

**Debenham Parish Council****Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting****Monday 20th October 2025****Dove Cottage, Debenham**

**Present:** Cllr Winrow-Giffin (Chair), Cllr Sweet (Vice-Chair), Cllr Collins, Cllr Cockerton, Cllr Barlow, Parish Clerk Kathryn Lillingston, Temp Parish Clerk – Peter Grogan, District Councillor Davis and 16 members of the public. (County Councillor Hicks arrived 7:20pm).

**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/25/444 To consider Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Grimshaw - APPROVED

**DPC/25/445 To consider Co-option of Ms Charlotte Alexander as a Parish Councillor:** The PC had voted unanimously to co-opt Ms Alexander at the last meeting, having completed the Declaration of acceptance of Office, Ms Alexander was co-opted to the Council.

**DPC/25/446 Declarations of Interest with regards to items on the agenda:** Cllr Barlow and Cllr Sweet expressed interest in DPC/25/454 (1) regarding expenses.

**DPC/25/447 Public Participation section:**

1. A member of the public thanked the Parish Council for their financial contribution to the Church heating fund; the Church was now very pleasantly warm.

2. A member of the public wanted to raise concerns over the "Call for Sites" being sought by the District Council pertaining to new housing developments. There are concerns over the number of properties and flooding risks in Debenham. The speaker was aware of the appointment of a consultant on the matter and wanted to offer her services as a volunteer to help revise the Neighbourhood plan. Any plan would need to address potential Solar Farms and Data Centres. It was noted that a meeting between the PC and the consultant was due but no firm date had been set.

**ACTION:** Clerk to ensure liaison between Parish Council, Consultant and County / District Council Planning Teams.

3. A member of the public was concerned that the railings and fence on the high street were falling into disrepair, and she had been informed, on site, by a Highways engineer they would not be replaced. The Clerk confirmed the matter was in hand but had no update on any potential work to restore the handrail. Cllr Hicks said this issue could be addressed by placing the problem on the priority list for Highway maintenance or from his discretionary budget. He agreed to meet the parishioner on the morning of Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October to look at the problem.

4. A member of the Public highlighted the Lions Club which kept a register of vulnerable people and where their essential medications were stored in case required by first responders or the ambulance service.
5. A member of the public wanted an update on the Traffic Order (TRO). There was no further information available, pending consultation.

**DPC/25/448 Council Reports:**

1. The report from County Councillor Hicks had been circulated, he verbally summarised the following. **Education:** parents and guardians need to apply for Secondary school places by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and for Primary by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026. **Culture fund:** there is £500k available for grants to local culture-based organisations, smaller groups need to be encouraged to apply. **Unitary Authority:** the bids are being considered by Government. **Cold Calling Zones:** The County Council is looking to support any new areas submitted by Parish Councils. **Don't do it Alone:** The County is promoting this stop smoking initiative in the area.
2. The report from District Councillor Davis had been circulated, she verbally highlighted the success of the Tour of Britain event and emphasised that the District would be taking the concerns about flooding when considering the "Call for Sites".

**DPC/25/449 To approve the minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 meeting:**

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

**DPC/25/450 Action Plan for outstanding matters (resolved):** Noted

**DPC/25/451 Action Plan for outstanding matters (ongoing):**

1. **Barleyfields footpath** – work started today
2. **Barleyfields boundary** – no update Clerk will chase
3. **Footbridge repairs (Low Rd / Saxton Close)** – with District Council, Cllr Davis updated the Council that this should be addressed with the County Council, **Clerk to action**
4. **Parishioner Correspondence Market Green** – with SALC
5. **Parking on Green Space Coopers field** – with SALC
6. **Painting railings at Aspoll Road** – work has commenced and is a great improvement
7. **TPO for oak trees in Gracechurch Street** – Cllr Sweet confirmed that the tree has been trimmed, therefore this is resolved.
8. **Churchyard tidy-up and Yew tree reduction** – No further update waiting on PCC

**DPC/25/452 To consider Planning Applications from MSDC:**

1. **DC/25/04317** – Dropped kerb at 16 Gracechurch Street - proposed by householder  
**No objections: Proposed** Cllr Giffin, **Seconded:** Cllr Barlow **Approved:** Unanimously
2. **DC/25/04439** – reduction of Horse chestnut tree in Chancery Lane to avoid power lines.  
**No objections: Proposed** Cllr Barlow **Seconded:** Cllr Giffin **Approved** Unanimously

**DPC/25/453 To Note Planning Decisions:**

1. **DC/25/02429 and DC/25/02430** – 2 Aspall Road, replacement of windows and Conservatory
2. **DC/25/03551** - 8 Lock Close, erection of single storey extension
3. **DC/25/03866** – 14 Priory Lane, Tree works, fell 1 Horse chestnut tree
4. **DC/25/03327** – Butts Lane and London Hill, erection of 4 dwellings and garages, approval of reserves matters of appearance, landscaping etc.
5. **DC/25/03700** – 64 / 66 High St modifications to guttering, joists and rendering on a listed building.

