

DENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 3rd June 2024



1. **Cllr. Wardley proposed Cllr. Lunn continues as Chair.** This was seconded by Cllr. Hopewell-Smith and carried unanimously. Cllr Lunn was willing to be re-nominated and signed the Chair's Declaration of Office.

2. **Cllr. Calver proposed Cllr. Wardley as continued as Vice-Chair.** This was seconded by Cllr. Shelver and carried unanimously. Cllr Wardley signed the Vice Chair's Declaration of Office.

3. Present

<u>Councillors</u>	Matthew Lunn (Chair)	Robert Wardley	Sam Steward
	John Calver	Vashti Mouncer	Kevin Shelver
	Doris Dearing		Nick Hopewell-Smith

Lydia Kindred (clerk) and 2 residents

County Councillor Stephen Burroughes sent his apologies.

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

5. **The Minutes of 11th March 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting, with a minor amendment to item 9 as suggested by the Chair.**

6. **There were no matters arising.**

7. Appointment of Officers and Council Representatives

Responsible Financial Officer	L. Kirk
Examining Councillor	S. Steward
Tree Warden	N. Hopewell-Smith
SALC Representative	Vacant
Health and Safety, Emergency	
Planning & Welfare Officer	R. Wardley
Community Partnerships	V. Mouncer

Council Representatives with legal trustee responsibilities

Dennington Jubilee Hall	S. Steward
Dennington Con. Charities	R. Wardley
Dennington Sports Club	K. Shelver

All appointments were proposed by Cllr Lunn, seconded by Cllr. Steward and carried unanimously.

8. **The Chair's had no additional items to report on since the Annual Parish Meeting.**
The APM report can be found on the village website.

9. Clerk's Report

The clerk wished to thank Councillors for their support and patience over the past few months. She has reverted to her maiden name and will be using this for all Council business from now onwards. The clerk also wished to thank the auditor for working so hard to ensure that the audit and report were completed ahead of the meeting.

10. Responsible Financial Officer's report

a) The following payments were approved:

Reference	Amount	Payee	Details
P01 24-25	£20.00	Dennington Village Hall	Hall hire APM May
P02 24-25	£208.43	Robins Row Ltd	Tractor mower insurance
P03 24-25	£200.00	Trevor Brown	Internal audit
P04 24-25	£20.00	Dennington Village Hall	Hall Hire AGM May
P05 24-25	£270.34	SALC	Annual subscription
P06 24-25	£36.50	L. Kirk	Share Microsoft Office & McAfee Antivirus subscription
P07 24-25	Up to £500 approved	Sibton Country Supplies	Tractor mower service <i>To be paid when invoice received</i>
P08 24-25	£16.92	R. Wardley	Noticeboard fixings (<i>This payment is to be set up by the clerk to adhere to Financial Regulations</i>)

b) The following payment made since the last meeting was noted:

P09 24-25	£35.00	ICO	Data processor fee
-----------	--------	-----	--------------------

c) Funds received since the last meeting were noted:

04/03/2024	£25.03	Barclays	Interest
04/03/2024	£35.65	Barclays	Interest
30/04/2024	£5,587.50	East Suffolk Council	First instalment of precept

d) The bank balances were as follows on 27th May 2024:

Community Account	£7,685.41
Active Saver	£7,620.36
Equipment Account	£9,569.93

It was noted that £17,465.09 of these funds are reserved.

12. Procedural

a) Cllr. Wardley proposed accepting the audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023. This was seconded by Cllr. Hopewell-Smith and carried unanimously.

b) The Chair read through the Annual Governance Statements and Councillors agreed each statement. Section One and Section Two (Accounting Statements) of the Local Councils' Annual Return for year ending 31st March 2024 were duly completed. The annual paperwork will be published on the village website.

c) The Council resolved to opt out of an External Audit as an exempt council following its positive report from the internal auditor. The Certificate of Exemption was completed and signed by the Chair and RFO.

d) The Clerk went through the Statement of Significant Variances and this was accepted. The Examining Councillor reviewed the bank reconciliation and bank statements.

13. The Internal Auditors' Report for 2023-2024 was considered. The Council will look to build its level of general reserves to fall in line with the recommended levels. It was pleasing to note that there were no recommendations or causes for concern and the Chair and Vice-Chair thanked the clerk for her hard work over the year which has resulted in the Council receiving yet another positive auditor's report.

