

DEBDEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DEBDEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 5TH APRIL, 2017 AT 8.00PM IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, DEBDEN

Present:

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

In attendance:

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

17/192 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Alicia Tetlow (on holiday) and Cty Cllr. S. Walsh.

17/193 Declarations of Interests**To receive disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in items on the agenda**

No interests were declared.

17/194 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 issues raised were:

- Will the PC be making any reference to the meeting with the UDC Chief Executive last week. There was some suggestion that the discussions should not be disclosed, but the NVHG has always been transparent and it is felt that the PC should provide some reassurance to the village.
The Chairman confirmed that the CEO advised that the parties involved should not discuss until the mediation has been arranged. The CEO rang me earlier this evening and forwarded a letter. The letter was read by the Chairman.
- The letter confirms that there is only one project on the table which the public may find strange in view of the recommendations that were made.
UDC is endeavouring to encourage all parties to work together in order to retain the MOD grant and their relationship with the MOD as they are currently working on a large project with them. The meeting with the mediator should be organised shortly.

- It appears to me that the only project is Simon Langman's plan. It needs to be explained to the village as they know what was put forward.
- Is the RG Trust going to take part in the mediation.
No. The PC were asked directly by the VH Trust to write a letter of support to the MOD which would be sent with a letter from the VHT and the NVHG in order to retain the grant. The grant would have been lost if those letters had not been sent. The MOD requested that all groups should work together.
- Why are the Recreation Ground Trustees not involved?
They will be involved with the project in one way or another.
- A way forward would be for the PC to resign and then there could be an election in the village and the residents could decide.
- In relation to the mediation was the RG Trust asked to participate.
UDC proposed that the mediation should take place between the PC and the VH Trust. There was only one proposal and that did not involve the RG Trust.
- Why is the other proposal off the table; the original plan should be re-visited.
It has been revisited three times.

The Chairman read a letter he had received from Dawn French, The Chief Executive at UDC, extract as follows:

As discussed, the first focus of mediation would be on reaching agreement to a plan that sets out the steps and time scales to delivering a new village hall on the site of the existing hall. In the event the mediation on this point stalls, and therefore the covenant grant funding would be lost, the second focus would be on how the parties involved with the village hall communicate the position collectively to ensure that the community can come together to move forward.

A copy of the letter will be held with the minutes.

During the public participation session Dist Cllr Knight pointed out that in her capacity as District Councillor and Liaison Officer at Carver Barracks she has been involved in a number of conversations with the MOD and UDC, the Chairman is not being evasive in answering questions. The whole scenario is very difficult because we have been asked not to say anything that could prejudice the mediation which has been discussed by UDC and the MOD. They will decide how it should be conducted. It is important at the moment that all parties should be concentrating on working together to ensure the grant is not lost.

The Chairman of the VH Trust, Richard Cawte, who was present at the meeting with UDC, said the RG Trust are not involved in the mediation because the Chairman, EB, said she did not want to go to mediation so that was slightly misleading. This is in the UDC Legal Officer's notes. EB said that was incorrect and she will be involved at some stage.

- What is the PC's position on violent conduct; what action is being taken?
The Chairman advised that the PC would not condone violent behaviour. The incident on 22nd February was a private matter. AT said he understood the Police have been notified and the UDC Monitoring Officer is carrying out an

investigation. Before anyone prejudices any side they should stay calm. This is not a matter for the PC.

- There are concerns about the financial situation at the Village Shop and I would like the PC to consider making a financial contribution.
The Treasurer of the Shop would like to meet to discuss this. The PC did invite the Chairman of the Shop last year but at that time he said no assistance was required.

17/195 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

The Clerk reported that she has received a report from Cty. Cllr. Walsh today and this will be circulated.

