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**DARSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

MEETING – 12TH JANUARY 2016

MINUTES [approved by councillors on 9th Feb. 2016]

*There were no questions from the members of the public*

* 1. – The chairman, Robin Leggate, welcomed councillors Jean Loveridge, Simon Manning, Keith Rolfe, John Butler, Chris Poupard, Sue Bloomfield and Ernie Hare. Apologies were received and accepted from Jasmine Backhouse. SC councillor, Michael Gower and Suffolk Coastal councillor, Raymond Catchpole were welcomed. The clerk, Caroline Cardwell, was in attendance.
  2. - **Declarations of interest** – Cllr. Keith Rolfe declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5; councillors agreed he could remain in room, but not vote.
  3. - **Minutes of previous meeting** [10-11-15] were approved and signed as a true record.
  4. – **Matters arising** not on the agenda – Cllr. Chris Poupard reported that The Wash had cleared with recent heavy rain; concerns were raised over the ditches in the new development not being screened by the culverts; Cllr. Jean Loveridge to contact site foreman; the clerk said that Footpath 9 had been reported to the Suffolk Rights of Way officers.
  5. - **Finances** –
* Balances at 31-12-15 **-** c/acct: 4,385.62; sav/acct: 4,599.89; total assets - £8,985.51
* Cheques were approved as follows: 692 - to C. Cardwell for £144.00 [Dec net sal]; 693 - to Royal British Legion for £50 [wreath]; 694 – to Heelis and Lodge for £66.00 [internal audit]
* Xmas tree request for donation – not agreed
* De-fibrillator funding – discussed; councillors agreed to donate 400.00.
* Clerk’s contract and salary to be reviewed prior to next meeting by the chair and Cllr. Ernie Hare.
* Financial inspection to be carried out at the same time.
* New external audit regulations – the clerk drew councillors’ attention to these and it was agreed to conform with the Sector Led Body arrangements supported by NALC, SLCC and ADA.
  1. – **Budget and precept for year Apr. 2016 to Mar. 2017** – this was discussed in detail, the chair reported on the recent SALC meeting views on possible future referendum and it was proposed to request a precept of £4,700 – all councillors agreed to this. It was noted that with the new houses in the village that the cost per household of this increase would be absorbed by the new housing.
  2. - **Planning** – Cllr. Sue Bloomfield *[councillor with responsibility for planning]* reported on recent applications and councillors had no objections to any of the proposals at Darsham Cottage, Darsham House pond or Brads Holte in Fox Lane.
  3. - **Allotments and orchard** – there will be an additional 5 trees from the Scattered Orchards project; it was noted that the original trees had been planted too close together and there are plans to move some to give a 6m gap between them; the new trees will be planted with the 6m gap; they are due to arrive shortly and the planting “gang” will be Simon Manning, Roger Coates-Smith, Chris Poupard, Jasmine Backhouse, Robin Leggate and George Jackson.

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* 1. – **Fairfields railings** – 2 quotes were received for putting up galvanised railings: a] from Vernon Pearl for £313.30 and b] from Martin Taylor for £360. Councillors agreed to ask Vernon Pearl to carry out the work at the price quoted.
  2. - **Suffolk Police and Fire Service** – forthcoming cut-backs and changes discussed but councillors felt that as the consultation “window” had been unrealistically short over the Christmas period that there was nothing they could do to comment.
  3. – **Reports from parish, County and District Councillors** –
* *Keith Rolfe:* gave a brief report on village hall finances and developers’ interests in carrying out the plans for the houses and the new hall; the parish council decided to use the coffee morning slot in June and the beneficiary will be decided in March.
* *Jean Loveridge* – only to say that F9 was still dangerous.
* *Ernie Hare* – reported that there is a new independent agency to assist local councils in Sizewell C concerns and plans.
* *Michael Gower [Suffolk County councillor]* spoke on concerns and reports on the path and cycle track from the station to Darsham which is very overgrown; the clerk asked to write to the landowner, Sir James Wheeler, to get the hedges cut back. He also discussed the 4 villages by-pass plans [Suffolk Energy Gateway] and local concerns and needs; funding is dependent on local business requirements and interests, problems using the A12 are not confined to the 4 villages; local interests favour a Benhall to Sizewell road and wider concerns include the wet dock in Ipswich and the third crossing in Lowestoft – the chair thanked Michael Gower for attending.
* *Raymond Catchpole [Suffolk Coastal District councillor*] – gave further comments on the Suffolk Energy Gateway and said the business case study was crucial. He reminded councillors about the need to spend his Community budget before the end of February. The chair thanked him for attending.
  1. – **Any other business** – Michael Shipp had offered to repair the seat round the village sign for £208 and it was agreed to accept this; Raymond Catchpole agreed to provide funding through his Community Fund – clerk asked to fill out forms and submit them asap. Annual Meeting plans were discussed and it was agreed that councillors should try to make it more inclusive and interesting, perhaps by hosting a coffee and cakes evening. Cllr. Jean Loveridge raised the case of a local resident’s housing needs. Though the PC has no powers over this it was decided that with the help of Cllr. Sue Bloomfield, the chairman would send a letter on behalf of the village to the housing association pressing our local resident’s case. Cllr. Chris Poupard spoke of concerns over the state of the church lay-by and Low Rd., Hinton. Cllr. Ernie Hare asked if it might be possible to make The Fox public house a community asset – clerk to look into this and report in February.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.