

# DENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



## MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2017 JUBILEE HALL

### Following Annual Parish Meeting at 8.25

Councillors: Robert C .T. Wardley (Chair), Kathy Whitbread (Vice Chair), Matt Lunn, Robert C. Rous, Mary Mann, Doris Dearing, Nick Watts, John Calver, Rebecca. Smith  
Copied for information to: County Councillor Stephen Burroughes; District Councillor Paul Rous, Christopher Hudson

**Present:** Cllr Robert C. T. Wardley (Chairman), Cllr Katherine Whitbread (Vice Chair), Cllr Mary Mann, Cllr John Calver, Cllr Doris Dearing, Cllr Rebecca.Smith, Mr James Maberly Ms Maggie Archard, C. Cllr Stephen Burroughes

Clerk: R Hart

- 1. Election of Chairman and signing of Chairman's Declaration of Office :** Cllr R. Wardley was proposed by Cllr R. Smith and seconded by Cllr M. Mann. He was elected unanimously and signed the Declaration of Office
- 2. Election of Vice Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office:** Cllr K. Whitbread was proposed by Cllr R. Wardley and seconded by Cllr D. Dearing. She was elected unanimously and signed the Declaration of Office.
- 3. Apologies for Absence** were received from D. Cllr P. Rous and Cllr R. Rous
- 4. Declaration of Interests:** Ch. Cllr Wardley (Suffolk Constabulary, Dennington Consolidated Charities), Cllr M. Mann (Village Hall), Cllr N. Watts (Village Hall)
- 5. The meeting confirmed Council representatives and nominative representatives for:-**  
Dennington Jubilee Hall – Cllr N. Watts  
Dennington Consolidated Charities – Ms F. Boscowan  
Dennington Sports Club – deferred until July meeting (Clerk to write to Cllr M. Lunn)
- 6. The meeting agreed group/individual appointments for:-**  
Tree Warden – Cllr K Whitbread  
Transport – Cllr JCalver  
Highways and Footpaths – Cllr N Watts  
SALC – deferred until July meeting (Clerk to write to Cllr M Lunn)  
Parish Plan/Neighbourhood Plan – Ch. Cllr R Wardley to review questions for July meeting  
Health and Safety – Ch. Cllr R Wardley
- 7. Confirmation of Minutes for Parish Council Meeting held on February 2<sup>7th</sup> 2017:** these were confirmed and signed as a true record
- 8. Matters raised in Annual Parish Meeting:** There was nothing raised from the Annual Parish Meeting
- 9. Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer:** Mrs Ruth Hart was confirmed as the Responsible Financial Officer, having been proposed by Cllr K. Whitbread and seconded by Cllr R Smith
- 10. Appointment of Internal Auditor:** It was agreed to retain Heelis and Lodge as internal auditors for 2017/18

**11. Clerk's Report** to include signing of financial report, receipts and expenditure book, along with Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return for external auditors; agreement to continue with current arrangements for cheque signatories:

- financial report: was presented to Councillors, approved and signed
- receipts and expenditure book: was presented to Councillors who noted the amendments (see below Recommendation 1), and was signed by R. Hart, Clerk and Ch. Cllr Wardley
- Annual Return to include annual governance statement for external auditors: The Clerk explained that this document comprised several sections –
  - a) annual governance statement (confirming the responsibility to ensure a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of accounting statements)  
This was agreed, signed and dated by R. Hart, Clerk, and Ch. Cllr R Wardley.
  - b) accounting statement 2016/17. This was agreed, signed and dated by R. Hart, Clerk and Cllr R Wardley, Chair.
  - c) external auditor certificate and report 2016/17 certificate
  - d) final sheet completed by the internal auditor.

It was agreed to keep the following as cheque signatories - Cllr R Wardley, Cllr R Rous, Cllr M Lunn, Cllr N Watts, Cllr K Whitbread, Cllr J Calver and Ruth Hart.

The Clerk reported the following:-

- received 1st precept payment of £4,425
- Bank Accounts as at April 28th 2017  
Current Account £1,016.29  
Equipment Account £8,392.39  
Everyday saver £6,673.79

- Cheques signed since last meeting:

100108	Information Commissioner	£35.00
100109	Robins Row (Insurance)	£377.30

- Cheques to be agreed and signed at this meeting:

100110	R Wardley (cement)	£ 15.45
100111	R Hart (stamps)	£ 14.52
100112	R Hart (petrol)	£136.35
100113	SALC membership	£244.28
100114	R Hart (salary)	£360.00

Councillors agreed to the above

The Clerk reported that she had received a thank you letter from the Sports Club for the donation of £300 made November 2016, .  
She reported that the road tax for the Parkway 3 mower had been renewed, even though tax exempt

The annual audit had been completed and submitted to Heelis and Lodge. The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Their report is as follows:-

### **Internal Audit Report for Dennington Parish Council – 2016/17**

Receipts: **£15,891.99**                      Payments: **£9,728.39**                      Reserves: **£11,682.51**