Dist. Cllr Knight raised two points:

1. Following the concern expressed regarding the current financial situation of the Village Shop she suggested that there is a need to go back to when the Shop was set up. It is not a business; it is an amenity and has often been “on the brink”. I have made a contribution from my District Councillor funding but the Shop needs to be supported by the community and fund raising events should be organised.
2. Around 45 years ago I was involved with the parish newsletter. It was subsequently decided that the PCC and PC would link up and produce a magazine and that was the start of the Parish Pump. It was agreed the contents should be events and news in the village and it was a delightful magazine and very well received. It was recognised that there would sometimes be controversy as people have different points of view but it should not be personalised and if this did happen a right of reply should be published in the same edition. A number of people have contacted me over recent months as they are tired of the abuse and accusations made; this is reflecting badly on the magazine with the result that many people do not read it.

17/196 To approve and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 1st March 2017

Following an amendment to 17/172 it was resolved that the Chairman should sign the minutes as approved.

Proposed: EB

Seconded: AT

All agreed

17/197 Chairman's Report

The Chairman had nothing further to report.

17/198 To receive an update from the Parish Clerk

The Clerk reported that:

- Following the letter from ECC regarding the closure of Byways 35 and 75 at Debden Green the landowner has been in touch with ECC and Cty Cllr Simon Walsh has offered to meet the landowner. Currently waiting for a date from Simon.
- I haven't had any complaints about the work being carried out in connection with the new reservoir at Debden Green. Peter Davis who came to our last Annual Assembly has now left.
A request was received for the verges to be reinstated when the work has finished.

- Regarding the roadworks, I am trying to find out what is happening on the 13th April because the resurfacing work was planned for July and it was hoped the work could be completed in two nights. ECC have asked if they can leave some of their equipment in the car park. I understand the work on the blocked pipe should have been carried out at the same time. A leaflet recently delivered states that at no time will the road be closed.
- The lantern opposite the Shop was out of order but has now been fixed.
- The sign for Church Lane was fixed by UDC.
- The defibrillator training session has been arranged for Wednesday 19th April at 8.00pm. There are still spare places. Unfortunately someone put an advertisement in the Parish Pump with the wrong 'phone number.
- The School and Preschool have organised a ramble in June and have requested permission to put up a small gazebo on the recreation ground afterwards. The PC approved this request.
- I have been contacted by the Information Commissions Officer regarding the request made by a resident for the invoices from Mills & Reeve. I explained that the R.G. Trust is a charity, therefore not subject to Freedom of Information.. I also explained the accounting process and the ICO informed me that the point I need to answer is whether or not the PC holds the information that has been requested (the Mills & Reeve invoices). This was an information request to the Commissioner so he has advised me to write back answering that one point and if the resident is not satisfied a complaint can be raised. The PC agreed that a letter should be sent as suggested by the ICO.
- After the last meeting I received a request from a resident asking me to carry out an investigation into the incident on 22nd February. It is not normal practice for me to deal with a matter of this nature and the resident was advised that if he wished to pursue the matter this should be taken up with the UDC Monitoring Officer. I received one further complaint from a different resident and then another letter from the resident who alleged he was assaulted, copy circulated.

SW said the Chairman has a moral duty to resign following the incident on the 22nd February.

- I received an email from the Chairman of the Parish Pump concerning the comment made by the Chairman. I was asked to read this out at the meeting but the Chairman has now replied.
- I received a request from the Chairman of the Village Hall regarding a letter which was sent to the Parish Council last May following the Annual General meeting of the hall. This was discussed in September 2016. I sent a copy of the letter together with a copy of my letter to the Charity Commission and their reply stating that the management committee should be made up of representatives of user groups or groups listed in the second schedule of the constitution. These representatives are managing trustees of the charity.

17/199 To agree to hold Parish Council Meetings on alternate months after the Annual Meeting in May

The Chairman advised that this has been done before. Holding the RG Trust meeting immediately after the PC meeting has lead to a very late finish. The village hall has

taken up a considerable amount of time over the last three/four years. SL felt monthly meetings should continue and the workload should be devolved to another group.

It was proposed that PC meetings should be held on alternate months after May,

Proposed: RF

Seconded AR

EB,AT,SW agreed

SL opposed

It was recognised that it may be necessary to have an Extraordinary meeting once the mediation process gets underway.

