

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting held in Damerham Village Hall held on Friday 9th June at 7.30pm.

Councillors present: David Crane (Chairman), Mrs Cathy Godber, Richard Major, Phil Stephens, Glyn Ruth

Others present: Mrs Sue Sykes (Clerk)

Members of the public present

Mr John Godber, Mr Jerry Davis, Mr Ben Wyatt and Mr Lack

Public Participation:

Un-adopted land between Church Lane and the Churchyard

Mr Godber said that the un-adopted land by the Church was becoming very eroded due to cars turning and water run-off. Councillors discussed the ownership of this land and were unanimous in agreeing that they were in support of the Church should it approach either Hampshire Highways or NFDC with a view to getting repairs done. The Council would write a supportive letter if this was appropriate.

1. Apologies and declaration of quorum

Apologies were accepted from Pete Doherty, Mrs Suzanne Musker and Barry Vincent,

2. Declaration of business and pecuniary interests

CG had declared an interest in the un-adopted land outside the Church (before Public Participation above.)

3. Minutes of the previous meetings held on Monday 8th May and 23rd May 2017

With minor alterations to date and attendance these were accepted.

4. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

i Speedwatch

The Chairman said that there were now five people who had volunteered to operate SpeedWatch and asked if the Council was in favour of starting up the scheme again. It was agreed that this should be done and that that a plan should be drawn up with the volunteers as to where and when the cameras would be used. It was also agreed that residents should be advised through The Pump that this would be happening.

Motion: that SpeedWatch should again be operational in the village.

Proposed: Richard Major Seconded: Cathy Godber

Voting: Unanimous

ii Footpath 39

The net cost to the Parish Council would be around £900 should it not be possible to get a grant; and it was agreed that this could easily be taken out of the financial reserves. Malcolm Parker would be able to start the work in September. The Clerk was still trying to contact the landowner.

Motion: that, should it not be possible to obtain a grant, this work would be carried out using Council reserve funding.

Proposed: Richard Major Seconded: Phil Stephens

Voting: Unanimous

iii Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator / Police Liaison Officer

Glyn Perrens was still continuing in these roles. Someone would need to take over with both when GP resigned.

iv Parish Footpaths Officer

The clerk had spoken to Ros Jones, who was happy to continue in this role should the Council wish her to do so. Councillors very much valued her way of carrying out responsibilities in this capacity and her interesting reports.

Motion: that Mrs Ros Jones be co-opted as Parish Footpaths Officer

Proposed: David Crane Seconded: Cathy Godber

Voting: Unanimous

v Village Hall link

Cathy Godber agreed to continue in this role.

vi Parish Transport and Traffic Representative

It was assumed that Barry Vincent would continue in this role, though it was agreed to be difficult that he was often unable to be present at Council meetings.

vii District and County Councillor

The Clerk reminded councillors that, under his new planned attendance at local councils, and because Damerham Council only met bi-monthly, Cllr Heron would only be attending meetings in Damerham twice a year. She had written to Cllr Heron and awaited his response. It was agreed that his presence was valuable and that it would be most unfortunate if he was unable to be present as frequently as he would be at other local council meetings.

5. Planning Applications

5i 17/10655 Home Bakery Cottage, Lower Daggons Lane

Two storey and single-storey rear extensions, front porch; detached double garage

Mr Lack explained that the original application had been withdrawn when it became obvious that the Planning Officer was against their original proposals. He had then consulted with neighbours and attempted to draw up plans to take into account the objections from a neighbour to the proposed sky lights in the original plans as well as the objections of the Planning Officer. The Chairman pointed out that the current application is an increase of 17% on the existing footprint.

The flue (mentioned by the neighbour as missing from the plans) would be above the windows of the next-door property. The roof skylight (also mentioned as missing from the plans) was, in fact, in the existing plans. Other comments from the neighbour were also explained by Mr Lake.

There was uncertainty concerning the opinion of the Planning Officer, but councillors felt that Mr Lack was proposing to bring about improvements to his cottage, which would make it more in keeping with the surrounding period village properties. They advised Mr Lake to talk to the Conservation Officer and to the Planning Officer, explaining his point of view and asking what he should do to meet their requirements.

Council's view was that the applicant had already gone a long way to meeting the recommendations of the Planning Office and would go further. That the new design would enhance the current structure and remove structures which detracted from the surrounding properties. The council did not agree that the neighbour's concerns were justified.

Motion 3: that the council were in support of the application and would speak in committee if appropriate.

Proposed: Glyn Ruth Seconded: Phil Stephens

Voting: unanimous

5ii 17/10632 Court Vale House, Court Hill

Raise ridge height; first floor extensions; fenestration alterations; front porch; rear Juliet balconies; chimney

It was agreed that the proposed extensions would be fairly extensive and that the house was very visible from the south side of the village. Councillors noted the comment from the Planning Office that it was unclear if the floor space restriction was being adhered to.

Motion 5: no recommendation. The Parish Council would accept the decision of the Planning Office.

Proposed: Richard Major Seconded: Phil Stephens

Voting: unanimous

5iii 17/10759 Lobster Cottage, Lower Daggons Lane

Orangery

In the absence of any information at all on this application, it was agreed that the only action for the council was as follows:

Motion 5: no recommendation. The Parish Council would accept the decision of the Planning Office.

Proposed: Mrs Cathy Godber Seconded: Phil Stephens

Voting: unanimous

It was also agreed that a complaint should be made to the Planning Office about the absence of information.

5iv 17/10612 Ringwood and Fordingbridge Skip Hire, Sandleheath Road

Variation of conditions 4, 7, 9 and 12 of Planning Application 17/1117 and retention of existing welfare units

Mr Davis (planning advisor to the Fordingbridge and Ringwood Skip Hire Company) explained that the application was essentially to regularise the existing situation; it was not about further increase in traffic to and from the site. Currently 9 vehicles were being run from the site and serving all villages in the immediate area. When the original permission was granted in 2010 there were only 2 vehicles, whose movements equated roughly to the traffic to and from a domestic dwelling. In 2016 a new permission was granted which did not take into account the fact that the business had already expanded to encompass 9 vehicles.

He pointed out that somebody needed to supply this service, which benefitted local residents and that the vehicles were using land where other users had no restrictions imposed upon them. The biomass proposal had been withdrawn and it was proposed that only the northern access to the site would be used so that noise disturbance to houses near the southern access would be avoided. A survey with complete shutdown of activity was planned in order that noise disturbance could be recorded. When an erroneous complaint was received that a lorry was speeding, Mr Wyatt had taken instant action and the lorries now drove at a monitored speed of 25 mph through the village of Sandleheath.

RM said that it was reassuring that any speeding problem would be instantly and responsibly dealt with. DC pointed out that the skip stacking would also be included in the noise restriction. He also commented that the welfare unit would not be any larger than the current facility and Mr Wyatt said that the facility had actually been improved. On the third matter of the concrete fence: Mr Wyatt explained that the steel fence would be removed and the panel fence extended in its place. The fourth point made on 23rd May concerned the 320 vehicles. Council questioned whether this was an inclusive figure or if it referred only to the incoming lorry movement. Mr Davis said this was inclusive.

It was generally agreed that the Company was doing all that it could to minimise disturbance and that comments would be entered on the Hants web site to the effect that:

Motion: the Council supported the existing business as it was; without extension

Proposed: Richard Major Seconded: Phil Stephens

Voting: unanimously in favour

The Council further agreed unanimously that they would participate in any liaison group which might be set up to monitor any future problems or developments should they arise.

6. Finance and payments

6i Approval of annual accounts

The clerk presented her grateful thanks to Phil Stephens who had untangled the perfectly correct but very confusing version of the accounts produced by the auditor.

The clerk presented the annual accounts and took the councillors through the differences between the figures for 2015 – 16 and those for 2016 – 17.

