

# Denham Parish Council

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

### Notes and Minutes

Wednesday May 23, 2018 at 7.30pm in St John the Baptist Church, Denham

1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Chris Mawson and County Cllr Guy McGregor had sent their apologies. 23 members of the public were present, together with District Cllr Elizabeth Gibson-Harries, Parish Cllrs Tania Farrow, Margaret Reeves, Carol Rose and Nick Farrow, and the Clerk Rod Caird</p>
2	<p><b>Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 24, 2017</b></p> <p>The Minutes were approved.</p>
3	<p><b>Chair's welcome, introduction and report on 2017/18</b></p> <p>Cllr Farrow noted that at this meeting a year ago only two Parish Councillors were in office. Now there are four, with just one vacancy, and a new Clerk started in March. The Parish Council meeting in November contributed to Mid Suffolk's Local Plan consultation. The future of the Village Hall has become a major issue for the village and the Parish Council, which is legally accountable for the Hall. An initial survey, funded by Cllr Gibson-Harries, highlighted urgent electrical problems. The Parish Council was unable to work with the Village Hall Management Committee. The committee has resigned, remaining funds (£401.03) have been transferred to the PC, and the building has been closed and the electricity disconnected for safety reasons. A new insurance policy has been taken out at a cost of £405 and a structural survey has been commissioned from Stroud Associates for £420 (inc VAT). The survey shows that while much work is needed, the basic structure seems sound.</p> <p>As the financial commitment to the Hall is currently unknown, repainting of the phone box and purchase of a defibrillator have been put on hold.</p> <p>Meanwhile the annual litter pick saw an excellent turnout by volunteer helpers and this evening's large attendance is very welcome and much appreciated.</p>

**Reports from the Church and other local organisations, including if appropriate the District and County Council**

**District Cllr Gibson-Harries** reported that funding for work on the Village Hall is available from the District Council if needed. She also commented favourably on the large turnout for the meeting. Meanwhile the District Council offices have moved from Needham Market to Ipswich, which is difficult for travel from the north of the district – and Babergh and Mid-Suffolk continue to be separate elected authorities. Some staff have left and the Planning department is currently nine short. Cllr Gibson-Harries will not be standing for re-election next year and her successor will have a different and larger area as a result of boundary changes. She believes in the value of Parish Councils and encourages residents to go to meetings and take part in discussion. She is still happy to be contacted about relevant issues and to discuss issues which arise. In answer to a question she said Highways problems are a County Council responsibility and should be reported via the Highways website.

**A report from the Church** noted that services continue every fourth Sunday at 11.15am, with Communion Services also held on a regular pattern in private homes. Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday and a Christmas Carol Service and regular events.

A new architect has been appointed this year and is looking at work required; the Church is very grateful for all the volunteer support it gets. A quiz has raised good funds and the Fair on June 30 followed by a garden game tournament in August are expected to be popular.

**The Tree Warden** reported that an informal district-wide tree warden network has been established to replace the District Council's support which is no longer available. Approximately 12 parishes get together to share one tree warden and with support from the Tree Council and the County Council it is hoped this will make the network viable in the long term. The level of ash die-back seems less severe than had been feared.

**The Hospital Museum** reported that it is entirely supported by voluntary contributions; it is open every last Sunday in the month until November, which is the same opening pattern as the Red Feather Club.

**The Village Hall** report was a discussion about its future, with three options on the table. The first (option 1) was to return it to a state where it can be used as a public building; the second (option 2), to turn it into a heritage site along with the Museum and Red Feather Club, based on its origins as a WWII guard room; the third (option 3), to dismantle and replace it entirely.

The hall was gifted to the Parish Council, which is ultimately

	<p>responsible for it. A Management Committee would run it on behalf of the Council and make regular and detailed reports.</p> <p>After a full discussion of the options a vote was taken of those present which showed a clear majority of 15 in favour of Option 1, though there was some support for 2. One resident had written in favour of 3, but the meeting did not favour that option.</p> <p>Costs need to be established and volunteers are sought for a new management committee (since the meeting a number of people have come forward). The work cannot be funded out of the Parish Council's precept but Cllr Gibson-Harries agreed to fund a quantity surveyor to the sum of £2,000 and renovation funding may be available from the District Council. Brian Sowter, the owner of the land behind the Hall kindly agreed to maintain it while future plans are developed.</p>
5	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>May 22, 2019</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AGM OF THE PARISH COUNCIL</b></p>
1/230518	<p><b>To Elect the Chair and Deputy Chair for 2018/19</b></p> <p>Tania Farrow was elected Chair and Carol Rose was elected Deputy Chair without contest.</p>
2/230518	<p><b>Apologies and Approvals of Absence</b></p> <p>None</p>
3/230518	<p><b>Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation</b></p> <p>None</p>
4/230518	<p><b>To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on January 24, 2018</b></p> <p>The Minutes were approved</p>
5/230518	<p><b>Members of the public are invited to make any comments on items on the Agenda or to raise issues for consideration at future meetings</b></p> <p>A member of the public queried a missing cheque number in the accounts and the reason given was that a cheque had been made out in error and was replaced.</p>

6/230518	<p><b>To consider recommendations from the Annual Parish Meeting on the future of the Village Hall and make any necessary decisions</b></p> <p>Cllr Farrow will contact the District Councillor about funding for the quantity surveyor; the Clerk will seek a suitable professional for the job. The village website and a new Mailchimp mailing list will be used to publicise activities and recruit support.</p>
7/230518	<p><b>To consider recruitment and co-option of further Parish Councillor(s)</b></p> <p>There is still one vacancy and volunteers will be sought.</p>
8/230518	<p><b>To consider and approve the following:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <b>The accounts of the Parish Council for 2017/18 (and to sign the relevant annual return paperwork)</b>  <b>The updated Standing Orders</b>  <b>The asset register</b>  <b>The risk assessment</b>  <b>The updated Financial Regulations</b> </p> <p>The accounts were approved and the annual return was signed. The updated standing orders, asset register, risk assessment, code of conduct and financial regulations were approved and adopted.</p>
9/230518	<p><b>To receive a report from the Clerk on the current financial position and any payments due</b></p> <p>A bank reconciliation was presented showing a balance after accounting for uncleared cheques of £3,991.26. Payments were made to: Stroud Associates (Village Hall survey, £420); HMRC (PAYE, £73.60); Rod Caird (Clerk pay, £294.81); CAS (Village hall insurance, £405.21); SALC (annual subscription, £134.73); Anglia Bookkeeping (pay slip, £4.50). The first instalment of the precept has been received (£1,500). It was noted that the bank accounts are now online and Cllr Tania Farrow is being added to the mandate as signatory.</p> <p>It was noted Parish Councils are likely not to have to appoint an external Data Protection Officer, but that steps need to be taken to ensure compliance with the new Data Protection Regulation. The Clerk will pursue.</p>
10/230518	<p><b>Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council</b></p> <p>It was decided with regret that in present circumstances it is not possible to give financial support to the 121 bus service, which is at risk of closure.</p>

	No objection was made to planning application 18/01640, erection of two sheds at Greenlands Farm.
11/230518	<b>To confirm dates and venues for Parish Council meetings during 2018/19</b>  July 25, September 26, November 28 and January 23, 2019 – all at 7.30pm at the Red Feather Club (TBC)

DRAFT