

DEBDEN PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF DEBDEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY,
2ND JANUARY, 2019 AT 8.00PM IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, DEBDEN**

Present:

Cllr R. Forster	(RF) Chairman
Cllr E. Blackie	(EB)
Cllr S. Luck	(SL)
Cllr A. Tetlow	(AliciaT)
Cllr S. Watson	(SW)

In attendance:

Mrs. C. Griffin, Clerk. (CG)
9 members of the public

19/092 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Andrew Tetlow (private commitment) and Dist Cllr T. Knight.

19/093 Declarations of Interests

To receive disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in items on the agenda

Item 19/100 SL advised that UDC had informed him that all members would be conflicted on this item as they are RG Trustees. He was advised to withdraw because it is against UDC Standing Orders. SL will advise the name of the person he spoke to and the situation will then be clarified with the Head of Legal Services at UDC. It was pointed out that it was UDC who engaged the mediator and subsequently the setting up of the co-ordinating group. The PC is allowed to give funding to the RGT because the PC owns the recreation ground.

19/094 Public participation session (15 minutes available if required)

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, and give evidence in respect of any item of business included on the agenda

The following issues were raised:

- The NVHG is expecting formal approval of the land exchange from the Charity Commission. £13,000 has been raised in the last three months (includes grant of £10,000 from Community Initiatives Fund)
- It was requested that the PC consider holding monthly meetings
- Will members of the public be allowed to participate on item 19/101 – Update on the closure of the Village Shop.

(Agenda items 19/101 was brought forward)

19/095 To receive Reports from District and County Councillors

No reports received.

19/096 To approve and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 7th November, 2018

An addition was made to the second bullet point under item 18/073 namely, "Attendance at Council meetings **within the six month rule**". With this addition it was resolved that the Chairman should sign the Minutes as approved.

Proposed: SL

Seconded: EB

All agreed

19/097 To receive an update from the Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk reported that:

- Following the report to ECC regarding the Willow tree at Hamperden End the adjacent land owners have now been advised that it is their responsibility.
- I wrote to the owners of Bayes House on Ivy Todd Hill but did not receive a response. I have endeavoured to get an update from ECC today without success. In view of the amount of time this has taken up already, it was agreed the Clerk should not pursue this.
- I have now obtained permission for the Rangers to tidy up the area at the top of Church Lane.
- The repayment of £396.92 for the Tommy silhouette has been requested from UDC following consultation with Cllr Knight. The delivery system of the Remembered Trading Co., who supplied this, was chaotic. Dist Cllr Knight will be contacted regarding insurance cover for the Tommy.
- EALC confirmed that the PC must abide by the Village Shop constitution.
- The Chairman and I attended the UDC cluster group meeting in November. Questions were raised about common land and restocking of trees. UDC will not deal with any issues concerning common land. The issues at Smiths Green and Thaxted Road will be taken up with ECC.
- There is a consultation on the Essex Library service if you would like to respond.
- There is also a Fire & Rescue Plan consultation.
- To date no work has been carried out on Byway 75 at Debden Green. Cty Cllr Walsh has been contacted and it is included on a schedule for the Local Highways Panel meeting next week.
- I have reported a blocked drain outside the Almshouses.
- I arranged for a First Responder to check the Defibrillator at the end of December. Everything is in order.
- A report was made concerning the digging out of a ditch at the development at the Old Barn, Slough Farm. After referring this to the Environment Agency I was advised to contact ECC. They have written to the owner and will carry out an inspection.
- The PC need to confirm that Cllr Roper should be removed from the bank signatory list. The application forms for internet access and a debit card will have to be completed again in view of the change.
- The electricity costs for the street lights are increasing from 21st January.
- I have investigated the car which has been parked at Fox crossroads for several days. The DVLA has advised it is not taxed and UDC will be asked to remove.

- A letter has been received from a resident of Deynes Road regarding the triangle and problems caused by increased on road parking which is preventing access to driveways. This was raised a few months ago and ECC will now be asked if the triangle could be reduced in size or there could be a small grass circle around the tree.
- Another resident has requested that the PC hold monthly meetings and also expressed concern regarding payments the PC makes to the RG Trust.