17/200 To receive an update on matters relating to the Pavilion – (1) Insurance and (2) Funding applications

(1.) The pavilion insurance has been renewed with Community Action Suffolk for one year. (2.) Following the last meeting the Chairman contacted the Football Foundation to clarify the position with regards to the lease. A copy of the email giving details will be forwarded to SW. It was agreed that all funding applications should be submitted for approval by the Council and made in the name of the PC.

17/201 To receive a report on the UDC Parish Forum held on 15th March

The Chairman attended and will circulate a short report in due course.

17/202 To receive an update on arrangements for the 2017 Annual Assembly

The Clerk reported that the groups had been invited but some have not replied.

The Chairman of the Village Hall, Richard Cawte, will be asked to give a report on behalf of the VH Trust and there should be a joint statement from the groups participating in the mediation process.

17/203 To discuss and agree who will represent the Parish Council at the Annual General Meeting of the Village Hall Trust on 24th April

Cllr Alicia Tetlow has informed the Chairman that she may not be able to attend the AGM on the 24th. If Alicia cannot attend a decision will be made, at the time, on who should represent the PC.

17/204 To receive an update on the CCTV equipment

Following the last meeting the clerk was asked to obtain a fixed quotation for servicing the camera and this has not yet been received. During Sygma's visit to carry out the servicing they have been asked to assess the situation regarding the proposal to install a camera on the School and make a recommendation. SL advised that the School has stated that, in principle, they do not have a problem with this.

17/205 To discuss the feasibility study carried out by UDC at Debden Green crossroads

Cty Cllr Walsh will be asked for an update on this study and also the realignment works which was included on the Local Highways Schedule and then postponed.

17/206 To approve a quotation for work on trees at the Allotments and in Mill Road

It was proposed that a quotation of £460.00 for cutting back the hedge which is overgrowing the footpath should be approved.

Proposed: SW

Seconded: AT

All agreed.

It was proposed that a quotation of £260.00 to lift the canopy of the trees in Mill Road should be accepted.

Proposed: SW

Seconded: EB

All agreed

17/207 To approve a quotation for repairs to the large village notice board

It was proposed that the quotation of £286.00 for repairing and refurbishing the large notice board should be accepted.

Proposed: AT

Seconded: AR

All agreed

17/208 To discuss planning applications received

The following have been approved subject to conditions:

UTT/16/3693/HHF Woodruff Farm, Debden Green

UTT/16/3617/FUL Pondside, Debden Green

UTT/17/0135/HHF Kelly Cottage, Deynes Road

UTT/17/0187/HHF Ruddlands, Henham Road

UTT/17/0483/HHF 12 Smiths Green

17/209 To receive an update on the Audit and Accounts at the end of the financial year

The Clerk reported that the forms have been received but the Auditor is currently away. As soon as the bank statements arrive the Accounts will be prepared and circulated. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will be attending the meeting with the Auditor to ask for advice on the Assets.

17/210 To approve accounts for payment

It was proposed that the following payments should be approved.

Proposed: AT

Seconded: EB

All agreed

Debden Village Hall

£89.75

Village Hall hire

C. Griffin

£398.89

Net salary + expenses (March)

HMRC

£348.80

(PAYE Jan/Feb/March)

(The additional tax, £67.40, on the payment relating to the Transparency Code will be paid from the funding obtained of £997.80)

17/211 To discuss any Urgent matters of interest to the Parish

211.1 SL suggested writing to the Police Commissioner and he will draft a letter and send to the Clerk.

211.2 The Clerk will contact the Footpath Warden regarding the broken bridge in the corner of the recreation ground,

211.3 SL said he sent an email suggesting the resignation of Cllr Blackie and Cllr Forster. SL said the Chairman should not chair the Annual Assembly this year.

The Chairman said he had been advised by UDC that it was his responsibility to report the threat of violence that was made by SL to the Police. An incident number has been given.

SL said his email had been misinterpreted.

211.4 EB thanked the Chairman for all the work he has done on the pond in recent months. It is now looking splendid.

17/212 Items for the next agenda

Report on the mediation process
Feedback from the Annual Assembly.
Report on the Village Hall AGM
Update on the Audit

17/213 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Council and will be held on Wednesday, 3rd May, at 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm.

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated: 03.05.17.