

Minutes of Denstone Parish Council Meeting 12th February 2024

1. Cllr J Mountney (Vice Chair), Cllr B Wright, Cllr M Flower, Cllr M Shermer, Cllr E Edmonds, Cllr Stratton, Cllr C Naylor and Julie Sadler (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllr Turner, Cllr Ratcliffe and Borough Councillor Steve Sankey (ESBC)

There were 7 Members of the village at the meeting.

2. **The Minutes of the Meeting held 8th January 2024** – The clerk informed the meeting that a slight error had been made on the minutes that went on the notice board item 12C stated RJS and it should have been RTS this has now been rectified. The minutes were approved and agreed by all as a true record of the meeting. They were signed and dated by Cllr Mountney.

3. **To receive declarations of interest** - None

4. **Adjournment for public participation**

- a. Connect Fibre – Mary Freeland from Connect Fibre informed the meeting that Connect Fibre were a full fibre network operator and broadband provider offering ‘faster, fairer, flawless’ broadband to its customers. They had recently been awarded a £16.5 million government contract to upgrade thousands of homes and businesses in North East Staffordshire. She stated that they are working closely with SCC and will also be contacting the Borough Councillors’. She confirmed that they would be holding meetings in the Village Hall in the near future for people in Denstone to attend should they wish to obtain more information. Cllr Mountney thanked Mary Freeland for attending.

5. **Councillors Responsibilities** – it was agreed that Cllr Naylor would take over the responsibilities of the website from Cllr Flower and Cllr Mountney. This was the only change recorded. Clerk to update the responsibilities spreadsheet accordingly and send to all councillors. **Action Clerk**

6. **Matters Arising/Clerk’s report**

- a. Correspondence Received

- I. The clerk informed the meeting that she had received an email from the owner of Stone Cottage on College Road regarding the blocked drain and the possible leak outside the property. Souths Staffs Water have been out and confirmed that there is not a leak but the water is coming from a natural spring. Therefore, they will not be taking any further action. The main problem is with the gully outside the property which is blocked. This has been reported to SCC on several occasions but no action has been taken. The clerk has contacted RTS and asked if they would clear the drains and is waiting for confirmation. Clerk to chase. **Action Clerk**
 - II. License for Play area between Denstone PC and Tom Boden Memorial Sports Trust. This was agreed by all and signed by Cllr Mountney. Both copies were given back to Cllr Flower to take to the TBMST to be signed and one copy returned to the clerk. **Action Cllr Flower.**
 - III. Cleaning the Compost Bin – It was agreed by all that the Parish Council would contribute £60 towards the cost of cleaning the bin.
- b. Fly tipping – The clerk informed the meeting that a member of the village regularly advises her of fly tipping in the village as and when it happens. It was agreed that a letter of thanks would be sent to the parishioner. It was also suggested that the clerk should ask the member of the village if possible to obtain any details on the rubbish so that the ESBC can trace the offenders. **Action Clerk**
 - c. Best Kept Village – it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would not lead on this, however, should another member of village wish to take this forward themselves, could they please contact the clerk on js.denstonepc@gmail.com for more information?
 - d. Carved Tree – The clerk informed the councillors that she had received confirmation from the tree artist of the cost to restore the tree. However, it was agreed that Cllr Flower would talk to a member of the Village first and ask him to look at the tree. **Action Cllr Flower**

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- e. Bus Service – The clerk confirmed that she had received confirmation from Cllr Sankey that the community transport service only applies to areas that don't have a commercial service. However, he did suggest that we ask the County Council just to see. **Action Clerk**
- f. Village Volunteers – The clerk confirmed that the poster had now been put on the notice boards in the village. Clerk to put on the website and Denstone Matters Facebook page. **Action Clerk.**

7. Planning (Permitted & Refused are decisions by ESBC) – Cllr Turner

- a. Bank House Farm appeal – the clerk informed the meeting that there was nothing further to report at this stage. Clerk to continue to chase. **Action Clerk**
- b. NP update – Cllr Shermer confirmed that we are now awaiting the outcome from the next stage of the process.