19/098 To agree dates of meetings for 2019 and arrange a date for the Annual Assembly

It was proposed that PC meetings should be held monthly for the next few months, i.e. on the 6th February, 6th March and 3rd April.

Proposed: SL

Seconded: SW

AliciaT agreed

EB and RF against

It was agreed that the Annual Assembly would be held on Wednesday, 10th April, subject to the Village Hall being available.

The Clerk advised that the Annual Assembly is a village meeting, managed by the PC, which is chaired by the PC Chairman if present.

SL offered to help with organising. SW and SL will draft an article for the Parish Pump inviting village groups/organisations to let the PC know if they would like to attend and give a report. This will be included in the PC notes for the Pump. Type of refreshments to be agreed later.

19/099 To agree the total Budget and set the Precept for 2019/20

A PC budget of £15,332 and a RGT Budget of £3,880 had been approved at previous meetings resulting in a total £19,212. The reason for the significant increase was the inclusion of £1,250 in the PC Budget to cover an election in May 2019. Following discussion it was agreed to reduce the PC budget by £1,000 to £14,332.

It was proposed that the Precept for 2019/20 should be set at £18,212.00.

Proposed: AliciaT

Seconded: SL

All agreed

The application form was signed by the Chairman, and will be returned to UDC.

19/100 To consider and decide whether to contribute £800 towards the Invoice for £3,300 for legal fees incurred by the Recreation Ground Trust and Village Hall Trust for advice from Russell-Cooke on the Village Shop

The Chairman explained that this came up at a co-ordinating group meeting and at the last RG Trust meeting and relates to fees incurred for looking into how the three parties could work together if there was no agreement from the Charity Commission to have a Village Shop should a land exchange take place. The RG Trust have already paid 50% of the invoice.

At the last meeting of the co-ordinating group the Chairman agreed to include this on the agenda.

SL said he had been told not to do it as it is against UDC Code of Conduct rules and withdrew from the meeting.

It was proposed that a contribution of £800.00 towards the invoice for £3,300 for legal fees incurred by the RG Trust and VH Trust for advice from Russell-Cooke on the Village Shop should be approved, subject to Simon Pugh, Head of Legal Services at UDC confirming that the PC are not contravening any rules.

Proposed: RF

Seconded: SW

EB agreed

AliciaT against

19/101 To receive an update following the closure of the Village Shop

(Discussed earlier in the meeting)

Nina Manser, Chairman of Debden's Village Shop reported that, after selling a lot of the stock in the morning, the Shop closed at 1.00pm on Friday, 21st December. Following the closure a stock take was undertaken and at present there is £1,500 in stock at retail value. A deep clean has been carried out, the chillers have been turned off and the electricity meter has been read. The assets are still in place. Two freezers are still working, the water has been left on and the new initiative have agreed they will cover the cost of electricity. The insurance expired on 1st January but the cover has been extended to the end of January to cover the contents. The expenses have not yet been totalled and the main debt has not been paid. At present there is £600 in the bank. The Committee will get the exact debt figure as soon as possible.

The Chairman thanked Nina and everyone associated with the Community Shop for everything they had done over the last 36 years.

Stuart Walsh advised that he has worked on the transition with Nina. Funds of just over £1,000 were raised in December towards the new shop. The legal structure is in progress and we are awaiting the company registration number. Initially, it will be a company limited by guarantee which is a not for profit company. It will then become a Community Benefit Society. The three directors will be Sue Wolff, Arthur Davey and Stuart Walsh. There will also be a management committee. Debden Community Shop will enter into a temporary agreement with the new Shop but at present there is no opening date. It is understood the deficit could be between £600 - £900 and this will need to be repaid. The new shop will purchase some, not all, of the remaining stock. We are looking to the PC for support. The historic debt will be paid by the existing shop committee. The fixed assets are owned by the community shop; there is no difference from the current constitution.

The Chairman of the PC said a lot more detail is required on this new initiative.

The PC cannot take on the debt and the current shop constitution was read.

It was reported that in the 1983 Village Hall minutes it is stated that the PC would pick up the debt if the Shop closed.