**DPC/25/454 Finance:**

1. **Proposal to approve payments schedule and note receipts**  
Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin Seconded: Cllr Sweet Approved Unanimously
2. **CIL funding report update** – Noted
3. **Fidelity Insurance Cover** - increased to £500k pro rata £149.52 – Noted
4. **Approval for 4 new Financial Institutions to spread risk** – report circulated  
Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin Seconded: Cllr Barlow Approved: Unanimously
5. **Approval for payment of painting village railings to be taken from existing CIL money**  
Proposed Cllr Winrow-Giffin Seconded: Cllr Barlow Approved: Unanimously
6. **Approval for SALC training course costs £120 for new Parish Clerk**  
Proposed: Cllr Barlow Seconded: Cllr Winrow-Giffin Approved: Unanimously
7. **Approval for Poppy Appeal donation**  
After discussion £50 local Branch and £50 National appeal  
Proposed: Cllr Collins Seconded: Cllr Cockerton Approved: Unanimously
8. **Approval for application for MSDC Winter Warm Hub funding**  
Proposed: Cllr Winrow-Giffin Seconded: Cllr Barlow Approved: Unanimously
9. **Approval of request for funding Books for Santa project**  
Proposed: Cllr Sweet Seconded: Cllr Barlow Approved: Unanimously
10. **Approval for request Debenham Sports & Leisure £600 for fireworks**  
Proposed: Cllr Cockerton Seconded: Cllr Barlow Approved: Unanimously
11. **To Note Debenham Angel Community Ltd refund to Parish Council £2,600**  
Following the purchase of the Angel by the Debenham Lion Pub DAC Ltd is returning funds no longer required. The Angel whilst not being a pub will be used for events.
12. **To Note External Auditor has concluded review for 2024/25**  
The auditor has supplied their report and supplied a certificate.

**DPC/25/454 Administration:**

1. **Review of Existing Committees and Working Groups**  
It was agreed the list of all current Committees and Working Groups would be circulated by the Clerk to all Councillors and they would offer to fill vacancies and make up the numbers.
2. **Consider dates for Councillor on-line SALC training £260 per session**  
Clerk to contact SALC for available January 2026 dates and times
3. **Consider submission to MSDC for a Community Governance Review**  
This could be an issue if the village expands and there may be a need for more Councillors

4. **Consider advertising fields for letting out:** Cllr Alexander thought there would be high demand for grazing, other ideas included a cycle track (lease restrictions may prohibit earthworks). It was confirmed there was a clean water supply from the mains. It was decided to advertise locally at first and if no interest was shown to advertise more widely.
5. **Welcome to the new Parish Clerk - Kathryn Lillingston.**

**DPC/25/456 To review and approve Council Policies, Procedures and Form:**

1. **General Risk Assessment** – This had been circulated and considered by Councillors  
**Proposed:** Cllr Giffin **Seconded:** Cllr Barlow **Approved:** Majority, 5 in favour - 1 abstention

**Committees, Working Groups and Representatives reports**

**DPC/25/457 Neighbourhood Plan:**

1. **Consider "Call for sites" by MSDC for assessment**  
 It was decided there was a need to wait until after the meeting with the consultant (see DPC/25/447 (2) earlier in the agenda). Clerk to schedule a meeting in November but not 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>.
2. **Consider next steps following appointment of consultant** – see item above

**DPC/25/458 Allotments:**

1. **Tenancy letter and new charges**, these have been sent out containing the new charges but crucially tenants were not given a clear 12 months notice of the increase of 2p per sqm. Tenants who have paid the higher rate will have their accounts credited. RFO is instructed to make appropriate adjustments to the accounts.
2. **To arrange a date for the next Allotment Cttee meeting**, Clerk to arrange a date and time with Councillors.

**DPC/25/459 Recreation Ground:** the small gate has been removed and the larger gate installed. Works have been completed.

