

**Minutes of the meeting of Desborough Town Council
held on Thursday 18 April 2019**

Councillors present: G Holmes (Chairman), C Archer, L Burnham, S Draycott, I James, B Keys, B McElhinney, J Read, P Sawford, and S Stroud.

Also present: County Councillor A Matthews, PS 782 R Offord, G Thomson (Town Clerk), and 14 members of the community.

276./18 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and reported that Councillors had attended a group training session which had been useful, that the Borough Council was conducting a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places, that Number 76 was reopening under new management, and that there was an appeal for volunteers to act as marshals for the carnival.

277./18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Taylor.

RESOLVED that:-

the apologies be noted.

278./18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Burnham, Holmes, and McElhinney declared an interest in minute 290./18 "To consider the daffodil planting scheme for 2019".

279./18 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensation were made.

280./18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2019 had been previously circulated and it was

RESOLVED that:-

the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

281./18 TO CONSIDER CO-OPTING A COUNCILLOR TO FILL THE VACANCY

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The vacancy for a Councillor was advertised and three people put themselves forward for co-option before the closing date. The Council will follow the procedure in the "Casual Vacancies and Co-Options Policy and Procedure" and will vote by show of hands. The Council will hear from the three candidates (in alphabetical order) for up to four minutes each, and will proceed immediately to vote. At the meeting, there will be no discussion with candidates, or between Councillors on this matter. The inability of any candidate to attend the meeting cannot be held against them, their words can be read (if submitted in time) and they will still be part of the voting process.

The candidates are (in alphabetical order) Kevin O'Brien, Joanne Watson, Alan Window. In order to be co-opted, a candidate must secure a majority of the votes of Councillors present and voting. If no candidate secures a majority (50% + 1) then the lowest polling candidate is excluded and the vote retaken. Should there still not be a majority then the Council cannot co-opt and the process will be re-run at the May meeting, with nominations reopening on Friday 19 April 2019.

Candidates not co-opted may put themselves forward again.

The Council is REQUESTED to consider the three candidates and vote on co-opting one as a Councillor.

In accordance with the Council's policy, each candidate gave a presentation and the Council voted immediately thereafter.

RESOLVED that:-

Mrs Jo Watson be co-opted as a Councillor.

282./18 TO HEAR REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public spoke about parking restrictions in Pioneer Avenue which had been the subject of a petition some years previously for the lines to be repainted which had still not happened. He added that Highways at Brixworth failed to respond to emails, and that although there were some problems caused by workday parking, he thought that there was plenty of parking space on Pioneer Avenue.

A member of the public spoke about the Neighbourhood Plan and asked why the former Neighbourhood Plan draft had been dropped. Cllr Sawford explained that whilst there was

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much in the draft which was still relevant a considerable amount of the plan had been superseded by events. He added that the draft needed to be reviewed and revised.

A member of the public spoke about traffic on Rothwell Road which she said was appearing to come from Rothwell and asked what the Council was doing about it. Cllr Burnham stated that Councillors remained involved with the Rothwell North Working Party and that the latest construction plan had been rejected.

283./18 TO CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING PARTY AND DETERMINE ACTION

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party are attached at Report No. 1. The Council is REQUESTED to accept the report and consider the recommendations of the Working Party as follows:

- a) to determine that it is still appropriate for Desborough to have a Neighbourhood Plan;*
- b) to aim to have the Plan as far advanced as possible before local government reorganisation in the County;*
- c) to employ a good, locally experienced, specialist Neighbourhood Planning consultant to review the available documentation and provide an appropriate framework draft Plan, with up-to-date references to national, regional, and local policies to which the views and policies from the town can be added; and,*
- d) to determine that any future group established to work on the Plan should provide for the inclusion of business and industry, and groups not traditionally represented.*

RESOLVED that:-

- i) it is still appropriate for Desborough to have a Neighbourhood Plan;**
- ii) the Plan should be as far advanced as possible before local government reorganisation in the County;**
- iii) a good, locally experienced, specialist Neighbourhood Planning consultant be engaged to review the available documentation and provide an appropriate framework draft Plan, with up-to-date references to national, regional, and local policies to which the views and policies from the town can be added;**
- iv) any future group established to work on the Plan should provide for the inclusion of business and industry, and groups not traditionally represented; and,**
- v) the report be otherwise accepted and adopted.**

284./18 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The arena of social media is an emerging and developing area of law for Councils. Although Desborough Town Council does not use social media (other than its own website), members of the community and some of those directly connected with the Council do. The draft policy attached at Appendix A sets out the rules for use of social media on behalf of, or in relation to, activities of the Council.

The Council is RECOMMENDED to consider and approve the policy.

RESOLVED that:-

the recommendation be accepted.

285./18 ANTI-BRIBERY, ANTI-FRAUD, AND ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

As part of the Council's suite of policies and procedures it is advisable to have a clear statement and strategy relating to bribery, fraud, and corruption. These will have most relevance when the Council engages with developers (in relation to planning matters), with contractors and service providers (where the Council is the client or potential client). A draft "Anti-bribery policy statement and Anti-fraud and corruption strategy" is set out at Appendix B. It should be noted, that the draft policy refers to provisions in the Grievance Procedure Policy and also to guidance on Gifts and Hospitality which are not yet in place but will be presented to the next meeting.

