

DEBDEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DEBDEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 1st JULY, 2015 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, DEBDEN.

<u>Present:</u>	Cllr R. Forster	(RF)	(Chairman)
	Cllr E. Blackie	(EB)	
	Cllr A. Tetlow	(AliciaT)	
	Cllr S. Watson	(SW)	

In attendance:

Dist. Cllr T. Knight	(TK)
Mrs C. Griffin, Clerk	(CG)
40 members of the public	

15/041 To receive a report on Debden's Chart of Hearts and carry out the draw for the Heart Pendant

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Gillian Lee and thanked her for donating the heart pendant and raising funds for the Defibrillator box and installation costs.

Gillian said she has been overwhelmed by the response and thanked everyone who supported the project; £720 was raised. A copy of the Chart of Hearts will be displayed with the Defibrillator box.

One of the Editors of the Parish Pump, who was present at the meeting, was then asked to undertake the draw for the heart pendant. The winner was Lawrie Waite.

15/042 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr S. Luck (holiday), Cllr A. Roper (work commitment), Cllr A. Tetlow (holiday) and Cty Cllr Simon Walsh.

15/043 Declaration of interests relating to items on the Agenda

No interests were declared

15/044 Public participation session (15 minutes available if required)

Following the last meeting the PC wrote to the Chairman of the Trustees of the Village Hall requesting the following:

1. A block plan, similar to drawing D/2890/13/PL-02 giving the exact location of the building and showing the existing hall, playground, car parking etc.,
2. A detailed plan of how access to the existing hall, shop and temporary parking on the recreation ground will be possible, with safety in mind during the construction phase, as the Parish Council could be held responsible if they submit the planning application.
3. Confirmation of the height of the roof as the reduced height is not shown on the latest drawing, D/2890/13/SK-01.
4. An outline of the process over the last two years, how decisions have been made and have these decisions just been made by the Trustees of the Village Hall.

SW said that at the last meeting the Council deferred a decision on a request from the Village Hall Trustees to submit the planning application for the new Village Hall in the PC's name. It was felt that further information was required particularly for the benefit of new members. A statement, on behalf of the Village Hall Trustees and the New Village Hall Group, was then read by SW and Mike Fairchild, a copy is attached to the minutes.

The Chairman pointed out that the recreation ground land includes the car park which had been omitted and advised that this matter cannot be taken further until the Trustees of the Recreation Ground, who must act in the best interests of the Charity, have discussed this.

David Jones from Alun Design then presented the proposed plans and explained that the building has been reduced in length by 2M and is now 27M long; the height has been reduced from 8.9M to 8M and is 2.5M higher than the existing hall, the floor space including the shop is 321sq.metres (existing hall 222sq.metres) and it is 4.34M's from the overhang of the pavilion. The gap between the existing hall and the proposed new hall varies between 7.2M and 7.7M. The internal design could be changed but you would need to reach a consensus; the Trustees have been working on this for over two years and feel this is a compromise. Three alternative sites were shown on the plan. The size of car parking spaces has been increased under planning regulations, which results in less spaces.

In terms of safety, risks would need to be assessed and a plan drawn up and approved. A method statement would be required for sharing the access which could restrict the hours of access for construction vehicles. Pedestrian access would be available at all times. How the site would operate would be dealt with at the same time as the planning permission.

A heated discussion followed, the main points raised were:

Would the PC be liable if the application is submitted in the PC's name?

The Architect advised that there would be no liability on the PC, the contractor would take responsibility.

The PC is being asked to approve and send in a scheme that they have not been involved in.

This site has been considered carefully and is the best option. Other sites have been investigated but are not viable.

The Village Hall has nothing to do with the PC, the design is yours and you can go ahead and submit the plans. You are putting pressure on the PC to make an application where there are legal implications for them. In the scale of things a £1,000 saving is very small; why don't you deal with it and stop entangling the PC.

The Village Hall do not want to antagonise the PC, if the VH agree to submit the application will the PC resolve to support the project.

The VH Trustees want the PC to support this project. The PC represent the village and they may not support you if you do not support the project.

It was pointed out the PC was democratically elected in May 2015.

Who agreed to the relocation, has any consideration been given to health and safety issues during construction?

Will the Parish Council include a decision on the plans on the agenda for September?

The Trustees of the Recreation Ground will need to meet beforehand.

The rules of custodian trustees was read and it seems that the management of the VH is not entirely in the hands of the Trustees, there is a role for the Custodian Trustee, i.e the Parish Council, in such a large project. The entire decision is focused on what the VH Trustees want; no consideration seems to have been given to the Trustees of the Recreation Ground who could have a liability.

The Chairman of the VH has a letter which gives a clearer explanation of the role but unfortunately this was not available.

There is no liability, the PC is obstructing it at every turn.

At the March meeting the PC agreed to support the Village Hall.

The PC agreed in March to support an application for the Community Covenant Grant for a new Village Hall. The application was submitted by the VH Trustees in January 2015 without the PC's knowledge.

