

# DUNWICH PARISH MEETING



## Draft Minutes of Dunwich Parish Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014

### 1. **Welcome and apologies for absence:**

Present: Electors: S. Strickland (Chairman), G. Abell (Treasurer), J. Zarins (Vice-chairman) A. Abell, J. Cary, D & H Cook, J. Hamilton, P. Labat, J. Perry, J. Sharp, R. Smith, R. Walter, J & M Whitby, M & B White.

Visitors: Cllr. B. Slater (SCDC), Cllr M. Gower (SCC), N. Mayo (Dunwich Town Trust, DTT), Mark Johnson (Environment Agency).

Apologies: C & M Barnett, G. Baverstock, M. Clark, C & L Clay, S. Labat, N & S Malkin, E. McCormick, K. Maunder, M & C Palmer, J & J Salusbury, S. Taylor, C. Weatherby.

### 2. **Minutes of the Parish Meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> October 2013:**

Minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> October were proposed (A. Abell), seconded (B. White) and approved *nem. con.*

### 3. **Matters arising from the Minutes not otherwise on the agenda:**

Broadband update. Contingency funding had now been found. Broadband rollout was intended to go to 97% of county households, (previously 90%), probably but not certainly including Dunwich. The timetable had still not been finalised; but rollout should be by 2015.

### 4. **Treasurer's Report:**

The current balance was £2,586.34.

Annual Precept. The budget was circulated. J. Cary had conducted an internal audit. Minor changes for 2014/15 had led the Treasurer to recommend a precept of £1,000 for the next year. This was proposed (R. Walter), seconded (D. Cook) and approved *nem. con.*

War Memorial. DPM agreed *nem. con.* to pay £60 towards a contribution for work to refurbish the War Memorial. This was appropriate as 2014 was the centenary year of the start of WWI.

Risk Analysis: This was required by the audit process and set out the financial risks to DPM. The internal auditor was content, and the analysis was approved without objection.

### 5. **Amenity Report:**

Hawthorn Trees, St James Street: Responsibility for the trees in question was unclear and might lie with the owner of Duncan's Field, the owner of one or other property, or the Highways Department of the County Council. It was reported that Duncan's, the builders, had indicated that they would meet DPM wishes in this respect. A proposal had been submitted in writing by C. Barnett that "DPM request our Chairman to take all necessary steps on amenity grounds for the village, to implement the healthy continuance of the remaining hawthorn trees by their cutting back hard to encourage rejuvenation and the removal of ivy encrustation as recommended by Mr Newton. The work to be carried out by a qualified tree surgeon". The proposal was seconded (J. Cary) and approved *nem. con.* **Action: Chairman to write asking Duncan's to cut back the hawthorn trees as proposed.**

Ditch clearance at Deering Bridge: SCC had been alerted and was to survey the debris after the flood. Technically this was the landowner's responsibility; but in this case, the primary purpose of the ditch was road drainage, so the Council might be prepared to deal with the issue.

6. **Coastal defence and recent floods:**

Recent floods: Mark Johnson represented the **Environment Agency** for the area from NW Norfolk to Thames Estuary. He noted that we lived in a 'dynamic' environment; and there was always some degree of risk. The recent surge had been big but less severe than in 1953 in this area. Long term monitoring and warning mechanisms were now much improved. EA continued to learn with each flooding event; and 'lessons learned' findings would be reported in due course. Flood-boards in homes had been generally effective. The sewerage pumping station had been flooded and slightly damaged; but Anglian Water had acted quickly to avoid disruption. It was fortunate that a tidal surge could not coincide exactly with a high tide; but the reasons were unclear. The shingle bank had now reformed naturally. The breach had pushed shingle perhaps 100-200 metres into the marsh. The beach and defensive structures at the cliff toe had appeared unaffected. After a constructive and informative discussion, DPM expressed fulsome thanks to Mr Johnson for his attendance.

Coastal defence demonstration project: Maintaining the beach defence project at the cliff toe was now a joint responsibility of Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council until the project's end in 2017. WDC and SCDC had written to consult stakeholders on proposals to repair any damage and to continue monitoring until 2017, subject to proof of failure. DPM agreed without a vote to accept the recommendations proposed but would also wish to see the related annual monitoring reports.

