

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held
on Tuesday 16th July 2024 in Damerham Village Hall

Councillors present: Phil Tandy (Chairman), David Crane (Vice-Chairman), Cathy Godber, Ann Bellows, Phil Stephens, Richard Major
Members of the public present: 1
Others present: Parish Clerk: Lindsey Malcom NFDC Cllr Janet Richards

Public participation: An elector asked when the drain by Kingfisher Cottage would be dealt with. Cllr Tandy advised the problem had been reported but had not received a date from HCC yet.

24.2.1. Apologies and declaration of quorum: Cllrs Ruth, Doherty and Anderson sent their apologies. Quorum was declared.

24.2.2. Declaration of interest by any councillor on any Agenda item: There were no declarations of interest.

24.2.3. To approve minutes of previous Parish Council Meeting: All voted in favour and it was **RESOLVED** to accept the Minutes of 20th May 2024 and, as had not been previously approved, 17th July 2023 as being true records of the meetings. The Chair signed both sets of Minutes.

24.2.4. To receive Officer Reports:

Footpaths: Cllr Bellows expressed her frustration that, despite doing as much as she can, a lack of staff at the Countryside department has meant nothing has been actioned. In addition, landowners have not taken responsibility for maintaining footpaths on their land and keeping them open and safe.

Several footpaths need clearing of vegetation and it was agreed to give them to Lengthsman to do, preferable on an extra day before his next visit. In the meantime, Cllr Stephens offered to cut back a bit on footpath 14 at the Channel Hill end.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the owners of the laurel hedge on Green Lane to cut it back as it is overgrown.

Dark Skies: Nothing to report

24.2.5. To consider planning applications:

5.1 24/10529 Methodist Chapel, High Street, Damerham SP6 3EU:

After discussion, all voted in favour and it was **RESOLVED** to recommend PAR3 approval for planning permission. Reasons included the fact there had been no objections from neighbours and the street scene would be ruined if not developed.

24/10620 The Chapel, Lower Daggons Lane, South End, Damerham SP6 3HE:

After discussion, 4 councillors voted in favour, 2 against, and it was **RESOLVED** to recommend PAR4 refusal due to previous breach of policy DM20 and concerns over increasing size.

5.2 The council noted the decisions made by NFDC and thanked Cllr Richards for her good support in objecting to the Courtvale Farm application.

24.2.6. Matters arising from previous minutes not appearing as agenda items: None

24.2.7. Parish Council Matters:

7.1 Cllr Crane advised that the Village Plan was signed off by the parish council in 2007, and that the West Park Meadow play area had been created in answer to requests from parents. Cllr Crane felt that it was time to have another look at the parish plan to see if it needs updating. It was agreed that Cllr Crane would approach the previous Chairman of the Village Plan working group for digital files of the village plan.

- 7.2** In addition to the village plan, it was felt that having an official Village Design Statement would be beneficial so Damerham would have a say in what development took place. It would need a group of volunteers to put together, not just parish councillors. NFDC Cllr Richards advised that the NFDC Local Plan does not allow development on open land, of which Damerham is included. It was agreed that the Clerk would enquire about funding for the Statement from NFDC and Cllr Crane would advertise for volunteers in next Parish Pump.
- 7.3** The Clerk advised the councillors that the internal audit on 18th June went well, and no issues found, although the final report and invoice had not yet been received from the auditor. An historic discrepancy of £5 in the accounts had been cleared by the auditor, bringing the accounts in line.

24.2.8. Finance: Financial Position:

8.1 To review current balances and financial position

Current account: £165.44 Instant Access account: £16,403.12

8.2 Expenditure

28.5.24	L Malcom	Email expenses	7.20
30.5.24	L Malcom	Clerk wages - May	240.00
30.5.24	HMRC	Clerk taxes Apr-May	120.00
30.5.24	RoSPA	Playtrail inspection	108.00
30.5.24	PCC Damerham	Church s137 grant	500.00
30.5.24	Damerham Sports Field	Sports s137 grant	500.00
30.5.24	Time2Display	PP June inv. 699818	36.00
30.5.24	Damerham Village Hall	VH s137 grant	500.00
11.6.24	MJ Parker	Gravel for footpaths	414.00
11.6.24	Setter Limited	Basket swing	1,844.88
13.6.24	Avon Tree Care	Remove fallen tree	420.00
30.6.24	Unity Bank	Service charge	18.00
4.7.24	L Malcom	Clerk wages June	240.00
4.7.24	L Malcom	IT expenses	61.20
4.7.24	HMRC	Clerk taxes June	60.00
4.7.24	Time2Display	PP July invoice 700141	36.00

The Clerk circulated to the councillors the actual income & expenditure for Q1 2024 (Apr – June) compared to the budget. It was noted that most of the budgeted expenditure for the year had been made by the end of June. A quarterly VAT return will be made to regain £945. All voted in favour and it was **RESOLVED** to accept the accounts as presented.

- 8.3** The council reconsidered the earlier s137 grant application from the Friends of Western Downland School for £500 towards new laptops. After much deliberation, it was felt it was a matter for the education department and the council could not financially support it. Four councillors voted to refuse the application, and two abstained. Therefore it was **RESOLVED** to not grant payment for the laptops.

24.2.9. Community matters:

- 9.1.** Cllr Tandy gave an update on the phone box, advising that it now has a new coat of paint and the wooden door has gone for repair. The phone box will be glazed and finished by next weekend. Cllr Doherty has a grant to take the project further. However, there are problems with using electricity, due to costs, and solar power cannot be used. The installation in the phone box cannot be developed if expensive to run so talks are ongoing between the grant provider and the electricity board.
- 9.2.** There is a new big swing in the Play Trail, and Cllr Tandy repaired the small swing. It has been noted that someone appears to be undoing the bolts and removing the bar. The RoSPA report issued in May will be discussed at the next parish council meeting.

9.3 NFDC is no longer cutting the grass at Rockbourne Cricket Ground and so the cost for cutting at Damerham will increase. However, the Streetscene Manager has agreed to honour the cost for this year as if they were still combining the two visits. Following discussion regarding costs and whether the grass needs to be removed, it was agreed to make a decision on whether to continue with NFDC in November when discussing the budget.

24.2.10. Environmental matters:

10.1 Parish Lengthsman: On his last visit, overhanging vegetation on road signs was cleared away and small tree in the Meadow removed. A pathway through the weeds in the middle of the river was cut to allow the water to flow better and riverbank nettles strimmed. Cllr Bellows has been in touch with the Housing Association regarding the hedge by the road in West Park, which will be trimmed although no date given yet.

24.2.11. Correspondence: Last year the Parish Pump was entered into a competition for the best parish Newsletter; however nothing was heard back. It was decided not to enter again as it was felt awards went to larger councils.

24.2.12. To receive reports from members who have attended meetings of outside bodies: Cllr Crane gave an update on the recent village hall committee meeting. They are considering allowing up to 2 electric car charging points in the car park. The village hall would receive a rental income and all costs would be borne by the installation company. A Non-Disclosure Agreement would need to be signed with the installers and it was unknown if planning permission would need to be granted as in conservation area.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 17th September 2024
Tuesday 20th August if need for planning

These are draft minutes until approved at the next meeting

Lindsey Malcom – Damerham Parish Council Clerk clerk@damerham.net 07493 390965