There may be a danger of losing the funding from the Army if the PC do not support the project. This is "scaremongering"

The PC heard last week that the Army were questioning the PC's support.

As the PC had not heard from the Army since the PC's email in March confirming support of the funding application, CG contacted the Barracks and asked them to confirm that they had received the email of 12th March. They came back and confirmed that they had received it and also asked if everything has been finalised as they had heard there might be "rumblings" about the design.

CG went back to the Army and thanked them for the confirmation and advised that the PC has requested clarification on a number of points regarding the current proposal, but the actual design is up to the V.H. We have heard nothing further.

Alun Design are not registered RIBA Architects.

The people here tonight only represent part of the village. I have been to PC meetings for the last year and, apart from the Editor the Parish Pump, I have been the only resident present. I object to this bullying. The PC and District Councillor have been duly elected and work tirelessly for the village; they should not be subjected to public ridicule. I suggest you have a referendum.

Tonight's meeting has seen a further display of unruly behaviour. Public disorder is an offence.

After the last meeting a member of the PC was abused in the Village Shop; this is a criminal offence. It is understood this came about because a member of the PC sent an email round after the last meeting. If that member was acting as a Councillor the email should be made public.

Also, if residents are bullied or verbally abused for giving their views they will not attend other meetings.

The PC will contact the legal department at UDC regarding this matter.

It was agreed that the PC need time to consider the information which has been provided and look into their responsibilities as Trustees of the Recreation Ground in order that they are fully aware of all legalities. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 2nd September and a meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust will be held beforehand.

15/045 To receive a Report from Dist. Cllr Tina Knight

Cllr Knight reported that:

- The problem with charging for School buses from Carver Barracks is still ongoing - ECC are charging one School and not the other. She thanked the PC for sending a letter of support and Cty Cllr Simon Walsh for his help with this matter. The other problems at Debden School are having a “knock-on” effect.
- She attended the opening of the Wimbish telephone box library.
- Wimbish PC held a ceremony to mark the second phase of affordable housing in Wimbish. Perhaps Debden PC could revisit this at some stage. (Debden PC has been invited to look at this project)
- The Debden and Wimbish Community Group trip took place today.
- There are some concerns relating to safety at the Army memorial in elder Street. There is also concern regarding the upkeep of the area. It was suggested that a lay-by is considered but ECC will not agree to this and Mike Fairchild, who is involved with the project, advised that the Rangers will deal with the upkeep of the area,
- Funding for the pavilion could be obtained through grants from the Playing Fields Association etc.,

CG gave a resume of the report received from Cty Cllr Simon Walsh. The full report will be circulated to all members.

15/046 To approve and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 3rd June, 2015

Following additions to 15/034 it was resolved that the Chairman should sign the Minutes as approved.

Proposed: RF

Seconded: EB

All agreed

CG drew attention to the fact that PC minutes should include the main points and decisions; they should not be verbatim reports.

15/047 To receive an update from the Parish Clerk

CG read a statement received from Cllr Roper saying that she does not fully understand what seems to be a complex issue and she does not understand why this is

being pushed further when there is a great deal more money to raise. She would like to have more time to find out what the responsibilities or repercussions could be. We were advised at the last meeting to take legal advice and I feel this matter should be deferred until this has been done.

CG reported that all matters had been dealt with since the last meeting and highlighted the following:

- A letter was sent to Cllr Simon Walsh regarding charging for School buses from Carver Barracks and she subsequently received a call from Cty Cllr Ray Gooding, ECC Cabinet member for Education.
- She has raised the bookings for 2016 with the Village Hall Booking Secretary again. SW will inform him that these should be taken as firm.
- A further meeting was held with the Auditor who signed off the Annual Return and this has now been sent to the External Auditor.
- There are two further forms to complete to implement the new bank signatories and these will be handed to EB and AR.
- BT has been contacted again regarding Superfast Broadband. To date, no reply.
- The Village Shop needs to be able to access the CCTV. I understand that SL is the only person who has the code. CG was requested to contact SL and arrange a meeting with the Village Shop.
- She watched the ECC drain machine clean the drains in Newport Road this morning. The engineer said that all the drains have been cleaned in the village, there should be a yellow mark against them. If there is still a problem we must contact the jetting team.
- At the last meeting the Parish Pump Constitution was raised. (EB will forward a copy)
- She contacted the Charity Commission in June 2014 and they informed the Council that in order to consider the matter further each Charity should engage a Surveyor to value the pieces of land to be exchanged. The key point to be considered is that from the perspective of each charity the land it receives MUST be of at least equal value to the land it is disposing of. This has not been taken any further. At the March meeting she expressed concern because the start date for building the new VH was stated as Spring 2015 on the application for grant funding from the Army and pointed out to the PC that the exchange of land had not been dealt with. She urged the PC to get specialised legal advice on the exchange of land because as members of the Parish Council and Trustees of the Recreation Ground you need to be certain that you are not breaching any covenants or laws and the situation must be confirmed in writing. If you do not, you could be putting yourself at risk. If another meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust is organised this should be an agenda item and include who will be responsible for the fees.
(The PC confirmed that a meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust would be held before the next PC meeting in September to discuss the land issue which is such a critical point.)
- We need to choose a hymn for the Songs of Praise on the 12th July. It was decided to have the hymn, Lord of all hopefulness.