7. **Traffic Management:**

Dunwich Dynamo: G. Abell had met SCC traffic manager, David Chenery, re the Dunwich Dynamo to discuss ways to manage congestion by coaches and lorries collecting cyclists. A one-way system was proposed from Westleton into Dunwich then out towards Five Finger Post, sending heavy traffic up towards Blythburgh to re-join the A12. This would be subject to SCC's signage, and stewards at Beach Road. After some discussion, it was suggested that DPM approach SCC to quantify costs, and in parallel enter discussion with Dunwich Dynamo on funding to cover such costs. One option might be to charge £50 per large vehicle. **Action: G. Abell to take forward discussions as needed.**

Pigs: J. Zarins had written to SCC's Richard Collen – East Area Technician – and Derek Oldham - East Area Highway Manager – regarding excessive floods on the Dunwich road from Five Finger Post towards the village, the road from St Helena to the Westleton Road, and the roads towards the A12 through Hinton. Wet weather had added to run-off from pig fields. Derek Oldham had then met the landowner, the tenant farmer, and representatives from the Environment Agency and from Natural England. NE had agreed to re-open one of the 'grips' connected to a soak-away ditch on the Dunwich Road, and to re-open a ditch system. The pigs had now been removed from that field, which would be returned to cultivation. The landowner had agreed regularly to 'brush' the roads of silt/mud/debris once the appropriate machinery had been delivered. There would also be work on roads between Hinton and the A12. More permanent, extensive works would be required for a long-term solution including an extensive soak-away ditch system, which would require various permissions, possibly including planning permission, as it would affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

8. **Planning Report:**

No outstanding applications since the last meeting.

New applications: Plot 3 on Duncan's Field: amendment to existing permission to add a small rear extension. This awaited decision, and there were no known objections. Three Tree applications: (all following December gales): Old Woodyard, Friars Gate, and Gainsborough House.

9. **Electoral Register:** SCDC had informed the Chairman that he was no longer entitled to receive a copy of the Electoral Register on the grounds that the Council had in the past misinterpreted the relevant legislation. Cllr. B. Slater pointed out that the Chairman would be able to view the electoral

register at the council offices – under supervision – and be entitled to make notes. After some discussion, the Chairman agreed to write to Thérèse Coffey MP seeking legislative action to address this problem. He would copy the letter to Brandon Lewis MP who, as Minister responsible, had spoken on the unique nature of a parish meeting where there is no parish council in the committee stage of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

**10. Other business:**

i) Cllr. B. Slater informed the meeting of the **Community Enabling Fund**. Some £220,000 was divided between council members to spend in their own areas, approximating £1,000 per community.

Individuals, or groups, with an idea or plan – preferably new - for a project with tangible community benefits were encouraged to apply directly to Cllr. B Slater at SCDC.

ii) An activity known as ‘dogging’, which could amount to offensively indecent behaviour in public, had been reported in and around Dunwich Forest during hours of darkness but occasionally also in day-time. Social media had apparently been used to promote this activity for several years. **Action:**

**Chairman to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner with a copy to Thérèse Coffey MP.**

iii) Police Report. Recorded crime in the Dunwich Parish from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014 was: 1 criminal damage; 2 burglary other buildings; 1 theft-other; 1 common assault; 1 harassment. Current SNT priorities were parking enforcement in Saxmundham High Street and speeding enforcement at Easton near Framlingham.

iv) St James Church PCC was applying for Lottery funds to replace the church roof. Special roof tiles were to be ordered: if any members of DPM also required ‘Dunwich style’ roofing tiles, they might wish to order them through the PCC and so to contact A. Abell at The Old Forge, St James Street.

v) Westleton Shop. It was reported that £2,500 had been collected as a retirement gift for the Lincolns.

vi) Two stone Cairns had been constructed for collecting donations from visitors at Greyfriars Priory. The lime mortar used was slow to set at this time of year and the covered cairns had been accidentally damaged by people going under the ropes and removing the waterproof covers. The Greyfriars Trust had accordingly asked the DPM to appeal for patience from persons enthusiastic to either see the Cairns or put money in them.

**Next DPM: AGM Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 7.30 pm.**

**The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.**

**Signed as a correct record**

**Chairman. Date**