

DENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.30pm



1. **Councillors Present**

Matthew Lunn (Chair)	John Calver	Nick Hopewell-Smith
Vashti Mouncer	Sam Steward	Robert Wardley

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Dearing (recovering from a medical procedure) and Cllr. Shelver (work commitment).

In Attendance

Lydia Kirk (clerk) Shirley Cunningham

District Councillor Langdon-Morris sent his apologies.

2. **There were no declarations of interest.**

3. **The Minutes of the meeting of 8th January 2024 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.**

4. **Matters arising**

Cllr. Wardley reported on Emergency Rest Centre training that he recently attended. This has raised additional items for consideration in the Emergency Plan. In April the Emergency Planning Officer will be considering the Village Hall for approval as an ESC Emergency Rest Centre.

Cllr. Wardley has received a quotation of £629.32 from the dealer to service the tractor mower. Cllr. Steward has received a non-dealer quotation for around £350. Councillors agreed to go with the lower quotation.

5. **Chair's report**

The Chair reported on Framlingham's public flood meeting that he attended on 21st January.

He has printed large maps of the village with overlays showing details of various future projects to seek residents' comments on at the Annual Parish Meeting.

6. **Clerk's Report**

The clerk wished to thank the web editor for all her hard work managing the village website for over 10 years.

The meeting room has been booked for most of the Councils meetings in 2024. However, the Main Hall will need to be used for the AGM in May as the meeting room was already booked.

With the financial year-end approaching, the clerk will be very busy with the accounts and preparing for internal audit over the next two months. She has made a VAT claim for 2023-2024.

The clerk attended ESC's Parish Council Planning Forum in January and advised on some procedural changes and biodiversity net gain obligations that are now in place. She will share the presentation with Councillors. She also attended a webinar on the upcoming consultation on possible devolution for Suffolk, and the East Suffolk Planning Alliance's Annual Conference. She has completed SALC's annual members' survey.

Framlingham's commissioned flood report will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting on 24th April at 7pm at Framlingham College and Councillors are welcome to attend.

7. Responsible Financial Officer's Report:

a) The following payments were approved:

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P33 23-24	£22.80	SALC	6 months payroll service
P34 23-24	£59.82	John Calver	Paint for telephone kiosk
P35 23-24	£1,012.20	L. Kirk	Pay to 31.03.2024
P36 23-24	£181.20	HMRC	PAYE to April 2024
P37 23-24	Up to £400	Sibton Country Supplies	Tractor mower service & checks

b) The following payments have been made since the last meeting:

P30 23-24	Dennington Consolidated Charities	Village Green rent	£150
P31 23-24	Defibshop	Replacement Pads	£92.94
P32 23-24	Defibshop	Defibrillator Battery	£286.20

c) The bank balances as at 28.02.2024 were:

Current account	£3,707.78
Equipment account	£9,534.28
Savings account	£6,640.41

d) The bank statements and bank reconciliation were reviewed by the Examining Officer.

e) The year-to-date receipts and payments account was noted.

8. Highways and Footpaths Issues

Cllr Wardley met SCC's local Liaison Engineer recently and they visited Owls Green to discuss problems regarding the verges and narrow road. Unfortunately, no actions could be agreed on this but the pothole there will be repaired. Flooding near both Durrants Bridge and Wash Farm is being investigated by SCC's enforcement team. Cllr. Wardley has also reported blocked drains near Wash Farm. The damaged 30mph sign near the Village Hall has been replaced.

Cllr. Hopewell-Smith has reported issues with damaged statutory speed signs at Owls Green. The Chair will have a site meeting with Cllrs. Calver and Hopewell-Smith regarding whether any additional safety signage at Owl's Green is necessary.

The Chair will write to County Cllr. Burroughes to reiterate roadway and signage issues in the village.

A resident currently cuts verges throughout the village that are too narrow for the tractor mower. As a principle, volunteers give their time freely, for which we are grateful, but no volunteer should not be left out-of-pocket with respect to paying for consumables used during these voluntary tasks. The Chair proposed that his fuel and any other costs should be reimbursed which Councillors agreed with but there were some concerns regarding insurance obligations.

ACTION The clerk will ascertain whether a volunteer using his own ride-on mower would be covered under the Council's insurance and whether the Council is allowed to reimburse him for fuel and expenses upon production of receipts.

9. **The Chair, as the Sports Club representative, reported on the proposed play equipment improvements.** The Sports Club has met with trustees from the Consolidated Charities and also District Councillors to discuss funding and grant applications. They are also discussing the improvements with the school and play school to see what facilities local children want. It was noted that they would not be requesting the Parish Council's CIL funding this financial year.

- 10. It was agreed to break the Asset Maintenance field in the budget down as follows to allow more spending without requiring prior approval at meetings:**
 Emergency Repairs up to £1000
 Defibrillator maintenance up to £500
 Speed signs SID maintenance costs £250
 Mower service £500
 Miscellaneous maintenance consumables up to £500
- Any expenditure would need to be agreed by the Chair plus one other Councillor and would then be reported at the next meeting.
- 11. The 80th Anniversary of D-Day in June was discussed.**
ACTION ML will speak to Sports Club and Village Hall to see if they want to run any events for this.
- 12. After over 10 years, the current webmaster would like to retire from this voluntary role.** The Chair and Vice Chair thanked her profusely for all her hard work. Councillors will speak to residents and advertise the vacancy in the newsletter to find a suitable new volunteer to carry out the role.
- 13. It was agreed that the Council would fund SALC's face-to-face training sessions at Framlingham Town Council for any Councillors who wished to attend.** These will be on 27th March and 17th April at a cost of £50 per person for the two sessions.
- 14. Correspondence received since the last meeting was considered.**
 A resident has thanked whoever removed the fallen tree on the footpath at Severalls Lane.
 Issues have been raised regarding cars parking on the pavement at Swainston's way.
ACTION The Chair and Cllr. Mouncer will speak to the affected residents and try to resolve this.
 The MP would like to attend a village event to meet residents It was agreed to invite him to the Annual Parish Meeting.
 The clerk has re-taxed the tractor mower

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The resident asked how the new signage, improved footpaths and play equipment would be funded. She also pointed out that many residents are over the age to benefit from replacing the play equipment but would benefit from footpath repairs and suggested that residents might prefer village CIL funds to be spent on this project.

The Chair confirmed that we don't have the required funds but that the Council would produce an improvement plan based on consultations with residents and would try to seek funding for these projects in the future.

15. Councillor Reports

Cllr. Wardley reported on the closure of more local bank branches. He has written to the local MP three times and has now heard that Dr Poulter will write to the CEO of Barclays about these concerns. Cllr. Wardley reiterated that the closures are a growing concern to older residents and those without computers.

Cllr. Wardley also reported on a dormant bank account created for the Neighbourhood Plan which has £327.50 in it. He and a resident are working to get these funds transferred to the Parish Council's bank account.

He also reported that both defibrillators in the village have been used recently and one of them needs new pads, hence the purchase. He has collected one defibrillator from Ipswich Hospital and both are now back in service.

Cllr. Mouncer attended the most recent Community Partnership in Framlingham meeting on behalf of Dennington Parish Council. She reported that there are several pockets of funding that can be spent on identified local needs and she was keen to remain involved in the Partnership.

- 16. **There were no additional matters to be raised at the next meeting.**
- 17. **The next meeting was confirmed as being the Annual General Meeting on Monday 20th May 2024.** It was noted that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 13th May but the clerk cannot attend this. There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10pm.

Signed

Chair

Date