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**DARSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**MEETING – 9TH FEBRUARY 2016**

**MINUTES** [ approved by councillors on 8th March 2016].

*Public Forum – concerns were raised re the planning application DC/15/5163 and councillors allowed that comments could be raised at item 8.*

02-1 – The chairman, Robin Leggate, welcomed councillors Keith Rolfe, Simon Manning, Jean Loveridge, Ernie Hare, Sue Bloomfield, Chris Poupard and Jasmine Backhouse. Also attending were Raymond Catchpole [SCD councillor and Michael Gower [SC councillor]. Apologies were received from John Butler. Two members of the public were present. The clerk, Caroline Cardwell, was in attendance.

02-2 – **Declarations of interest** and dispensations allowed – none

02-3 – **Minutes of the previous meeting** [12-01-16] were approved and signed as correct after minor alterations to wording.

02-4 – **Matters arising** on the minutes not on agenda – Fairfields railings to be erected and village seat to be repaired with locality budget funding; clerk asked to write to Sir John Wheeler [Aldeburgh] re hedges on main road cycle track; the resident concerned over application for new housing had a favourable response from the housing association; concerns over free flow of new housing ditch on The Street, would be addressed by site foreman;

02-5 – **Finances** –

* Balances at 29-01-16 - c/acct: 4,017.62; sav/acct: 4,599.89; Total assets - £8,617.51
* Cheques for approval: no. 695 to C. Cardwell for 288.00 [net sal. Jan/Feb]
* Donations of £30 each, to be sent in March, were agreed for the following bodies – St. Elizabeth’s Hospice, Ipswich; Halesworth Volunteer Centre; CAB Leiston; and Disability Advice Service. The coffee morning in June would be in aid of EACH.
* Heelis and Lodge were appointed internal auditors for the year Apr. 15 to Mar. 16
* Councillors Leggate and Hare had carried out a review of the parish council accounts on 1st Feb.

02-6 – **Clerk’s contract** was reviewed and updated as follows - a] clause 9 to include NALC salary and hour recommendations; the clerk to be employed for 5 hours per week at SCP 15 [currently £8.613 per hour gross] and b] clause 16/17 stating council’s policy on sick pay. All councillors agreed to these changes.

02-7 – **Queen Elizabeth II** – 90th birthday celebration plans – it was agreed to hold a Sunday lunch on 24th April for all residents tickets £5 each – PC to provide wine; a working group to be set up to include representatives from PC, Village Hall cttee, Ladies of Leisure and the PCC. There will be a bowl for donations to the Princes Trust or similar royal charity. Ron Reeve has kindly agreed to provide a suitable historical display of photographs etc.

02-8 – **Planning** – DC/15/5163 – Ash Spring Wood – application to build cottage for gamekeeper

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*[the meeting was opened briefly at 8.05 for comments by members of the public who raised concerns over shared access and possible need for builders to maintain track during proposed building]*

The meeting was resumed for councillors to discuss the proposals taking into account the above comments; it was felt that the need for a residence in this site outside the PLB had not been demonstrated, new houses are available in the village a short distance away and so councillors unanimously refused to support the application. Chair to write with comments for SCDC Planning and clerk to forward.

**02-9 – Annual Village Meeting** – it was agreed to hold this on 10th May, immediately preceding the annual meeting of the PC. Councillors felt that an informal meeting with refreshments and participation by the various groups in the village would hopefully attract more people to attend. Groups to be invited include Bowls Club, Ladies of Leisure, Craft Group, Horticultural Soc., Allotment Holders, Village Hall Committee, Parochial Church Council, Exercise Class, Social Dancing, Website, Art Group and Astronomical Soc.

02-10 – **Community assets** – the clerk provided information on the process of declaring a community asset and, after discussion, councillors felt it would not be practical to register The Fox at this time.

02-11 – **Correspondence** – received and discussed.

02-12 – **Reports** from councillors –

* Michael Gower [***Suffolk County Councillor***] – spoke about county finances, reductions in the budget, the Adult Social Care Levy of 2% and the current reduction in staffing levels; there would possibly be a need to utilise some of the reserves.
* Raymond Catchpole [***Suffolk Coastal District councillor***] – spoke about Sizewell C consultations needed shortly and the importance for all local communities to work together in their responses to EDF plans
* Cllr. Jasmine Backhouse reported on the new trees in the Scattered Orchards project and the need for weed mats [cost 2.25 each]; it was agreed she should buy these and the bill could be presented to the PC in March. A team had been arranged to look after the orchard.
* Cllr. Chris Poupard said the remaining vacant allotments had been let and there was also one person on the waiting list. There had been complaints about chickens on one plot and the clerk was asked to write to the holder regarding the conditions in which they were kept.
* Cllr. Sue Bloomfield – commented on the broken road sign at the turning to Halesworth; clerk to contact Suffolk Highways to get it repaired.
* Cllr. Jean Loveridge – drew councillors’ attention to the poor state of steps at FP8 [station to Primes] and clerk will contact Suffolk Footpaths officer.
* Cllr. Ernie Hare – spoke of the importance of the Suffolk Forum re Sizewell C and concerns over proposed park and ride scheme.

02-13 – **Any other business** – a litter pick was arranged for Sunday 3rd April; clerk to arrange for bags etc to be left at chair’s house. The condition of the verges opposite Optney cottages was raised; Cllr. Hare said that Hermes lorries delivered there. Concerns were raised again re overgrown condition of cycle track and clerk asked to write to landowner, Sir John Wheeler, and contact Suffolk Highways to have grass cleared from the edges. **Next meeting** – this will be held on 8th March 2016. *The meeting ended at 9.15pm.*