**DPC/25/460 Cemetery:** tree surgery is in hand, Cllr Sweet is to contact the contractor

**DPC/25/461 Debenham Sports and Leisure:** the Clerk has no further update.

**DPC/25/462 URC:**

1. **Memorial Gardens**, Cllrs Sweet, Cockerton and Collins agreed they will meet and discuss options.
2. **Car Parking** (see item 462.1)

**DPC/25/463 Public Conveniences – Update-** There had been problems with blocked pipes due to excess paper being put into the bowls, this is assumed to be children. The pipes have been cleared, and the problem is resolved.

**DPC/25/464 Waste and Dog Bins-**

1. Cllr Sweet had a discussion with the contractor who could see no need for additional dog bins, other Councillors concurred that the problem was down to inconsiderate dog owners rather than a lack of bins. To be reviewed again in January 2026.
2. The problem with the Co-op bin has been resolved and no new scheduled pick ups are required.

**DPC/25/465 Emergency Plan:** There is a need for a dedicated sub-committee, this can be arranged during the Cttee and Working Group review (See **DPC/25/454 (1)**)

**DPC/25/466 Flooding:**

1. **Proposed meeting with Suffolk CC and Env Agency (EA)** – Following the Section 19 report a further report is expected from the EA. This is expected soon.
2. **EA future management of erosion boards** – the EA appears to have ceased maintaining the boards. If the Parish Council is to adopt this responsibility the Council needs to have this ratified in writing. **Clerk to write to EA for clarification.**
3. **Update on Riparian rights** – Linked to the item above, what responsibility for the boards might rest with the residents of the houses on the riverbank, again clarification required from the EA. With regard to Riparian rights generally a letter should be sent to all residents with houses / gardens on the riverbank advising them of their Riparian rights and responsibilities – **Clerk to Action.**

There is a need for a dedicated sub-committee, this can be arranged during the Cttee and Working Group review (See **DPC/25/454 (1)**). District Cllr Davis offered her services on the Cttee if required.

**DPC/25/467 Village Tree / Hedge works:**

1. **Lime Trees at URC** – Clerk has chased this but has no update.
2. **Village Green replacement Willow Tree** – Tree to be ordered
3. **Update on Tree condition survey** - The estimated cost of the survey is £600, and the specialist will a map of the Parish Council trees in order to advise the tree surgeons.
4. **Approval for the independent survey:** It was proposed to set aside £700 for the survey. **Proposed** Cllr Giffin, **Seconded:** Cllr Barlow, **Approved** Unanimously

**DPC/25/468 General Maintenance topics-**

1. **Village Benches:** this was approved last month, 6 benches have been revitalised and 4 remain, to be done when the weather improves.
2. **Concrete base for bench:** Cllr Sweet will obtain a quote.

**DPC/25/469 Highways:**

1. **Update on parking at High Street / Cross Green** – Highways have been enforcing parking outside the Primary School and in the High Street. Cllr Giffin has requested the number of tickets issued from Highways but has not received a response to date and will take up the matter with County Cllr Hicks.
2. **Update on TRO-** No further update

**DPC/25/470 Correspondence received:**

1. **Consider Community Engagement Policy in relation to Chancery Lane Hedge:** Cllr Giffin read out the policy; a copy is available to all Councillors on the website for comment.
2. **Consider access Gate at Barleyfields** – as this is not Parish Council and any works are prohibitive the PC can do nothing. **Clerk to write to the resident explaining the situation.**
3. **Consider next steps for installing village gates:** this will be an expensive project to install 3 sets of gates on the primary roads into the village. Highways will need to be

consulted on a survey of locations and installation. County Councillor Hicks will be able to advise.

- 4. Consider additional sites for Defibrillators:** The Council does not want to request funding from the British Heart Foundation (BHF) as it has its own resources and BHF funds can be better used elsewhere. It was proposed a quote be obtained for new defibrillators and additional sites be considered. **Clerk to investigate getting quotations**

**Proposed** Cllr Giffin, **Seconded:** Cllr Barlow, **Approved** Unanimously

- 5. Consider parking around Lock Close:** There are vehicles parking on the grass in the area of Locks Close. The issue was discussed and options included sending letters to residents and for the longer term looking at the possibility of converting some of the area to hardstanding for parking. **The Clerk is to prepare a letter for residents and Cllr Alexander agreed to deliver them.**

**DPC/25/471: Requests from Cllrs for additional future items on the agenda.**

- 1. Cemetery pine trees :** Cllr Cockerton asked this item to be added to the agenda but Cllr Sweet informed the meeting that he would instruct the contractor dealing with other trees to look into this.

**DPC/25/472: Date of next Parish Meeting:** Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 7pm Dove Cottage, High Street, Debenham.

Meeting Closed 8:40pm

SIGNED:

