

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held
on Monday 17th July 2023 in Damerham Village Hall

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| Councillors present: Phil Tandy (Chairman), David Crane (Vice-Chairman), Richard Major, Cathy Godber, Phil Stephens, Ann Bellows, Glyn Ruth |
| Members of the public present: 1 plus 2 representatives from Wessex Internet |
| Others present: Parish Clerk: Lindsey Malcom NFDC Cllr: Janet Richards |

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| Public participation: The Following matters were raised: Painting of the beacon – it was agreed by the council to do this before the winter. Cllr Tandy agreed to arrange it with the appropriate person to get the beacon down. Signage being obscured by vegetation – the parish Lengthsman did not have time to do this at his last visit. Will be added to his worksheet for 1 st September |
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1. Apologies and declaration of quorum

Cllr Doherty, Cllr Anderson and HCC Cllr Heron sent their apologies. Quorum was declared.

2. Declaration of interest by any councillor on any Agenda item:

There were no declarations of interest

3. To approve minutes of previous Parish Council Meeting:

There were no comments and all voted in favour and it was RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of 27th June as being true records of the meeting. The Chair signed the Minutes.

4. To receive Officer Reports:

Footpath Officer -

Footpath 21 opposite Bakery Cottage: was very overgrown and impassable but has now been cleared by both parties. One side of the stiles is broken, and other side is leaning badly. HCC Countryside department had said they were going to replace this with a kissing gate. Cllr Bellows will chase them up on this.

Bridleway 27, Stoney Lane: Cllr Bellows spoke to the landowner who claimed his land ended at the hedge but he agreed to clear the tree once his harvest of the field was completed towards the end of August. In the meantime, another resident arranged for the tree to be made safe and the bridleway is now usable. The landowner will remove the branches that are now neatly piled up on the edge.

Footpath 19 from Browns Lane across the Burroughs land: is now passable, the fallen gate obstructing has been moved, the stile is broken but can be easily navigated around.

Footpath 4: had a tree obstruction. The landowners cleared it the same day Cllr Bellows notified them.

Lopshill: there is a temporary obstruction with electric fencing due to sheep being moved there. The landowner will put it right.

Footpath 22 accessed from Cornpitts Lane and across fields at the back of Manor Farm: The footpath is obliterated, due to the bumper crop of rapeseed this year, and it is not possible to go around the edge of the field as the crop goes right up to the edge. The farmer agreed in future to leave a wider path although they will not be putting rapeseed in that field for a few years now. Unfortunately, the field is not going to be harvested until middle/end of August which means nothing can be done for this footpath immediately.

Cllr Bellows is attempting to work with the landowners and the walkers in the Damerham area to keep our footpaths clear and safe, but it must be appreciated that this cannot be done at the expense of farmers crops. Hopefully through her contact with them, landowners will appreciate that they need to plan to keep their footpaths accessible and make plans for that when planting crops and moving animals. Cllr Bellows would like to say that all the above have been very accommodating and the Bryants and the Burroughs always action problems, if not the same day, then as quickly as they can.

5. To consider planning applications:

5.1 None received

5.2 To review decisions by NFDC Planning Authority

Cllr Stephens represented the residents of Woodpecker Wood at a recent appeal meeting. Damerham Parish Council had previously recommended PAR 3 approval, but NFDC had refused planning permission.

5.3 Item not on Agenda as late application

None

6. Matters arising from previous minutes not appearing as agenda items:

None

7. Parish Council Matters:

7.1 Previous parish council files: Cllr Crane stated he has had difficulty in retrieving past council files from the previous clerk but will continue trying.

7.2 Possible projects this financial year: Cllr Crane requested that the hedges of the village hall and war memorial be cut by the Lengthsman 3 times a year. The possibility was agreed if there was no other work for him to do in the village.

Another suggestion was for HCC to reinstate the white lines down Court Hill and for double lines along the bend.

It was requested that the Village Design Statement be reinstated this coming year. The Chairman agreed to add it to the agenda for the September meeting.

Cllr Bellows stated that the river is becoming overgrown and items are being thrown into it. She requested that a representative from the river authority be invited to come and give a talk about it, and that a working party be created to clean it.

Action: Parish Clerk to find out about Lengthsman contract – as soon as possible

Action: Parish Clerk to contact HCC regarding white lines – no date agreed

Action: Cllr Bellows to contact river authority – no date agreed

8. Finance: Financial Position:

8.1 To review current balances and financial position

Current account: £10,757.04

Instant Access account: £8989.28

8.2 Expenditure – To approve cheque and bank transfer payments

Clerk expenses for website and stationery were approved.

8.3 Review of budget

It was budgeted to spend £1500 on village costs, and as this is now unlikely, it was agreed to pay the full amounts of the s137 grants previously requested.

9. Community matters:

9.1 Bank transfer: the application is pending with Unity Bank

9.2 Wessex Internet: two representatives from Wessex Internet were present, and were invited to speak at the beginning of the meeting. WI are part of the government's 'Levelling Up' initiative to close the digital divide between rural and urban areas. 'Project Gigabit New Forest' has a 6-month planning and consultation period. The section including Damerham will start in September, and WI will have a presence at the Fair in July and will hold a community meeting in the village hall on 5th September. The benefits to the public will include being able to use the internet to its' full extent, increased bandwidth and speed, and more efficient business.

The council voted all in favour of approving Wessex Internet to cross West Park Meadow with their cables using a small plough unit.

9.3 Phonebox update: Men's Shed are still to do the refurbishment, but it is likely to commence in the next few weeks. Cllr Doherty will give an update at the next meeting.

10. Environmental matters:

10.1 Parish Lengthsman: Road signs need cleaning and more work to be done in the Meadow. Should anyone have a suggestion for the next visit to the village 1st September, please contact the parish Clerk. A discussion on the fixtures and fittings in the meadow will be held at the next meeting in September

11. Correspondence:

All correspondence had been forwarded to Councillors prior to meeting.

12. To receive reports from members who have attended meetings of outside bodies.

Cllr Crane attended a parish liaison meeting, held in Sandleheath, that included councillors from Whitsbury, Rockbourne, Sandleheath and Martin. The meeting was held primarily to discuss speeding in the villages. Sandleheath is embarking on a large-scale project to tackle speeding and to make the village more visibly attractive to deter speeding. The biggest issue has been getting the police on side. Also discussed was the general dissatisfaction with the work of the Lengthsman. It was agreed to hold a parish liaison meeting every few months and Damerham will host in November after the usual parish council meeting.

NFDC Cllr Richards stated she has been given a small Community Engagement Fund to split between villages before the end of March 2024. If there are any small projects that need funding, she is to be emailed with the details of the project.

Date of next meeting:

Monday 21st August 2023 at 7.30pm – to discuss planning applications only

Monday 18th September 2023 at 7.30pm

These are draft minutes until approved at the next meeting

Lindsey Malcom – Damerham Parish Council Clerk

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