14. The following policies were reviewed:

a) Standing Orders *No changes required*

b) Assets Register *Some of the assets on the Register have been disposed of. The clerk will amend this and circulate for Councillor's to reconsider.*

- c) Financial Regulations NALC has recently released new model regulations. These will be considered at a future meeting.
- d) The Statement of Internal Control was considered effective and fit for purpose.
- e) Risk Assessments for Physical Assets Cllr. Wardley is responsible for this. There were no changes required.
- f) Financial Risk Assessment It was agreed to add the word “and Councillors” in the section regarding accessing online banking.
- g) Data Protection Policy There were no changes required. Councillors were reminded of the need to password-protect any device that includes Council emails and to periodically delete emails with personal data in them that are no longer needed.
- h) Suffolk Cloud’s standard Website Accessibility Statement was considered fit for the Council’s needs.

15. The Local Government Association’s Code of Conduct was re-adopted.

16. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Report for 2022-2023 was approved

ACTION Clerk to send report to East Suffolk Council.

17. Cllr. Wardley proposed re-appointing Trevor Brown as the Council’s internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2024, if he is willing to continue this role. This was seconded by Cllr. Steward and carried unanimously. The Clerk noted her appreciation to Mr Brown for his assistance throughout and meeting the tight deadline.

18. The following highways and footpath issues were discussed:

Cllr. Hopewell-Smith mentioned the ongoing national review of public rights of way and asked if the Parish Council had been consulted on this. It was noted that rights of way not on the revised map in 2026, may be lost for ever. Whilst the Council hasn’t been formally consulted, the Chair agreed this was an important issue and encouraged Councillors to look into this ahead of the next meeting when it would be considered further.

Cllr. Wardley has reported recent flooding at Dunnet’s Bridge to SCC. Cllr. Shelver noted that Badingham Road is showing signs of flooding again. Cllr. Wardley has already reported this issue and will chase for an update.

Cllr. Hopewell-Smith has secured a quotation for the agreed signage at Owl’s Green and has the landowners’ consent for the poles to be sited on their land.

Cllr. Mouncer proposed that the Council spends up to £591 on these new signs. This was seconded by Cllr. Hopewell-Smith and carried unanimously.

19. Cllr. Mouncer noted that there are several new residents in the village. She would encourage the Parish Council to adopt more proactive ways of engaging with all residents to keep them informed of what the Council does and also of volunteering opportunities within the village. It was agreed to create a digital mailing system where meetings and Council news can be sent out regularly to all on the list. Councillors supported this idea and it was agreed to use Mailchimp to help avoid disclosing any email addresses.

ACTION Clerk to draft a flyer to be hand-delivered to each house.

20. Following the recent issues with the playing field not being mown ahead of a football match, Cllr. Mouncer asked the Council to consider procedures to allow for emergency mowing. This prompted some detailed discussions on the mowing rotas for the village green and sports field. The Chair thanked all who gave their time to cut these areas, noting that each cut of the sports field can take several hours. Whilst there are less volunteers to mow the sports field than the green, the Parish Council are not responsible for this sports field. He will discuss this issue with the Chair of the Sports Club. He will also liaise with him and Cllr Mouncer to see if using an app to view the rota and see when cuts have been carried out would be useful.

21. Correspondence received since the date of last meeting was considered.

A Variation of Planning Condition regarding land to the north-east of Glebe Farn was considered. Councillors noted that the application was originally granted as a holiday-let

and were mindful that the application would likely not have been permitted for residential purposes due to its location. It was agreed to object to this application. The Chair strongly encouraged Councillors to look at the Local Nature Strategy and the accompanying questionnaire.

21. Councillors' Reports

The noticeboards on the green were damaged following a recent traffic incident. Cllr. Wardley and a resident have now reaffixed them.

Cllr. Steward reported that the Village Hall's roof would be replaced in autumn.

He also gave an update on levels of funding pledged for the Sport's Clubs new play equipment to date.

Cllr. Wardley will complete East Suffolk Council Business Rates Review Relief form and return it before 24th June.

It was noted that the letter from HMRC regarding employment allowance does not apply to local councils.

PUBLIC FORUM

The two residents confirmed that they were happy to train any new volunteers to use the tractor mower and were not aware of any problems with the current mowing regime.

23. Matters to be raised at the next meeting:

- Current footpath consultation
- NALC's new model Financial Regulations

24. The next meeting was confirmed as 7.30pm on 1st July 2024.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked Councillors for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15pm.

Signed

Chair

Date