

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 25 May 2023 at 6.00pm at the Denham Village Hall, Denham UB9 5BN

Councillors:	Cllr S Williams (SW) – Chairman	# Cllr ME Hagon (MEH)
	# Cllr J Walsh (JW)	# Cllr A Head (AWH)
	# Cllr A Hans (AH)	Cllr S Sproul (SS)
	Cllr M Heath (MH)	Cllr B Keen (BK)
	Cllr W Davey (WD)	# Cllr E Austin (EA)
	# Cllr S Jefferys (SJ)	Cllr G Hollis (GH) (Unitary & DPC)
	Cllr M Goonesekera (MG)	# = Apologies received
	Cllr S Chhokar (SC) (Unitary)	## = Apologies not given
Clerk:	Derek Wilson MBE	

*Note: The Meeting was voice recorded by Clerk, **AGREED** by all present.*

Agenda No	Agenda Item
20230525/01	Welcome and Introductions Cllr SW welcomed residents to the meeting and introduced the new parish clerk to the meeting, along with announcing our new deputy clerk. Both are working well together in the office, and this is benefitting the parish to move forward on projects.
20230525/02	Chairman's Report - Cllr SW informed the meeting that when our Queen had died. She was privileged to read out the Proclamation on the Village Green. - The local 'In and Around' magazine has changed ownership and the format. This has resulted in DPC to no longer use this magazine and will be producing our own newsletter for circulation to Denham residents. - Continue to liaise with Align who are building the viaduct across the A412 and through the Colne Valley with regular meetings. - Relations have been forged with neighbouring parishes, including Iver, Gerrards Cross and Fulmer. We are looking at ways we can work with work with the Colne Valley Regional Park. - We support a variety of sports clubs within the parish, Denham Ladies in New Denham, Denham United who play at Martinsfield and Martin Baker Youth who are based in Knighton Way Lane. In addition, we support Denham Cricket Club, who are based at Way & Tillard ground. All Thriving and looking for new players. - We continue to press Bucks Council to obtain the old Tilehouse Centre to use as a Day Centre for health and wellbeing and assisting Dementia sufferers. - One of the biggest challenges over the past year was the Local Government Boundary Commission for England wanted to split up New Denham from the rest of the parish. It has recently been announced by the Commission that Denham will stay together and will join up with Gerrards Cross.
20230525/03	Communities Report - Denham Parish Council continue to be committed to providing all sections of the community support through local events. - We have had great pleasure in supporting residents, diagnosed with dementia and their carers, through provision of a monthly Memory Café held at St Marks Hall in Denham Green. This is a happy event with entertainment and lunch. The volunteers, Councillors and guests all look forward to sharing time together. This year Councillors and volunteers experienced training through Dementia Awareness Day on a specially adapted bus. - The Tea/Bingo/Dance afternoons held at the New Denham Community Hall continue to provide an afternoon of companionship and a chance to win at Bingo. These are always well attended, and the live music provides an opportunity for dance and laughter. - Music on the Green event is held five times a year throughout the Summer is a popular way for residents of all ages to have a leisurely afternoon with live music. These events are always well attended with picnics or a glass of alcohol providing a relaxed way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

