

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting held in Damerham Village Hall on
Monday 23rd January 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

Councillors present:

David Crane, Pete Doherty (arrived 8pm), Mrs Cathy Godber, Glyn Perrens, Glyn Ruth, Phil Stephens, Barry Vincent

Parishioners present: Mr John Godber, Mr Andrew Mercer, Revd Lesley Player.

Others present:

Spinney Adlam (Parish Watercourse Office), Mrs Ros Jones (Footpaths Officer), Mrs Sue Sykes (Clerk)

Public participation

i) Failure of faster broadband to reach houses in the centre of the village

Mr. Andrew Mercer explained his inability to connect to the promised faster broadband from his house, which was in the High Street. This issue was discussed at some length and the Chairman shared the contents of his letter to Mr Peacey at HCC, pointing out that a commitment had previously been made to connect the village by the end of 2016. It appeared that residents connected to Box 4 were disadvantaged and it seemed wrong that they would be required to pay for a service which, for others, was free. This letter was handed to the Clerk who would make it available on request. The Council would continue to pursue a solution in this matter and had a great deal of sympathy with the frustration of residents.

Revd Lesley Player thanked and complimented the Parish Council on ongoing work for the residents of the village.

ii) Fly tipping in Church Lane

The Rector explained the problems experienced by the Church in determining the ownership of the land where dumping of rubbish had again taken place. They believed that the triangle of grass outside the Churchyard was not the property of the Church; but was commonly used by village visitors and residents when walking; tending the Churchyard and for parking for weddings, funerals and Church services. He cited the removal of fallen branches from the beech tree as evidence that the Council had previously accepted responsibility for the land outside the Churchyard hedge and gates.

It was agreed that it seemed that somebody had identified Church Lane as an area for unobserved dumping of rubbish and hoped that NFDC or HCC would accept responsibility for its removal. It was also agreed that measures should be taken to discourage this activity

Action: BV to purchase a security camera to be erected as unobtrusively as possible. The PC to pay for this.

Action: The Rector to e-mail the Countryside Service and investigate the erection of a sign warning would-be fly tippers.

1. Apologies:

Were accepted from Mrs.Suzanne Musker and from Cllr Edward Heron. Pete Doherty had said that he would be late. Richard Major was caught in a late meeting and subsequently in fog.

2. Declaration of business and pecuniary interests:

No interests were declared.

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3. Election of Vice-Chair

Mrs Cathy Godber was unanimously elected unopposed
Proposed: Phil Stephens Seconded: Glyn Perrens

4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th November 2016

These were signed as a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on agenda

Item 11: PC documentation

The clerk reported on those documents now complete and those still to be done. She hoped to present these for approval at the March meeting of the PC. She had amended references to previous entries in the Standing Orders, approved at the November meeting.

Councillors recorded their thanks to SUS for this lengthy and ongoing piece of work.

Item 12: possible school car park,

The Chairman reported that he had written a draft letter to the local land owners suggesting a meeting to discuss possibilities. This letter was currently with Cllr Heron. DC had two concerns: 1) The school had not the finances to support a scheme 2) It seemed that there might have to be a Community Plan written before any decisions could be made and this was a massive task.

Action: Chairman to contact Cllr Heron for his comments and see if the matter could be moved forward.

Item 13 Footpath 49

Mrs Ros Jones spoke of her actions as detailed in her Report (which follows at Item 6). The Chairman explained that there would need to be a map of the area and a formal letter from the land owner as well as a plan of the proposed work, if a grant was to be applied for from the Small Grants Scheme for Countryside Access. It was believed that Mr Cobb was the landowner and agreed that the HCC Community Access Ranger, Natalie Hands, was most probably the right person to speak to him.

Action: Chairman to get Malcolm Parker to suggest materials which should be used and to cost the work in detail.

Action: Clerk phone Natalie Hands to ask her to contact the land owner.

6. Report from Parish Footpaths Officer

"Footpath Report. January 2017

State of the paths: as is unavoidable at this time of year, low-lying paths and farm tracks can become muddy. However the first signs of spring, such as snowdrops, arum lilies and celandine, are emerging.

Footpath 49: I spoke to the Footpaths Secretary of the Ringwood and Fordingbridge Footpath Society, Kevin Winch, who said that it is already on the Society's radar. He told me that a small grants scheme from Hampshire County Council is available to Parish Councils, but that it consists of matched funding, so that, if the cost of labour is low because of volunteer workers, it might be more cost effective to get HCC to supply materials. He indicated that RFFS volunteers might be willing to help with the labour.