2014 / 15	2015 / 16		2016 / 17
£8,600.00	£8,750.00	Precept	£8,750.00
£1,500.00		HCC grant	£0.00
		NFDC grant	£150.00
		Training grant	£0.00
		Training against payment	£215.15
		Queen's celebration income	£183.00
		Transparency Fund grant	£2,170.00
		FunQuest for PlayTrail	£1,050.00
		CIL monies	£2,294.16
£914.88	£211.20	VAT refund	£253.00
£11,014.88	£8,961.20		£15,065.31

£2,186.20	£2,186.66	Clerk's salary	£3,247.67
£100.00	£110.00	Payroll services	£150.00
£76.21	£98.68	General admin (expenses)	£192.01
		Queens Celebration	£879.62
£903.77	£583.52	Insurance	£469.28
£35.00	£35.00	Data protection	£35.00
		Other running costs	£89.00
£143.84	£107.88	Web site management	£143.84
		Training	£660.00
£1,000.00	£1,250.00	S137 payments	£1,380.00
£84.00	£162.00	District audit	£0.00
£50.00	£50.00	Internal audit	£50.00
	£133.25	Election costs	£0.00
£180.00	£144.00	Hire of Hall	£260.00
£180.00	£180.00	Parish Pump	£312.00
		Publicity and security	£365.72
£209.00	£215.00	HALC	£211.00
		Asset maintenance	£0.00

Continued..			
2014 / 15	2015 / 16		2016 / 17
£1,267.20	£1,724.80	PlayTrail maintenance	£2,305.20
£321.60	£168.80	PlayTrail inspection	£142.80
£6,736.82	£7,149.59		£10,893.14
Balances			
£5,030.63	£9,308.59	Reserves	£11,120.20
£11,014.88	£8,961.20	Add total receipts	£15,065.31
£16,045.51	£18,269.79		£26,185.51
£6,736.82	£7,149.59	Less total payments	£10,893.14
£9,308.69	£11,120.20	Account balance	£15,292.37

Motion: That the annual accounts be accepted as presented.

Proposed: Cathy Godber

Seconded: Glyn Ruth

Voting: unanimous

The internal auditor's comments were noted and would be actioned. In particular her attention was drawn to the size of the reserves. She would like to see this money spent on particular projects and the reserve reduced to an amount equalling twelve months income. The Clerk explained where the additional sums had come from during the year and said that it was generally regarded as best practice to spend the money in hand and apply for more in the precept when needed. However, she believed that it had been the council's choice to build up funds ready for expected later expenditure, so as not to have to ask the rate payers for more. PS voiced the opinion of the councillors and preferred to have the money in hand for future need. He named several major projects that were in the foreseeable future and for which more money would be needed than was allowed for within the precept.

Action: Clerk to look into transferring the major sums received for specific purposes from Fun Quest; the Transparency Fund; SIL money; to the Bus Bank a/c to be more effectively reserved for appropriate projects when needed.

6ii Payments for June and July

687 DoTheNumbers for internal audit	£155.00
688 Time2Display for June Pump	£24.00
689 Clerk's expenses	£68.92
690 Autela Group Ltd for payroll services	£36.00
691 HMRC (p.a.y.e.)	£131.00
692 RoSPA playtrail inspection	£92.40
693 Clerk's July salary (not to exceed)	<u>£175.06</u>
	<u>£ 682.38</u>

6iii Bank reconciliation for May / June 2017

In accordance with agreed policy this had been verified by Phil Stephens

Cheques presented since 8th May 2017	£3,080.55
Unpresented cheques	£406.06
Income	£2,229.69

Balance in bank to date (09 June 2017)

£19,222.57

7. Adoption of statutory and advisory documents

Councillors had received the documentation in advance and the Chairman now asked for comments on each document one by one.

7i The Financial Risk Assessment

This was adopted unanimously. It was noted that this should be reviewed in November each year.

Proposed: Richard Major

Seconded: Cathy Godber

7ii Code of Conduct; Complaints Procedure; Financial Regulations; Financial Risk Assessment

These were adopted unanimously.

