

DANEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Danehill Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 26th November 2015, at Danehill C.E. School.

Present: C. Critchley, J. Blake, M. Mockridge, M. Garman, H. Montagu, T. McHattie M. Riminton, A. Garman. Also Cllr. P. Roundell, M. Fishlock (Tree Warden)

In Attendance: C.W. Gooders (Clerk)

Meeting started at 7.30pm

Prayers were said by the Cllr. Critchley.

665. Apologies for Absence

Cllr. S. Crabb and Cllr. R. Galley.

666. Declarations of Interest

None.

667. Minutes

The minutes of Danehill Parish Council meeting dated 22nd October 2015, having been previously circulated, were agreed and signed as a true record. Proposed Cllr. McHattie, seconded Cllr. M. Garman. Voting unanimous.

668. Matters Arising

None.

669. Communications

- A) Letter undated – Mrs L. Barnard. See file.
- B) Letter dated 16th November 2015 – Wealden District Council. Review of Danehill Conservation Area. Refer to Planning Committee.
- C) Email dated 20th November 2015 – Linda Graham, Wealdlink. See file.
- D) Letter dated 22nd November 2015 – Mrs J. Leuchars. See file. Clerk to respond.
- E) Letter dated 30th September 2015 – St. Peter & St. James Hospice. See file. Cllr. Critchley proposed a donation of £330.00. Seconded Cllr. M. Garman. Voting unanimous. Clerk to write highlighting one off larger donation.
- F) Email dated 23rd November 2015. Mr M. Wells. See attached (669A). Clerk to reply.

670. County and District Councillors' Reports

Cllr. Roy Galley – Report submitted. See attached (670A).

Cllr. P. Roundell Wealden District Council

Consultation regarding the Wealden Local Plan has begun, possible completion 2017.

Consultation regarding Conservation Area Plans has begun (see minute 669B).

Consultation regarding Electoral Borders (Wards) has begun. There will be a reduction in the number of district councillors.

Wealden District Council will increase their council tax by 1.94%. The police to increase their council tax by 3.47%. Wealden District Council retain 10% of the total council tax.

Cllr. Blake – What is the delay in reconstructing the damaged road at Northall Farm?

Cllr. Roundell – Lorry movements have not yet finished. Repairs to be paid for by Northall Farm and Browns contractors, possibly February 2016.

671. Reports from Parish Councillors

Cllr. A. Garman – Report submitted. See attached (671A).

Cllr. Blake – Report submitted. See attached (671B).

Cllr. McHattie – Report submitted. See attached (671C).

Cllr. Critchley – Report submitted. See attached (671D). Advised that the Clerk will opt out of the Automatic Enrolment Support (pension). See file. Proposed Danehill Parish Council to continue with PKF Littlejohn as external auditors and not Sector Led Body (NALC). See file. Seconded Cllr. Blake. Voting unanimous.

Cllr. Montagu – Report submitted. See attached (671E).

Cllr. M. Garman – Report submitted. See attached (671F). Cllrs. Critchley, M. Garman and Riminton to update Emergency Plan for future presentation to council. Cllr. Critchley has sent a Community Support Grant application form to Mr G. Love (Ashdown Weekend Committee). Await completion.

Cllr. Riminton – Report submitted. See attached (671G).

Cllr. Mockridge – Report submitted. See attached (671H).

M. Fishlock (Tree Warden) Nothing to report.

Meeting opened for the public to express a view or ask a question.

There were thirteen members of the public in attendance.

Public

Cllr. Critchley – Good to see so many members of the public in attendance – a credit to the Parishioner?

Mr. Boatfield – Question to Cllr. Roundell. Is there any news regarding the felling of trees near his property in Sandy Lane?

Cllr. Roundell – There is nothing Wealden District Council can do to rectify the situation. The Arboricultural and Biodiversity Department (under Planning and Environmental Services) acknowledge incorrect tree work was carried out and that Tree Protection Orders were not adhered to. A full review of TPO orders will be carried out.

Mr Stott – Following the recent AGM of the Chelwood Gate Village Hall Committee, has the Parish Council a problem with the running of the Hall?

Cllr. Critchley – Danehill Parish Council have no concerns over the operation of the Chelwood Gate Village Hall Committee. A representative from the Parish Council sits on the Chelwood Gate Village Hall Committee as an individual, not as the Council.

Ms Mitsfud - Are there any people in the parish considered as vulnerable, and if so, could they be registered as such as part of the Emergency Plan?

Cllr. Critchley – The Emergency Plan is currently being reviewed. Cllr. M. Garman will discuss with Ms Mitsfud after the meeting.

Mrs Day – Could the Parish Council pay for the Parish Magazine to go to all houses in the Parish?

Cllr. Critchley – Suggest organisers of the Parish Magazine contact the Council to discuss.

Mrs Day – Reports in the Parishioner talk of 70+ new houses for Danehill and Chelwood Gate. Where are they to be located?

Cllr. Critchley – Wealden District Council are required to meet housing needs for their area. The report states that Wealden District Council has suggested that there is scope for that number of dwellings within the parish, but no actual allocation or designated locations have been arrived at.

Cllr. Roundell – Wealden District Council are required to build 20,000 new homes by 2017 and are currently out to consultation over the details. Members of the public are encouraged to contribute.

Mr Stott – With regard to the proposed solar farm, are Aardvark an independent company or are they involved with the plan?