SW felt we should support this new initiative as the community want the shop to continue. There was funding available last year for the shop but as it was going to close this was not given. The situation has now changed. We should not ask the shop that has closed to sell off the fixtures and fittings which the new shop would have to replace.

EB asked if there is any evidence that the community will support the new village shop. The PC cannot pay off debt.

The new shop needs the fixed assets and if these were purchased there would be no debt. The PC could contribute towards the cost of these.

SL said he did not attend the meeting but he fully supported the village shop and would support the proposal. SW said we should confirm that we would assist the new shop with the transition.

The Post Office is due to open next week although Nina has to approach the present committee regarding the insurance.

The Chairman enquired about fund raising for the new initiative and was advised that there are offers of financial support from the village which have not yet been taken up.

To conclude, the Chairman reiterated that following the closure of the shop the PC need to know the exact financial situation when all the expenses have been paid and we need more information on the viability of the new initiative.

19/102 To consider reserving a date for a training course for Councillors after the May elections and topics to be covered (dates circulated 13th December)

Deferred until the next meeting.

19/103 To receive information obtained on CCTV equipment

Deferred until the next meeting

19/104 To review the Allotment contract and hiring charges.

Deferred until the next meeting

19/105 To receive a report on the drainage work carried out by ECC on Walden Road

Deferred until the next meeting

19/106 To review the Internal Auditors report and resolve outstanding items in part 3 of his report about the PC/RGT relationship

Deferred until the next meeting

19/107 To confirm the co-option process following the resignation of Cllr Amie Roper and inform UDC which option will be taken in view of Debden Parish Council's co-option policy.

It was proposed that the PC should not co-opt a new member following the resignation of Cllr Amie Roper.

Proposed: AliciaT

Seconded: EB

SW and RF agreed
SL against

19/108 To decide whether to enter the 2019 Essex Village of the Year competition

Deferred until the next meeting.

19/109 To discuss planning applications received

The following applications have been received, no comments submitted:

UTT/18/256/FUL Land south of Wisteria House, Debden Green

Minor alterations to planning approval UTT/18/1869/FUL to raise the height of the valley in the rear elevation

UTT/18/3082/HHF Lovecotes Lodge, Debden Green

Single storey rear extension

UTT/18/3030/HHF Wychbars, Hamperden End

Conversion of loft space of garage building

UTT/18/3075/FUL Retrospective application, Debden Barns

Change of use of grassed area to extended car park area and amenity area for customers as well as an occasional overflow car park and erection of marquee

UTT/18/3411/HHF Retrospective application, Ivy Todd Cottage

For garage loft conversion to ancillary residential. Revised from approved application UTT/0633/12/FUL.

The following have been approved, subject to conditions:

UTT/18/2396/HHF Wisteria House, Debden Green

UTT/18/2521/HHF Barltrops, High Street.

UTT/18/2480/LB Red Brick House, Deynes Road

The following has been refused:

UTT/18/2861/FUL Land adjacent to Henham House, Henham Road, Hamperden End.

The PC has been notified of an Appeal at Hand Post Cottage, Chickney Road.

19/110 To approve Accounts for payment

It was proposed that the following payments should be approved:

Proposed: AT	Seconded: EB	All agreed
Ridgeons	£101.78	Allotments – poles and wire
Debden Village Shop	£50.00	Contribution towards electricity for Defib. and light
B. Griffin	£136.78	Website Domain renewal and hosting
HMRC	£289.80	PAYE (Oct/Nov/Dec)
C. Griffin	£407.91	Net salary + expenses (November)
C. Griffin	£408.96	Net salary + expenses (December)

19/111 To discuss any Urgent matters of interest to the Parish

No other matters were raised

19/112 Items for next agenda

- To consider reserving a date for a training course for Councillors after the May elections and topics to be covered (dates circulated 13th December).
- To receive information obtained on CCTV equipment

- To review the Allotment contract and hiring charges.
- To receive a report on the drainage work carried out by ECC on Walden Road
- To decide whether to enter the 2019 Essex Village of the Year competition
- To review the Internal Auditors report and resolve outstanding items in part 3 of his report about the PC/RGT relationship
- To discuss parking problems in the village.

19/113 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 6th February, 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated: 06.02.19.