#### **Annual Return Completion:**

Section One: *To be completed at the Council meeting in May 2017*  
Section Two: *To be completed at the Council meeting in May 2017*  
Section Four: *Yes, completed by Internal Auditor*

The following Internal Audit was carried out on the adequacy of systems of control. The following recommendations/comments have been made:

**Proper book-keeping** Cash Book, regular reconciliation of books and bank statements. Supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts

*At the time of the audit review, the Cash Book failed to reconcile with the Council's bank accounts. During the course of the audit a number of discrepancies in the Cash Book were identified as follows:*

*Receipts:*

- a) The amount received from HMRC on 6 May 2016 was £2,685.70 (and not £2,685.76 as displayed in the accounts)*
- b) Receipts for the year within the Active Saver (no.2) Account were £13,540.45 (and not £13,540.57 as displayed in the accounts).*
- c) Total Receipts for the year were £15,891.99 (and not £15,892.05 as displayed in the accounts).*

*Payments:*

- a) The total for Maintenance should be £1,548.77 (and not £1,548.82 as displayed in the accounts).*
- b) Total Payments for the year were £9,728.39 (and not £9,728.44 as displayed in the accounts).*

***Recommendation 1: The above corrections (which will enable the Cash Book to balance to the bank statements) should be made to the Receipts & Payments Account prior to approval by the Council and submission to the External Auditor. COMPLETED***

***Recommendation 2: The Council should add a 'Total' column in the Cash Book which identifies the gross figure for individual payments. This will facilitate the completion of the end-of-year accounts and reduce the possibility of errors being made. This was previously recommended by Internal Audit in 2016 and is still to be acted upon.***

**NOTED FOR 2017/18**

*The Cash Book is referenced and provides a clear audit trail. Supporting paperwork is in place and well referenced.*

*Payments under the Local Government Act Section 137 are separately identified within the Cash Book (it should be noted that donations/grants to the Citizens Advice Service can be made under Sect 142 (2A) and not Section 137).*

**NOTED FOR 2017/18**

*VAT payments are also tracked and identified within the Cash Book.*

**Financial regulations** Standing Orders and Financial Regulations  
Tenders  
Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes  
Identifying VAT payments and reclamation  
Cheque books, paying in books and other relevant documents

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in place: *Yes, both were reviewed and adopted by the Council at its meeting on 27 February 2017 (Minute 6 refers).*

VAT reclaimed during the year: *Yes, the reimbursement of the claim for £648.58 to HMRC for the period 24 March 2016 to 31 March 2017 was received at bank on 9 March 2017. However, the claim appears to have been understated as it does not include the £10 VAT paid to Community Action Suffolk (CAS) on 12 September 2016. Similarly, a payment of £295 VAT was made to Realise Futures on 7 November 2016 but only £225 VAT was re-claimed from HMRC, an underclaim of £70.*

***Recommendation 3: The Council should ensure that all amounts of VAT paid during the 2016/17 year are re-claimed from HMRC. ADDED IN FOR 2017/18 CLAIM PERIOD***

Adoption of the Local Code of Conduct: *The Council adopted the Code of Conduct at its meeting on 12 September 2016 (Minute 7 refers).*

Use of the General Power of Competence: *Not Applicable.*

Data Protection registration: *The Council is registered for the provision of council services (Registration ZA116681, expiring 20 May 2017, refers).*

Minutes of Council meetings: *These are well presented and provide a clear record of Council's decisions.*

**Risk Assessment**                      Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council

Risk Assessment document in place: *The effectiveness of the Council's Internal Controls was reviewed by the Council at its meeting on 16 May 2016 (Minute 12 refers).*

*The Internal Controls and Financial Risk Management documents were also adopted by the Council at its meeting on 12 September 2016 (Minute 7 refers).*

*Insurance was in place for the year of audit. The level of Fidelity Guarantee Cover is £150,000 and is in accordance with the current recommended guidelines of year end balances plus 50% of the precept.*

**Transparency Code**                      Compliance for smaller councils with income/expenditure under £25,000.

Smaller Council: *Yes*

Website: <http://dennington.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/>

Smaller authorities should publish on their website from 1 April 2015:

- a) all items of expenditure above £100  
*Published – Yes (and within Council Minutes published on web-site)*
- b) end of year accounts (By 1 July)  
*2015/16 Annual Return, Section One Published – Yes*
- c) annual governance statement (By 1 July)  
*2015/16 Annual Return, Section Two Published – Yes*
- d) internal audit report (By 1 July)  
*2015/16 Annual Return, Section Four Published – Yes*
- e) list of councillor or member responsibilities  
*Published – Yes*
- f) the details of public land and building assets (By 1 July)  
*Published – Yes*
- g) Minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings  
*Published – Yes, other than the Minutes of the meeting on 16 May 2016 which cannot be downloaded from the web-site.*

*Other than the issue referred to at item g above, the Council met the requirements of the Transparency Code in the year.*

**Budgetary controls**                      Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and supporting documents