	• Our usual Christmas events of Dressing the Tree on the Village Green and then having a Carol Singing event, with the local schools and Rainbows/Brownies is now very popular start to Christmas in Denham. • The Christmas lights around the whole of Denham bring a festive feel for all residents as they move through the five areas of Denham. Each year we add to the lights, and we have really established a fantastic show of festive cheer for all residents to enjoy. • During the past year we have had the joy of the late Queen Elizabeth II's Jubilee and the Coronation of King Charles III. For both events we supported many street and area celebrations throughout Denham with a grant to help their celebrations go well. We were delighted to have donated a Coronation mug to all pupils in both schools in Denham. • We also recognized the sad passing of Queen Elizabeth II by a book of condolence for all residents to record their personal messages and a public proclamation given on the Denham Village Green. • For Remembrance Sunday we placed poppies on our lampposts and silhouettes in the five settlements throughout Denham and laid a wreath at the memorial service held at St. Mary's Church. • It has been a very busy year and Denham Parish Council are proud of their involvement with the local community. Councillors work hard and we appreciate the volunteers who work alongside us in making our events happen. We will continue to work hard for the Community throughout the coming year. If you would like to add your name to our list of volunteers that will be appreciated.
20230525/ 04	Services Report • Cllr MH informed the meeting about clarifying some of the responsibilities of the Services committee. Denham Parish Council are not responsible for maintenance of potholes, grass cutting and lighting along major roads. These, together with some 'rights of way' paths, are the responsibility of Bucks Council. Our responsibilities are mainly for verge maintenance along minor roads, in play/gym areas and green spaces. • Our latest grass cut was unsatisfactory, and you will be pleased to hear that on Saturday it will be re-cut. • Councils are constantly being encouraged to leave verges unattended to provide a wildlife corridor, and also, where possible, to create meadows. We have been trialling patches of wildflowers with some positive results and hope to expand on this and added benches in some areas to provide a recreational facility. • Services work completed; ➢ Refurbished Denham Green Play area and received very positive feedback. ➢ In the Conservation area, Denham Village Garage has been re-roofed, and the guttering attended to. ➢ The Village Green has been tended to and reseeded in places. ➢ The post and rail fencing alongside the Misbourne has been replaced. ➢ Boundary gate installed in Higher Denham. ➢ In Tilehouse Lane, MVAS has been installed. ➢ In James Martin Close, Denham Green, Knighton Way Lane, New Denham, and Tatling End recreation grounds, trees have been trimmed and reduced, along with the hedgerows being flailed. ➢ Process of restoring benches in all areas and installing paving for underfoot when sitting down. ➢ Noticeboards are currently being refurbished. ➢ Street lighting along minor roads has been thoroughly checked and the faults remedied apart from a couple awaiting parts. ➢ All play and gym equipment has had their annual check by RoSPA, no faults outstanding. ➢ In New Denham, the allotment committee have done considerable maintenance tasks and are in the process of installing a water capture facility. ➢ In Martinsfield, Denham United FC won promotion last year and won their league this year. • Services items in progress; ➢ A412 footpath flooding issue between Village Road and Denham Green. ➢ Oxford Road issue with littering and lack of street cleaning. Denham Parish is going to organize a litter-picking event and I urge you to attend and take part in it.

