

DEBENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Finance, Planning and Employment meeting held on Monday, March 9th 2009 at 7.30p.m. in Dove Cottage.

Present: Cllr R Walters (in the Chair), G Baxter, R Blackwell, L Cockerton, S Dalison, K Voller, temporary clerk Mrs C Williamson and two members of the public

1. Apologies for absence: CllrF Winrow- Giffin, Mrs D Bedwell, District Cllr K Guthrie

2. Open Parish Council Meeting

3. Declarations of interest with regard to items on the agenda and additions to register: Cllr Blackwell, Item 6

4. Vacancies for councillors: to consider co-option of Mr Martin Durie. He had attended at least one previous meeting as stipulated by council and had provided a statement for consideration. He was asked further questions by council and then asked to leave the room while his co-option was debated. It was agreed that a vote by paper ballot should be taken. The result was five in favour, one against, therefore Mr Durie was welcomed to take his seat on the council. He duly signed a Statutory Declaration of Office, counter-signed by the temporary clerk.

5. Suspension of standing orders: 7.44 p.m.: *Meeting open for 5 minutes to allow members of the public to speak about items on the agenda:* Mrs Hughes asked about prejudicial interest: if someone felt very strongly about a matter, would they still be entitled to take part and vote. Cllr Walters explained that this was permissible provided that councillor did not have any formal interest in the topic and would be acting independently.

7.49 p.m. Standing orders resumed

6. Debenham Leisure Centre: Cllrs Blackwell and Durie declared a prejudicial interest and took no part in the discussion.

6.1 Response regarding offer of donation : Mr Hughes had advised the temporary clerk that morning that the attached conditions were still being considered. It was agreed that he should be advised that if the conditions had to be revisited by the council, there would be a delay which, if it went beyond March 31, as was highly likely, could result in a loss of funding (which under S137 we anticipated paying DLC in this financial year) in the region of £7000.

6.2 any further information from SALC/NALC or otherwise re power to make donation to DLC: none received

7. To consider donation to Youth Club Scheme for 2009/10: details had been requested, to be received by March 15th at the latest:

1. Confirmation that the youth club does indeed wish to open for a third evening
2. How much funding is needed in total?
3. What will the money be used for?
4. Who will benefit, and how many?
5. What is the present structure of the youth club - how often is it open, how many people run it, for how many youths etc?
6. Where do they get funding from at present?
7. Accounts for 2007- 8.

It had been explained that an advertisement had been placed in the Guardian for a Youth Leader and the vacancy was unlikely to be filled before the summer – the third evening would not begin before then. The cost would be approximately £117 per night. It was hoped that the facility would be available for 50 weeks of the year rather than in term time only as at present. It was agreed that further information, especially on present funding, was required, and that the amount to be considered for donation should be specified on the agenda.

8. RFO's report: no formal report was received but Mrs Bedwell had advised the temporary clerk that the increase in Insurance premium due to Fidelity Guarantee Increased Limit is likely to be in the region of £114 annually. An amendments form will need to be signed at the next meeting by the Chair, Mrs Williamson and Mrs Bedwell so this will be an agenda item. She had nothing urgent and would provide a report for the next meeting.

9. RFO request for new accounts package: Mrs Bedwell had the opportunity to look at the accounts system used by Melton Parish Council but it was less specific and more expensive.

10. Cemetery Charges Review for 2009/10: current charges were considered briefly. It was agreed that more comparative information was required, especially in the present financial climate. The temporary clerk said that she would also like to look at the terms and conditions attached to the purchase of grave spaces.

11. Planning matters:

11.1 Approvals: none

11.2 Refusals: none

11.3 Applications: none

2033/08 Appeal notice, Willow Cottage, Bellwell Lane: this was received

3933/09 Appeal notice, Wanda Cottage, Pettaugh: this had gone to appeal because MSDC had chosen not to debate the application ie it had not actually been refused.

11.4 Planning Correspondence: none

12. Grasscutting contract decision. No further tenders had been received. Impact Landscapes had carried out the hedgecutting work as requested at the previous meeting and had contacted the temporary clerk about this and churchyard work. The figures presented at the February 16 meeting were reconsidered. Cllr Baxter proposed, seconded by Cllr Voller, all in favour, that the contract for grass cutting and hedgecutting work be awarded to Impact Landscapes Ltd, on condition that their work was satisfactory and that regular contact was maintained with the council through the temporary clerk.

13. Risk assessment requirements for audit: the Chair and temporary clerk had reviewed this. It was agreed that the draft copy should be forwarded to council for their consideration.

14. Allotments – problem with rabbit infestation

An allotment holder had advised he temporary clerk that rabbits were presenting a problem in the area. The council was advised that in previous years Mr G Bridge and Mr Sillett kept the rabbit population down by shooting them. It was agreed that the temporary clerk should make enquiries: where did they shoot and when, how often etc. It was noted that the allotment agreement stated that fencing was an obligation of the tenant, not the council. The cost of fencing would be £55 per 50 metre roll of 1000mm high.

15. Chair's urgent business: any items not on this agenda but of such urgency as to merit, in the Chair's opinion, immediate action.

15.1 Debenham Information Board: a proof copy was distributed. It was agreed that if possible, the ford running along the Butts and adjoining the River Deben at the Derry Brook Lane/Aspall Road junction should be depicted, also 'Hoggs Kiss Wood' should be moved up and to the right and three typing errors should be corrected.

16. Any other business: information exchange only: none

17. Date of next meeting: March 16th

18. Temporary exclusion of press and public: *That pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the Public and Press be excluded from the Meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed concerning legal issues; potentially sensitive personnel content.*

19. Employment Issues

There being no further business to be transacted, the meeting ended at 9.14 p.m.

.....Chair.....Date