Therefore, a decision to agree in principle to fund 50% of the lower quote amount (full quote was £3,210.00 plus VAT) would be appropriate and treat all Requesting Organisations fairly and under the same rules.

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Unanimously

vii) To Note: Agreement to donate £100 to Families Together Suffolk Christmas Appeal in December 2025. The Council noted this agreement to donate in December 2025.

DPC/25/424: Administration

1) To Note: Resignation email from Cllr Helm received by the Clerk – awaiting official notification that conforms to the statutory requirements. The Council will await notification from Cllr Helm as stated under The Local Govt Act 1972 article 84.

2) Acknowledge resignation email from Parish Clerk – the notice period ends 2nd October 2025 (RFO responsibilities will continue until the end of December 2025). The Council duly acknowledged the resignation of the Parish Clerk.

3) Review all existing Committees and Working Groups. Defer to the next meeting and include a new Working Group to support regular inspections of the play equipment at the Recreation Ground.

4) Arrange meeting with Clock winder to review process, fees and future billing. Defer to the next meeting.

5) Consider dates for SALC online Councillor training sessions (£260 +VAT per session). Defer to the next meeting.

6) Consider submission for MSDC Community Governance Review. The Clerk had circulated an Information Summary to the Council ahead of the meeting, which highlighted the ability to request a reduction in the maximum number of Parish Councillors for Debenham. Reducing the number from 13 to 12 would allow Parish Council meetings to be quorate with 4 Councillors instead of 5. The submission window opens on 27th October 2025 until 7th November 2025, so the Council will approve any submission at the October meeting.

7) Consider Co-Opt process for new Parish Councillors. Defer to next meeting. The Agenda item will be reworded to actually allow the Parish Council to Co-Opt a new Councillor at the meeting, not simply consider the process.

8) Review Debenham Day 2025 and consider improvements for 2026. Cllr Barlow reported that next year's event would most likely revert to being held in the High Street. This allows better participation from local businesses, and the costs were similar between 2024 (High Street) and 2025 (Recreation Ground). The Council thanked Cllr Barlow for her work in organising the 2025 event.

9) To Note: Litter Pick being scheduled for Saturday 25th October. The Council noted the date for the next Litter Pick.

DPC/25/425: To review and approve the following Council Policies, Procedures and Forms:

1) Approve and Adopt new Internet Banking Policy. The Council approved this new document which had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Barlow, Seconded: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Approved: Unanimously



2) Approve and Adopt new Section 7.15 in the Financial Regulations (adding the new Internet Banking Policy). The Council approved this new wording for the Financial Regulations, which had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously

Committees, Working Groups and Representatives Reports:

DPC/25/426: Neighbourhood Plan – the NP Consultant has been appointed (in principle) and the initial meeting will be the next step. Defer to next meeting.

DPC/25/427: Allotments – Updates. The Clerk reported that regular communication continues with the Allotment Consultee. Anglian Water has carried out a mandatory inspection and requested a new standpipe tap be fitted that complies with the Regulations. Cllr Sweet kindly carried out this remedial work and supplied a picture to Anglian Water as confirmation. The Clerk is creating the renewal tenancy agreements, and these will be sent out before September month end.

DPC/25/428: Recreation Ground – Update on inclusion of small gate to help with grass cutting. Defer to the next meeting – this matter is ongoing.

DPC/25/429: Cemetery – Updates. Cllr Cockerton mentioned tree pruning and this will be discussed later in this meeting under DPC/25/436 (6).

DPC/25/430: Debenham Sports and Leisure (DSL) – Updates. The Clerk had nothing to report.

DPC/25/431: URC:

1) Memorial Garden – update on potential use as community green space. The Council agreed that the working group members should be expanded and then a meeting scheduled to consider this topic further. A report should then be presented to full Council for agreeing next steps.

2) Car Parking – reconsider this topic. Incorporate this item into the working group meeting mentioned under DPC/25/431 (1).

DPC/25/432: Public Conveniences – Updates. As agreed, the exterior wall crack has been fixed, and the invoice will be sent to the RFO for payment.

DPC/25/433: Waste and Dog Bins:

1) Consider requirement for new dog bins in Water Lane and Cross Green. Cllr Sweet reported that there could be a requirement for three new dog bins. The Council delegated the task of obtaining costs (including bin costs, base and fixing costs plus the Street Warden emptying charges) to Cllr Sweet and he will report back. Consideration should also be given to the bin locations and ensure the appropriate consents to use the land are obtained in advance.

Proposed: Cllr Sweet, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously



2) Review the new Coop bin emptying schedule. Cllr Sweet reported that the Street Warden empties the bin on Monday and Friday. If there are reports of excess rubbish between these days, Cllr Sweet offered to empty the bin. Agreed to continue to monitor this matter and discuss alternative solutions if the problem persists.

DPC/25/434: Emergency Plan:

- 1) **Review EP following meeting in May with Suffolk CC.** Defer to next meeting.
- 2) **Follow-up meeting to be arranged with Chair of DSL.** Defer to next meeting.