	➤ Bucks will not facilitate any more bins, so will need to investigate costs. ➤ Re-planting is needed along the North Orbital verge, which was decimated when they installed a new footpath. ➤ Investigating ideas to celebrate 130 years of Denham Parish Council being given royal assent in March 2024. ➤ Graffiti problem ➤ Green Corridor and Wildflowers.
20230525/05	Finance Report • We continue to carry out detailed reviews of our budget requirements for the next three years, paying particular attention to 'ear marking reserves' for items that regularly need funding. As an example equipment in our play areas will probably need renewing after they have been in situ 20-25 years, in order that we don't have a large cost in one year, we save a little each year towards the renewal bill by 'ear marking' that money in our reserves. This practice can make our reserves look high but it is monies that are accounted for, as well as having monies available for regular maintenance and improvement once the facilities have been established. • We maintain stringent controls are in place and our internal auditors came in last week, followed by an external audit in a couple of weeks' time. • A continued reduction in funds and level of services from Unitary, has put pressure on the Parish Council to address more queries, complaints and requests coming in from residents. We have also been continually under pressure to respond to a large number of consultations (e.g. Neighbourhood plans) and the increased workloads being handled by our committees has put extra pressure on our office staff. We have managed this with excellent support from all councillors and the increased effort of our staff. • Denham Parish Council continues to ensure that it provides the best possible service to its residents at an affordable price. • We continue to update our play areas and recreational facilities to encourage residents across the Parish to become more active. • We are prioritizing more support, activities and social events for those residents less able to socialize and those who are living on their own without an established family network such as Tea/Bingo events, memory café and music on the green. • We have a lot to achieve setting ourselves high targets and we are doing our utmost on behalf of the community to push ahead with these projects. • Denham Parish Council continues to have one of the lowest precepts in South Bucks, despite a small increase this year. I think you will agree that the amounts involved are very small compared to the wide range of work that is carried out by the parish.
20230525/06	Planning Report • We are consultees regarding planning applications that have been submitted and robustly respond on a regular basis. • A working party has been set-up to look at sites within Denham Parish, when Bucks Council called for Brownfield sites for their Local Plan. We sent in areas which Denham Parish Council felt could accommodate residential, commercial and leisure buildings. • We monitor on a regular basis enforcement that Bucks Council have notified us about and continue to hold them to account.
20230525/07	Unitary Authority Councillors Reports • Cllr GH referred to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, redrawing the boundaries for the elections in 2025. Denham Parish and Gerrards Cross are of similar size, despite Denham covering five separate areas and they have recommended that we join them. This avoids the separation of New Denham being transferred to Iwer parish. • Cllr GH informed the meeting about Bucks Council's budget per annum is £1.2bn, 65% going towards Adult social care and Children Services, but they have been able to balance the budget for this year. • Roads have been a particular issue this year with three times the number of potholes and they have done temporary fixes and now have a machine that repairs potholes. Balfour Beatty (new Highways contractor) have now come in to assist in the road maintenance programme. • Fly-tipping hotspots have been reported through Fix My Street. 70% are individuals from outside the area dumping their rubbish within the local area. Where possible enforcement action is being taken.

	• Planning – Deputy Chairman of the planning committee – Reviewing sites in the southern part of Bucks site, awaiting for the levelling up bill to come into force, a local plan can be written up. Currently we are subject to the local government act for the NPPF and NPPG, which are very broad documents to determine whether planning permission should be granted. • Enforcement is not a compulsory service but the number of cases have doubled, under funded and under staffed and therefore it can be only be done through negotiation as identified under the Town and Country Planning Act. Bucks is the fifth highest enforcement cases in the Country. • Cost of living crisis is affecting people in Bucks with higher heating bills, debts and increase use of the foodbank. • Cllr SC referred to the boundary review saying that it is a big achievement in persuading the LG BCE to change their minds from their initial ideas of trying to separate New Denham from Denham Parish Council. • Cllr SC is the Chairman of the Community Board that covers 8 parishes including Denham, Gerrards Cross, Chalfonts, Fulmer, Seer Green and informed the meeting about the purpose of the community board to assist local initiatives. • The Community Board is taking up issues across other parishes that matter, such as the potential of a day care centre in Denham and getting local parish support, working with Cllr JW to push this idea with Bucks for community benefit. • Engagement event at Gerrards Cross Community Centre on 9 June 2023 to discuss Sustainability and also to present 'Proud of Bucks award' at this same meeting. • The community board deals with wellbeing, environment, highways, and community safety. Liz Charter is the manager and works with parish clerks. The first instance they should contact the parish clerk before contacting Liz Charter.
	Open Forum • Denham Fayre does not come under the remit of the parish council and is being run by separate committee run by the local church. Christof is the person to contact for this potential event. • Party in the park – Gerrards Cross 1st July 2023 • Chalfont St Peter – Feast of St Peter 24th June 2023 Denham History project, Colne Valley Trust and the Fire Authority were present for residents to speak with after the meeting concludes. Cllr SW referred to upcoming events that are listed on the reverse side of tonight's flyer for future information.
	Meeting concluded at 6.55 pm

Signed: Derek Wilson – Executive Clerk & RFO

Date: 31 May 2023