Precept 2015/16: *£8,325*

Precept 2016/17: *Not listed in Council Minutes*

Precept 2017/18: *£8,850*

*Satisfactory budgetary procedures are in place. It is noted that the Precept for the 2016/17 year was agreed in full Council but the precept amount was recorded as a 1.5% increase. The Council's Minutes should formally record the actual amount of the precept for the year. Care will be needed in completing Box 2 of Section 2 of the Annual Return for 2016/17 to*

*ensure that only the Precepted amount is included; Box 2 should not include any grants (e.g. Council Tax Support Grant) received from Suffolk Coastal District Council in the year.*

*For the year 2017/18 the precept was agreed in full Council and the precept decision and amount has been clearly stated in the Minutes (the meeting held on 7 November 2016, Minute 7 refers).*

*The Clerk ensures the Council is aware of responsibilities, commitments, forward planning and the need for adequate reserves. Budget papers are prepared to ensure councillors have sufficient information to make informed decisions.*

**Income controls** Precept and other income, including credit control mechanisms

*See the Proper Book-keeping item above. Income controls were checked and income received and banked cross referenced with the Cash Book and bank statements.*

**Petty Cash** Associated books and established system in place

*No Petty Cash held, an expenses system is in place.*

**Payroll controls** PAYE and NIC in place where necessary.  
Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures  
Records relating to contracts of employment

PAYE System in place: *Yes, Ladywell Accountancy Services administer the payroll functions.*

**Asset control** Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets  
Cross checking on insurance cover

*A separate asset register is in place and was reviewed and approved by the Council at its meeting on 27 February 2017 (Minute 7 refers). Values are recorded at cost value and also insurance value.*

*The total asset cost value at 31 March 2017 is £43,858 and can be included in Box 9 of Section 2 of the Annual Return for 2016/17.*

*The recorded value of assets is in accordance with current requirements, viz. that each asset should be recorded at its original purchase cost or where the original purchase price is unknown at the time of first recording on the asset register, a current value is recorded, which acts as a proxy for the original cost and will remain unchanged until disposal.*

**Bank Reconciliation** Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements

*See the Proper Book-keeping item above. Following the necessary corrections being made, the end-of-year accounts reconciled with the statements for the Barclays Community Account, the Barclays Active Saver (Council Equipment) Account and the Barclays Active Saver (no. 2) Account.*

**Year-end procedures** Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents  
Verifying sample payments and income  
Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate.

*See the Proper Book-keeping item above. The end-of-year accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis.*

**Sole Trustee** The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee

*The Council is not a sole trustee.*



**Internal Audit Procedures** *The Council has satisfactory internal financial controls in place. Cheque stubs and invoices are initialled by signatories as part of the overall financial control framework. The Clerk provides financial reports to Council meetings. Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.*

*The Internal Audit Report for the previous year (2015/16) made the following recommendations:*

- a) *Add a 'Total' column in the cashbook which identifies the gross figure for individual payments. **This has not been addressed and the recommendation is repeated in this report (see Recommendation 2 above). NOTED FOR 2017/18***
- b) *Identify the power used for donations in the column heading. This has been addressed for payments made under Section 137 of the LGA 1972 although it should be noted that grants to the Citizens Advice Bureau are made under Section 142. **NOTED***
- c) *Update Financial Regulations and Standing Orders to reflect the 2015 Public Contracts Regulations. This has been addressed.*
- d) *To meet the requirements of the Transparency Code. This has been addressed.*
- e) *To formally minute the precept amount in the minutes. This was addressed for the precept for the year 2017/18.*
- f) *Adjust the cost price of the new mower to £15,600 in the asset register. This has been addressed.*

*The Council reviewed the effectiveness of the work of internal audit at a meeting held on 16 May 2016 (Minute 12 refers), when Heelis & Lodge were re-appointed as the Council's Internal Auditors for the year 2016/17. An Audit Plan is in place.*

#### **External Audit**

*The report by the External Auditor BDO LLP for the previous year (2015/16) was reported to the Council at its meeting on 12 September 2016 (Minute 6 refers). There were no matters raised which required the issuing of a separate report.*

#### **Additional Comments**

*The Annual Parish Council meeting was held on 16 May 2016. The first item of business was the Election of Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders.*

*I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for the assistance provided during the course of the audit work*

Trevor Brown for Heelis & Lodge 16 April 2017

#### **12. Highways and Footpaths:**

- Frozeley Bridge: It was reported that the carriageway on the B1116 from Owls Green towards Dennington was rutted. Clerk to report to SCDC
- B116 on the bend as you approach Dennington from Framlingham – overhanging hedge obscuring 30mph sign and causing traffic to veer onto opposite side of road. Clerk to report to SCDC

#### **13. Correspondence: None**

**14. Public Session:** The meeting was asked whether anyone officially welcomed new people to the village. Mr J Maberly informed the meeting that he was working on an Information Sheet with local contact numbers, doctors etc and it was suggested that backcopies of the newsletter might be useful too.

The meeting closed at 9.00

**SIGNED:** *R. Wardley*

**DATE:** 17/07/17