The path must be restored exactly where it is now, as a new deregulation bill – which would be needed to modify the existing Definitive Map – has not yet been ratified by all councils.

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There is also a need for care in that area to protect existing wildlife.

Mr Winch suggested that the next step would be for the Parish Council to approach Natalie Hands, the HCC's Community Access Ranger, who would be able to guide it through the process. (02380 605109)"

7. Report from Parish Watercourses Officer

Spinney Adlam queried the priorities of Hampshire Highways in tackling requested tasks. He said that the culverts towards Lower Daggons should be cleared as a priority because they were blocked and the grips needed digging out. The resulting standing water had turned to ice in the current cold spell and was a danger. BV agreed with this assessment.

8. Report from Transport Representative

BV reported that the High Street at North End needed work doing where the verge was disappearing and ideally markers should be placed to keep vehicles from continuing this damage.

Action: BV to contact Bob Brown about the culverts and grips at Lower Daggons; the verges at the northern end of the High Street; and the bridge rail in South End.

He also said that the hedge along Green Close was in need of cutting.

Action: Clerk to write to Tylney about Green Close hedge.

9. Correspondence

Parking at Ohio Cottage.

The Clerk had been copied into an e-mail from the Parish Clerk at Martin where a councillor had concerns about the parking in the road outside Ohio Cottage on the Martin road. This was discussed at some length and councillors agreed that this was most probably a temporary issue. Damerham Council felt that, as the householder was parking outside his own house, there was little they could do. Should the councillor concerned want to take this further it was suggested that a courteous letter to the householder might be the best action. Bob Brown of Hampshire Highways, who had been contacted by Martin PC had commented that, should there be danger to traffic, then this would be a police matter.

Action: Clerk to reply to the Clerk at Martin PC saying that Damerham PC did not feel that they could proceed with this issue.

10. Finance and payments

10i 2017 – 2018 budget

Councillors made two comments:

- BV queried the budget lines for Assets Maintenance and PlayTrail Maintenance and whether these monies should be kept strictly separate. However it was pointed out that the PlayTrail was the greatest of the PC's assets and this was accepted.
- PS said that as the reserve was so healthy he felt that some of this should be spent for the benefit of the community; possibly either on measures to mitigate speeding or on Footpath 49. This also was accepted. (See also Item 15 below).

The draft budget was then accepted unanimously

Proposed: Pete Doherty Seconded: Glyn Ruth

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10ii Payments for December / January

10iii Bank reconciliation 29th November 2016 – 22nd January 2017

The clerk distributed copies of this information; which was accepted unanimously.

11. Planning Applications: Fordingbridge & Ringwood Skip Hire application

The Chairman explained that he had been unable to attend the hearing of this application at NFDC, but that a member of the Sandleheath Parish Council had done so and had e-mailed his views and the outcome of the hearing (attached on file). It was believed that the NFDC would definitely present a very negative view of the application and it was hoped that this would influence the decision by Hampshire CC. A member of the Sandleheath PC would attend the HCC hearing.

12. Parish Lengthsman tasks and update on the PlayTrail

The Clerk reported that the next visit was at the end of February. The following tasks were agreed:

- Clearing grips – particularly towards Lower Daggons
- Clearing undergrowth from all road signs and particularly those at the end of Little Mill Lane and the Rockborne sign in the centre of the village.

The Lengthsman had completed his tasks on the PlayTrail as requested and today the tree surgeons had cut back the overgrown hedges and trees as planned. The grass was becoming very eroded particularly where football was being played, but this was agreed to be inevitable at this time of year.

13. Neighbourhood Watch update

GP reported that it was planned to hold another meeting of Coordinators at which the effectiveness of the scheme could be evaluated.

14. Reports from Councillors attending other Meetings

None. The Clerk was to attend a briefing on the Transparency Fund in February.

15. Other matters brought forward by the Chairman

15i Speeding

DC explained that a number of recommendations were made for discouraging motorists in "Community Funding Initiative" forwarded by the Clerk. It was agreed to call a public meeting on Monday March 6th – or, failing that, the first weekend in March, to fit around other events. This would be a Drop In session manned by councillors, who would record the views of residents on the issue of speeding and other associated problems and possible solutions.

Action: Clerk to check this date with Hall bookings and advertise the event

Action: GP to contact the Community Police Liason Officer to see if she could Attend the meeting.

15ii Litter Pick

DC confirmed that this would take place.

Action: Clerk to advertise this in the Parish Pump

16. Date and time of next meeting: Monday 27th March 2017

The meeting ended at 9.25pm