8. Highways

- a. Feasibility Study –Cllr Shermer confirmed that at this time there was nothing further to report but hopefully we would know more before the end of this financial year. **Action Cllr Shermer**
- b. College Meeting – Cllr Shermer confirmed that she attended a meeting with Cllr Edmonds and the Head of Denstone College on 30th January. Prior to the meeting a traffic count was done and Cllr Shermer expressed sincere thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to the members of the village who gave up their time to do this.
The count showed that the number of cars through the village is stabilising, especially as the Head continues to promote “Bus or Board.” The bus routes are constantly monitored and assessed with the aim of reducing the number of cars. Two of the bus routes have been merged with the use of a double decker. The Head will continue to add a reminder to parents in her newsletter regarding sensible speed on the routes through the village.
- c. Speeding on B5031 – The clerk confirmed that she contacted Staffordshire Road Safety Group and there was no funding available towards the cost of SIDS. Cllr Shermer confirmed that Denstone College could not provide any funding at this time for the SIDS though the college do continue to support the Parish Council and the village in a number of other ways. Cllr Mountney confirmed that she had not heard anything regarding funding from Alton Towers or Denstone Farm shop but she assured the meeting that she would chase this and report back at the next meeting. The clerk did, however, receive a reply from the SCC regarding data for the B5031. SCC confirmed that as far as they were aware there was no current data, however if the Parish Council wished they could pay for a 7 day count to be carried out. It was agreed that the clerk would ascertain if this information included speed or just a count of the number of vehicles. **Action Clerk and Cllr Mountney.**

9. Liaison

- a. Village Hall – Cllr Stratton updated the meeting on what has been happening at the Village Hall. She confirmed that there is to be a play The Farm Boy on the 23.3.24 £10 a ticket and there are still some seats available. They are also looking at a Race Night and a Whist Drive event. Details to be advertised when dates have been agreed.

10. Play Area – Cllr Flower

- a. Play area inspection report – Cllr Flower confirmed that the annual inspection report was discussed at the TBMST meeting. They agreed that as there are no high risk items on the report the actions mentioned on the report could be dealt with when the weather is better. This was totally agreed by the Parish Council.

11. Miscellaneous

- a. Bus Shelter – the clerk informed the meeting that she had contacted the insurance company, they needed the address of the bus shelter and some photos. Cllr Naylor agreed to send the photos to the clerk and the clerk will forward the photos with the address to Zurich. **Action Cllr Naylor and Clerk**
- b. War Memorial – Cllr Edmonds confirmed that there is nothing further to update at this time.

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- c. Denstone Diary – Cllr Edmonds confirmed that Sue Edmonds would no longer be producing the Denstone Diary. However, if anyone else in the village would like to take it over then please contact the clerk as Sue would be more than happy to give advice. Cllr Mountney asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Sue for all her work on the Denstone Diary in the past.
- d. Village Flowers – Councillor Edmonds confirmed that Sue would be happy to continue with the village flowers this year. However, one of the flower beds is damaged. Cllr Shermer said she would ask a member of the village to help with mending the flower bed. Cllr Mountney also agreed to ask Gary Plant if he would like to contribute again this year to the flowers. **Action Cllr Shermer and Cllr Mountney**

12. Finance

- a. Vat return – the clerk confirmed that she had submitted the VAT claim for £1885.62.

13. Payments - To approve the following payments:

Cllr Mountney went through the payments individually. The payments were Proposed by Cllr Edmonds and seconded by Cllr Stratton. All payments would be processed online by Cllr Shermer and Cllr Flower. All invoices would be signed and would be returned to the clerk once actioned.

- a. Lascombe Consulting – Website - pay for January 2024 = £25.00 [LGA 1972 s142 & 144]
- b. Clerk's pay for January 2024 (Made by Standing Order) = £494.32 [LGA 1972 s112]
- c. Clerks expenses January 2024 - £5.40
- d. J Etherington – Cleaning Village Hall toilets January 2024= £50
- e. N Power – Electricity – January 2024 £57.60
- f. Stuart Smith Lengthsman – January 2024 £62.29 - £32.00 = £30.29
- g. Electricity Highways - £128.56
- h. Tom Boden Memorial Sports Trust License £50 and Cleaning of Bin £60 total = £110.00

items for Future Agenda

1. It was requested that Potholes would be placed back on the agenda
2. Planning application on Narrow Lane - Enforcement

Date of next meeting: Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall Denstone.