DPC/25/435: Flooding:

1. **Report on proposed meeting arrangements with Suffolk CC & Environment Agency Flood Teams following s.19 report.** Defer to next meeting.
2. **Environment Agency future management of the river erosion boards.** Defer to next meeting and consider next steps which could include setting up a Community Interest Company.
3. **Update on Riparian responsibilities.** Defer to next meeting.

DPC/25/436: Village Tree / Hedge works:

- 1) **Chancery Lane hedge works – update.** The Council agreed to move forward with the previously agreed action to sensitively reduce the hedge height to 6 feet. Continued management of the hedge will be routinely undertaken by the DPC tree surgeon.
- 2) **Lime Trees at URC – update on UK Power Networks tree work.** The Clerk has reported this matter to UK Power Networks and supplied photos of the area that need attention. Cllr Sweet's details have also been supplied as they wanted a local contact point for their team. Continue to monitor and chase if required.
- 3) **Village Green – tree replacement next steps.** Cllr Sweet reported that it is too dry to take any action at present, so defer to next meeting.
- 4) **Willow tree on Market Bridge Green replacement – costs approved in July.** This is a duplicate of item DPC/25/436 (3) – merge comments for next Agenda.
- 5) **Update on tree condition survey.** Cllr Sweet agreed with the Clerks suggestion that the DPC tree surgeon makes an escorted tour of the village to assess necessary tree works and report back for approval. Initial costs would be one hour for the assessment tour.
Proposed: Cllr Sweet, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously
- 6) **Cemetery tree overhanging near recycling bins.** Incorporate an inspection of the area under the DPC tree surgeon tour approved under DPC/25/436 (5).
- 7) **Ornamental Pear tree on Market Green (parishioner email).** The Clerk has asked the parishioner to cease any tree works and report future issues to the Parish Council who will organise remedial action.

DPC/25/437: General Maintenance topics:

- 1) **Consider restoration and preservation of Village benches.** Agreed to delegate task to Cllr Sweet who can outsource this work for £15 per hour to a local handy man.



Proposed: Cllr Sweet, Seconded: Cllr Barlow, Approved: Unanimously

2) Consider action for rabbit holes at the Cemetery and Rec Ground. Cllr Sweet has purchased a few bags of soil and grass seed to remedy the damage (work will be carried out when the weather is less dry). The Council thanked Cllr Sweet for this assistance in addressing this matter.

3) Approve parishioner's kind offer to repaint Telephone Box. No costs involved as spare paint is available and signs will be placed at the location warning the public of "wet paint". Agreed action for the Clerk to contact the parishioner and approve the work, with thanks.

Proposed: Cllr Barlow, Seconded: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Approved: Unanimously

4) Consider appointing handy man to repair concrete base for bench on High Street Village Green. Agreed to link this action into the decision and delegated authority under DPC/25/437 (1).

DPC/25/438: Highways:

1) Update on parking at High Street/Cross Green pavement. Defer to next meeting and continue to monitor the situation.

2) Update on proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Defer to the next meeting.

3) Consider meeting dates for Suffolk Police site visit to Chancery Lane / Market Bridge. Defer to next meeting and perhaps incorporate this matter into the TRO process/next steps.

DPC/25/439: Correspondence received:

1) Consider maintenance plan for Churchyard tidy-up including Yew Tree reduction. Defer to next meeting and include feedback from PCC meeting scheduled for the end of September to help coordinate next steps.

2) Consider placing St. George's flags around the village. The Council would not be front-running any village-wide activity on this topic but had no objection to parishioners having flags on their own property/business premises.

Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin, Seconded: Cllr Sweet, Approved: Majority (5 In Favour, 1 Abstention)

3) Freedom of Information request received and will be processed in accordance with statutory procedures. The Council discussed whether the FOI request was valid as the requestor details were only known by the Clerk (the requestor asked to remain anonymous). Also, as the information requested was in the public domain, would the Parish Council be exempt from responding. Finally, the costs involved in providing the full FOI response may breach ICO limits. The Clerk agreed to investigate further ahead of the 20-working day deadline.

DPC/25/440: To receive any report from Councillors/requests for addition to a future Agenda (no decision can be made unless exempt or under delegated power)

1) Cllr Barlow asked for the Poppy Appeal contribution for 2025 to be added to the next meeting.

2) Cllr Cockerton requested the parishioner email regarding parking around the Lock Close area be discussed at the next meeting (it was received after this meeting's Agenda had been published).

DPC/25/441: Date of next Parish Council meeting – Monday 20th October 2025, 7pm at Dove Cottage, High Street, Debenham.



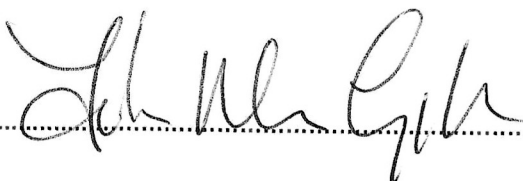
Debenham Parish Council DRAFT Minutes 15th September 2025

DPC/25/442: 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.

The public and District Councillor Davis left the meeting at 9:05pm.

DPC/25/443: Consider future options for Field Lettings

Meeting ended at 9:25pm.

Signed  Chair Date 20/09/2025