Cllr. Critchley - Aardvark are an independent company who are conducting a feasibility study on behalf of Danehill Parish Council into the possibility of a solar at Crawley Down to provide income to the parish.

Mrs Stott – How much money is in the Community Support Grant Fund?

Cllr. Critchley – The fund started with £36,000. The first award of £22,500 over a three year period was granted to support a youth worker. On completion of an application form, a working group is formed to investigate and review and report its finding to council.

672. Nursery Provisions Within Parish

Cllr. Critchley read email dated 24th November 2015 from Mr M. Wells. See attached (672A) and Chelwood Gate Nursery Community Support Grant Working Group report. See attached (672B).

Cllr. Blake – Why can't the nursery stay at Chelwood Gate Village Hall?

Cllr. Critchley – Although Ofsted are happy for the pop-up nursery to run in the village hall and recognise its success, the building itself does not comply with all their standards. Two examples of many, there are no toilet facilities for the disabled and there are no covers on the radiators. This alone stops the nursery from receiving an "Outstanding" status from Ofsted, something they aim to achieve.

Cllr. Blake – Could the Parish Council not pay for improvements to the Hall to satisfy Ofsted?

Cllr. Critchley - The nursery in the village hall will only ever be of a pop-up nature. As other activities are carried out in a hall, nursery equipment will always have to be cleared away to allow access for other users. The nursery would like to extend their hours, but cannot do so as the Hall must be available for others. There is also a relationship issue between the nursery and the Hall.

Cllr. Blake – Is there room at Danehill School?

Cllr. Critchley – The headmaster at Danehill School is aware of the problem, but has not offered space.

Cllr. Blake – Could Danehill School be extended to accommodate the nursery?

Cllr. Critchley – Theoretically, any one of the parish's existing buildings could be extended, but time is the problem. If the nursery do not have suitable completed accommodation, approved by Ofsted by July 2016, they will have to close. None of the parish's existing buildings comply to Ofsted's specifications. The cost of providing nursery services for the parish will come from the precept.

Cllr. McHattie – Would the nursery be happy with the proposed new building?

Cllr. Critchley – Yes, it would secure the future of the nursery and would offer a realistic chance of achieving an "Outstanding" status from Ofsted, which in turn will offer security for the future.

Cllr. Critchley – Propose that Danehill Parish Council apply for outline planning permission at the cost of £2,500.00 (funds from the Community Support Grant) for Jubilee Green. Seconded Cllr. Riminton. Voting unanimous.

673. Committee Liaison and Role of Clerk

Clr. Critchley – Danehill Parish Council comprises of nine councillors and the Clerk. Individual representatives from the parish council volunteer their interest and are elected by the council to sit on various other committees within the parish in a liaison capacity. In doing so, they become a committed member of that committee and will report back to the parish council. They do not individually act on behalf of the parish council but act on behalf of the committee they serve.

As defined in NALC Model Standing Orders section 15, sub section BX10 (adopted by Danehill Parish Council on 27th February 2014), the Clerk's role in communications is "... to receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary".

674. PCSO's and Community Support

Two new PCSO's have been allocated to the Parish of Danehill, Ian Priddy and Sarah Roberts – contact details to follow.

Cllr. Critchley – Attended a meeting last week along with the Clerk, with Nutley, Isfield, Fletching and Buxted parish councils to discuss the subject of community wardens. Sussex police have advised that PCSO's will possibly be moved from their current role, to be replaced with community wardens. Community wardens will be directly employed by parish councils at a salary of £28,000pa and will not be part of the police force in the way that PCSOs are. Their duties may include, low level anti social behaviour, engagement with schools and youth clubs etc., liaison with police using appropriate communications, co-ordination of emergency plans, monitor sites of risk, monitor condition of roads and pavements and check playground equipment. Trevor Leggo (SSALC) has advised that the idea is designed to allow the police more resources to concentrate on major crime. Will keep council advised of developments.

675. Finance

A) Cllr. Critchley – Localism and devolution is forcing parish councils to take more and more roles away from county and district councils. For example, community wardens (as discussed minute 674), community match funding (parish councils required to match fund certain highway projects), support for vulnerable people (to be withdrawn by county/district in 2018), health and wellbeing, support for local schools etc. At present increasing the precept is the only way to support these issues. Danehill having its own community warden and the possible solar farm at Crawley Down would be ways of generating income to relieve the precept. These are examples of what SALC/NALC are encouraging parish councils to do.

Draft precepts (A & B) for 2016/2017 as presented by the Finance Committee were discussed. See attached (675A). All councillors will review independently. Comments to Finance Committee by the end of the year. Finance Committee to sit in mid January.

B) Cllr. Blake proposed that an annual letter from the Chairman of Danehill Parish Council, be sent to all households in the parish, explaining the precept and intended spending for the following financial year. Seconded Cllr. Mockridge. Voting unanimous.

C) The Month End Movement report for October 2015 was approved and adopted. It was noted that the bank reconciliation as at 31st October 2015 was £96,437.44 and that it had been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chairman. The Month End Reconciliation report for October 2015 was approved and adopted and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chairman. The Balance Against Budget report October 2015 was approved and adopted. Attached (675B). Proposed Cllr. Blake. Seconded Cllr. M. Garman. Voting unanimous.

676. Date of Next Meeting

28th January 2016 – Danehill C.E. School

Meeting closed at 10.10pm

Chairman..... Date.....

Anyone requiring sight of any attachments to these minutes, please contact the Clerk 01825 740 731