15/048 To discuss the visit to the Pavilion and the information received following the meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust on 3rd June

Three members of the PC visited the Pavilion prior to the meeting. Following the last meeting a letter was sent to SW and a reply had been received by email. It was agreed that this matter should be discussed further at the next meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust.

15/049 To receive an explanation on the role of the Trustees of the Village Hall and the relationship between the Trustees of the Village Hall and the Parish Councils

EB read an extract from the guidance notes she had obtained from the Charity Commission and custodian trustees do have a role to play in a project of this size. SW said she has a letter from the Charity Commission which gives a clearer explanation of the role but unfortunately this was not available at the meeting.

15/050 To discuss the details and information on the new Village Hall requested at the June meetings

This was covered under 15/044 and a meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust will be organised before the next Parish Council meeting.

15/051 To acknowledge and agree a response to a letter from a resident regarding the Village Hall, Recreation Ground, Pavilion and Tennis Courts (letter circulated prior to the meeting)

A draft reply will be drawn up by CG and the Chairman and circulated to all members before it is sent.

15/052 To receive an update on the Allotments and approve quotations of £500 for removing tree stumps and chipping branches etc.,

Two of the vacant allotments have now been taken leaving one whole plot and three smaller plots available once the tree stumps etc., have been removed.

The quotations for the necessary work to remove the trees, tree stumps and chipping the branches were approved.

Proposed: RF

Seconded: SW

All agreed

15/053 To discuss a request to cut down a tree in Mill Road

The tree is on the edge of the field access opposite the entrance to the car park. RF will identify the tree and members were asked to inspect it and make a decision at the next meeting.

15/054 To discuss a request from Spartak Under 11 Football Team to use the Recreation Ground and Pavilion from September 2015 – May 2016 (details circulated prior to the meeting.)

The two representatives from Spartak Football Club explained that the venue at Herberts Farm, Saffron Walden is overcrowded and there are now more games of various age groups and pitches are different sizes for different ages. They are looking for an alternative pitch for a single team (youngsters of 10 to 11) and they would like to play on Saturday mornings, kick off 10.30 am, and train on Tuesday evenings. They are self sufficient but require toilet facilities. They would cover cost of cleaning

the facility. They are also in touch with Wimbish PC regarding another team playing there.

The PC agreed in principle, but they will need to speak to Debden Football Club before taking this any further. Also, a contract would need to be drawn up and approved by the PC.

The Spartak representatives asked the PC to consider what they would like from them as they would like to contribute in some way.

15/055 To review the ROSPA Playground Inspection Report

RF reported that there are two matters in the report which require attention and he is dealing with these.

15/056 To discuss planning applications received

The following have been received:

UTT/15/1772/OP Sibbards Farn Barn

UTT/15/1864/FUL Hamperden End

No comments submitted.

15/057 To discuss the Internal Auditor's Report

The report is not yet available, therefore deferred until the next meeting.

15/058 To review the Insurance Policy, circulated prior to the meeting

This was deferred until the September meeting. CG advised that during her meeting with the Auditor he had recommended an increase in the Fidelity cover.

15/059 To review the Budget for 2015/16, circulated prior to the meeting

It was agreed to discuss this when it is issued again in three months time. CG advised that E-on have increased charges for street lighting by approximately £8 per month so this will need to be taken into account in next the budget for 2016/17.

15/060 To approve accounts for payment

Manor Nursery	£49.00	Hanging baskets
Manor Nursery	£19.96	Compost for tubs
Springwell Nurseries	£103.35	Geraniums for tubs
HMRC	£271.80	PAYE
C. Griffin	£390.82	June salary + expenses
Village Hall	£176.00	Village Hall hire – 2015
RCCE	£66.00	Membership fee
Playsafety Ltd	£114.00	Annual inspection of playground

15/061 To discuss any Urgent matters of interest to the Parish

061.1 The Community Payback group will be coming to the village on Sunday, 12th July. RF is meeting with the co-ordinator beforehand as he would like to look at the area where they will be working, i.e. the path from the recreation ground to the allotments. It may be necessary to hire a tool for some of the higher branches.

061.2 A resident of Debden Green has kindly cut some of the footpaths at Hamperden End, permission was gained from the farmer beforehand. The resident was thanked for undertaking this.

061.3 The new owners of a house in Hamperden End have removed a hedge making the roadside very narrow. This has been reported to ECC and they have been asked to do a boundary check. As this was some time ago, CG will chase them.

15/062 Items for the next agenda

Internal Auditors Report

To consider a request to cut down a tree in Mill Road and decide whether this should be removed.

To receive an update on the project to extend the Recreation Ground.

To receive a report on the meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust

15/063 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 2nd September at 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

A meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust will be held beforehand.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Dated: 02.09.15.