Proposed: Glyn Ruth

Seconded: Richard Major

7iii The Assets Register

Approval of this was deferred until such a time as the figures had been confirmed or amended. It contained some figures that did not appear to be logical: a) insured (replacement value) of the war memorial and the bus shelter seemed too low b) the insured amount for the benches seemed very high and three were listed.

Action: Clerk to check with Zurich when the Chairman had obtained more realistic figures for replacement of the war memorial and the bus shelter.

8. Verges throughout the village: to hear any update from County Councillor

The matter of restoring these was in hand – DC and BV would meet before the next meeting in July. No reply had been received from Cllr. Edward Heron as yet.

9. Broadband in the village: to hear any update from the Chairman

No further news yet from Cllr Heron. The Chairman said that he understood that a community funded scheme would be the only option.

10. Editorship of the Parish Pump

At the last meeting councillors had raised as a problem the fact that sometimes articles could appear in The Pump, which they would not want to see attributed to them as the Council. The Clerk had contacted Marie Langdown, as instructed, to get her thoughts on forwarding the final draft to her, as a “second pair of eyes” to check the content. Maria had replied, very reasonably, that she believed that it would be impossible to co-ordinate an extra step in the time available; and still to get the publication out on time. Councillors discussed this at some length and it was agreed that, as The Pump was the voice of the Council, it was appropriate that they had some say on the content; though it was also voiced that it was important not to disallow views which could be controversial.

Action: Clerk to write to Marie thanking her for her editorship of the Pump.

Action: SUS to ask Suzanne Musker if she would take on editorship

Action: Councillors would refer any names that came to mind as editor to DC

11. Other matters considered urgent by the Chairman or raised with him in advance

11i Bus shelter

It was agreed that the Council would pay somebody to paint the bus shelter. Mike Jerrard was suggested and would be approached by CG. It was agreed that Mike's care for the village was outstanding.

Action: CG to ask Mike Jerrard if this was something he could take on.

11ii Possible logo for the Council

The Clerk had admired logos adopted by some other councils and wondered if it would be a good idea to launch a competition to design a logo for Damerham with the local schools. However, there was little support for this idea and it was abandoned.

11iii Footpaths Officer report

In her absence Mrs Ros Jones had sent the following report, which had been written in May:
“State of the paths: path side vegetation, including stinging nettles, is starting to grow and will flop if it rains, so please be prepared to wear suitable clothing. There are no insurmountable obstacles of which I am aware.

The tree trunk across Footpath 14, opposite Damerham Garage has been cleared and I have written to Mr Tilney to thank him.

A couple of people have told me that Footpath 31 (up to Ashridge from the corner of Cornpits Lane), although cut earlier in the season, is difficult to walk on because the cut stems are quite tall and the growing crop (oilseed rape) has spread sideways so that, in wet weather, it will soak walkers from the ears downward. I telephoned Boveridge Farm and the very helpful Farm Secretary said that she would ask for it to be cut back again.

I also asked her about the stile where Footpath 32, along the top of Ashridge, meets the steep field down to the Daggons road opposite the metal barn; and she said she would ask someone to check it. I'd like to thank her for her help.”

11iv E-mail address for councillors

Under the Transparency Code it was recommended that all councillors should have secure, separate contact details that would be used only for council business. Two options for setting up this facility were proposed by Richard Major and all councillors present opted for separate mailboxes. RM would set this up when time allowed.

Action: Item for next Council agenda so that other councillors could choose how this would work best for them

12. Confirmation of dates for future meetings

The Clerk suggested that the alternate 4th Monday dates should be put in councillors' diaries in case of the need for an additional meeting. She said that it would be easier to cancel a meeting already in the diary, than to set one up at short notice. It was pointed out that this would not always work for planning applications if the deadline for comments was still between meetings. It was found that some of the intervening dates of 4th Mondays were Bank Holidays. The following dates were set:

Monday 24 th July	full Council meeting
Monday 21 st August	additional meeting if needed
Monday 25 th September	full Council meeting
Monday 16 th October	additional meeting if needed
Monday 27 th November	full Council meeting
Monday 18 th December	additional meeting if needed

The meeting ended at 10.00pm