

DENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of meeting held on Monday 4th November 2024 at 7.30pm



1. **Councillors Present**

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

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Dearing (health issue).

In Attendance

Lydia Kindred (clerk) 3 residents (two of whom left after item 12)
County Councillor Stephen Burroughes sent his apologies.

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

3. **The Minutes of 2nd September 2024 were approved as a true record.**

4. **Matters arising**

Cllr Wardley is continuing to chase the invoice for the mower service. The contractor has contact details for himself and the clerk.

5. **The Chair had nothing additional to report.**

6. **Clerk's Report**

The clerk has completed SALC's questionnaire regarding Suffolk County Council's Highways and signage. She noted that the questions appeared very leading.

Cllr. Burroughes has sent his apologies for an indefinite period due to health concerns. The Council agreed that the Clerk would send him their best wishes for a full recovery.

Suffolk County Council's Rural Transport Survey is still open. Councillors are asked to encourage residents to complete this. The next SALC area forum will be on 28th November at 7pm. The Council does not have a designated SALC representative.

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the available training budget. Councillors interested in any training sessions are advised to contact her.

The Clerk attended a useful Emergency Planning workshop in Huntingfield. The Environment Agency will contact residents who own property next to watercourses to inform them of their riparian rights and responsibilities. Framlingham residents and others further downstream have already been contacted.

The Clerk also attended a Suffolk County Council webinar on flooding and drainage. She found it informative and will share the presentation with Councillors.

Item 15 was brought forward for discussion.

15. **Councillors discussed options for the Parish Council's correspondence address, to help safe-guard the clerk's personal information.** Some expressed surprise at the proposed fees for using the Village Hall as a mailing address. It was agreed that the Chair would request a reconsideration of these fees, suggesting that this service be linked to the Council's annual donation to the Village Hall, which could be increased to £250 to accommodate this arrangement.

7. **Responsible Financial Officer's Report:**

a) The following payments were approved:

Amount	Payee	Details
£20.00	Dennington Village Hall	Venue hire November
£200.00*	Dennington Village Hall	Donation

£100.00	East Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau	Donation
£450.00	Dennington Church	Donation for communal lighting
£55.00	East Anglian Air Ambulance	Donation
£700.00	Dennington Sports Club	Donation
£22.80	SALC	6 months payroll

* It was agreed to increase the donation from £200 to £250 if the Parish Council can have a letter box installed at the Village Hall.

b) The following payments were noted:

£970.40	L. Kirk	Pay to 30 th September
£223.00	HMRC	PAYE to 5 th October

The following receipts were noted:

£199.07	East Suffolk Council	Grant for cycle racks
£35.92	Barclays	Interest Equipment Account
£28.61	Barclays	Interest Saver Account
£5,587.50	East Suffolk Council	Second half of precept 2024-25

c) The bank balances as at 31.10.2024 were:

Current account	£2,238.25
Equipment account	£9,641.64
Savings account	£11,677.47

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

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

e) NALC's pay agreement for 2024-2025 was noted. This equates to a 63p/hour, or an £163 annual, increase and is to be backdated from 1st April 2024.

8. Highways and footpaths issues in the village

8.1 Cllr. Hopewell-Smith reported that "The Hold" is closed until January, preventing further checks on historical maps. The Chair discussed the 1970s revision of definitive maps with a Rights of Way Officer. Some Councillors questioned the need for a permissive footpath between the village centre and Owl's Green, and this will be reconsidered if there is sufficient resident demand.

8.2 The Council reviewed highways signage throughout the village. Cllr. Wardley presented his report, highlighting signs that are defective or damaged. It was agreed to obtain pricing for heritage-style fingerpost signs, similar to those used in nearby villages and the clerk will look into this. It was noted that County Cllr. Burroughes has no remaining funding available in his Highways budget. The Clerk is confirming with the Highways Engineer whether the Parish Council is permitted to replace statutory signage and the process involved.

8.3 Cllr. Wardley has met with SCC officials to discuss the possibility of extending the layby at Saxtead Road. Unfortunately the visibility splay would not be compliant with current legislation and so would not be permitted.

8.4 Cllr. Wardley confirmed that several issues reported on SCC's online portal are scheduled for rectification.

Councillors were asked to note Sizewell lorries and vans, marked with a SZ3 roundel on their rear, that are travelling through the village as they should not be using the route. If evidence that they are doing so is provided, this might help strengthen the Council's grant-funding applications as it shows impact of the development on the village.

9. **Draft budget figures were reviewed and will be finalised at the January meeting, when the 2025-26 precept will be set.** Councillors are encouraged to review and comment beforehand.

10. **The following planning application was considered:**

DC/24/3547/FUL *Detached timber-framed studio with room above*

Church Farm Clay Hill Dennington IP13 9JJ . It was agreed to support this application.

11. Village jobs list and mowing communications

Cllr. Mouncer proposed creating a list of village jobs for volunteers, following receiving offers of help from several residents. Councillors are to think of various tasks that could be added to the list and let the Chair know.

The clerk will check the minimum age for drivers on the tractor mower's insurance policy. Any new volunteer drivers will need to be trained and registered. Cllr. Lunn will discuss an app to schedule and monitor the sports field mowing with the Chair of the Sports Club.

Whilst the Parish Council is not responsible for the Sports' Clubs mowing and maintenance jobs carried out by other voluntary organisations in the village, it might be useful if it helped to co-ordinate the various tasks.

12. Pavement from The Neathouse to Swainstons Way on the village green

Concerns have been raised by residents about encroaching vegetation on the village green pavement. It was noted that this land belongs to the Consolidated Charities but it is leased to the Parish Council. A work party to help edge this path will be added to the list of village jobs.

13. Village Christmas tree and lights switch on

Luke Steward from Dynamic Flow Solutions has generously agreed to donate a Christmas tree for the village this year. **ACTION** The clerk will contact him to thank him on behalf of the Council.

The Christmas tree lights-switch on will be on 30th November at 5.30pm, for 6pm. Once again, Cllr. Mouncer will be providing refreshments for this and the whole village is invited. There will also be carol singing this year.

14. Gov.uk domain name and email switchover

Councillors were concerned that there has been no progress on this since it was agreed in July and that over 70% of the government grant funding for this project has now been allocated. It was agreed to ask our current web provider to complete the domain switch over and to sign up to the two year package for hosting gov.uk email addresses.

15. Discussed after item 6.

16. Correspondence

HMRC: Notice of penalty & cancellation of penalty

Overgrown Leylandii: A Councillor will speak with the resident about trimming the trees; UK Power Networks is expected to conduct maintenance work in the village soon.

ESC Precept request 2025-2026 notification: It was noted that a 100% Council Tax surcharge on furnished second homes could support an increased precept without raising the Parish Council element of the invoice.

PUBLIC SESSION

No questions were asked.

The resident present has expressed an interest in standing as a Parish Councillor.

17. Councillor Reports

Cllr. Steward reported that the new play equipment has now been installed and should be open in the next two weeks following a completion inspection.

The Village Hall's AGM will be on 21st November at 7pm. The Village Hall roof works have now been completed.

The Chair will be ordering new batteries for the Speed Indicator Device but more volunteers to help move this between the two sites are very welcome.

18. Matters to be raised at the next meeting:

Budget 2025- 2026

Precept 2025-2026

19. The next meeting was confirmed as being on Monday 6th January 2025. There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05pm.