The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve the statement and strategy.

RESOLVED that:-

the recommendation be accepted.

286./18 MEETINGS WITH DEVELOPERS POLICY

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The Council has exercised its right to be consulted on planning matters. As such, the Council's views are heard by the Planning Authority but the Town Council does not make decisions on

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applications. The Planning Authority makes decisions having heard the views of applicants, consultees, and views of members of the community.

The Council wishes to encourage appropriate sustainable and safe development, whilst at the same time attempting to preserve and protect the environment and character of Desborough; having due regard to the duties of the Town Council in relation to conserving biodiversity and the prevention of crime and disorder. Developers may wish to seek the Council's views and those of the local community before applications are submitted, after submission but before consideration by the Planning Authority, or before determination of appeal against refusal. There is a real risk that members of the community may misunderstand any contact between developers and the Council as a whole, or individual or groups of Councillors, or even Officers of the Council, especially where contact is not in the public gaze. However, if the contact is carefully managed and details are recorded then there can be benefits to all, without tying the Council to supporting or otherwise any application or proposal (predetermination).

A draft "Meetings with Developers Policy" has been proposed (as attached at Appendix C) in order to protect the Council and provide the openness and transparency for which the Council strives.

The Council is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the statement and strategy.

RESOLVED that:-

the recommendation be accepted.

287./18 THE CONSIDER, AND IF SO RESOLVED, TO APPROVE INVESTMENT IN THE CCLA PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

In accordance with the decision at the last meeting, accounts are being opened with Unity Trust Bank. Once opened, the Council's day to day banking will transfer from Barclays.

As highlighted at the last meeting, the investigations into the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund have taken place. CCLA (Churches, Charities & Local Authorities) is a mutually owned firm of investment managers, owned by LAMIT (Local Authorities Mutual Investment Trust), the Church of England (Central Board of Finance) Investment Fund and the Charities (COIF) Investment Fund. The Fund is managed on a conservative basis (beyond the requirements of AAA-rating), only using plain cash products with well-rated banks: call; notice; term and certificates of deposit: the type of products that Councils will usually use. There is no exposure to the stock market, derivatives, other funds or asset backed securities. It is a UK FCA Qualifying Money Market Fund managed by CCLA that offers the substantial benefits of cooperation between public sector bodies. The rate of interest fluctuates but is around 0.7%. A fact sheet is attached as Appendix D. The Council's Financial and Treasury Management Strategy and Reserves Policy defines the Council's investment priorities as:-

- the security of its reserves; and,*
- the adequate liquidity of its investments; and,*
- the return on investment (the Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity).*

The Responsible Financial Officer considers that these priorities are met in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. The Council is REQUESTED to consider transferring reserves to the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

RESOLVED that:-

the RFO be authorised to deposit reserves in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund as set out in the Financial and Treasury Management Strategy and Reserves Policy with signatories as previously authorised for other accounts.

288./18 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE HARBOROUGH ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

Members will be aware of the recent traffic accident on Harborough Road. Once the cause of the incident is fully established, it is suggested that the Council works with the relevant agencies to find a solution. That might mean working with developers, the Planning Authority, and the County Council to seek railings / a crossing / traffic lights / crossing patrol / road markings / traffic calming, or whatever might be the solution to the cause. The Council is REQUESTED to consider the matter in the light of any further information received.

It was noted that the cause of the recent accident was still not entirely clear but that the bridge was a continual source of concern. It was suggested that the much vaunted footbridge had not been constructed.

It was suggested that NCC be requested to determine how the bridge could be made safer, possibly with railings at the edge of the footpath.

County Councillor Matthews stated that safety at the bridge was on the County Council's contractors' wish list. He reported that an indicative price for a Pelican Crossing was £120,000

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and for a Zebra crossing about £35,000 but that there was an almost nil chance of these happening in the near future. He expressed a view that road narrowing measures were unlikely on the bridge.

It was reported that the Northamptonshire Police Fire and Crime Commissioner had opened three funds to which community groups, charities, and voluntary organisations could bid. It was also noted that the feasibility study into traffic calming and management produced by NCC could be reviewed.

A member of the public reported that a great deal of traffic from Great Bear appeared to be using Desborough roads as a preferred route after midnight causing disturbance to residents.

RESOLVED that:-

- i) an engineer from NCC be requested to visit the site to determine how the bridge could be made safer, possibly with railings at the edge of the footpath;
- ii) the County Council's feasibility study be reviewed;
- iii) the Town Clerk be requested to investigate the likelihood of the footbridge being provided; and,
- iv) the Town Clerk be requested to contact Great Bear to discuss the late night vehicle movements.

Cllr Keys left the meeting at this point.

289./18 TO CONSIDER THE PLANNING AND LICENSING REPORT

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

In accordance with the views expressed by Councillors, any comments which were uncontentious and uncontested were submitted to the relevant authority as set out in the report attached at Appendix E. The Council is REQUESTED to consider any comment on any of the applications listed.

RESOLVED that:-

the information contained in the report be noted.

290./18 TO CONSIDER THE DAFFODIL PLANTING SCHEME FOR 2019

Councillors Burnham, Holmes and McElhinney having declared an interest in this item, left the room and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair took the Chair.

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

In previous years, Desborough in Bloom has planted daffodil bulbs in the grass verges in and around the town. Since the scheme began, 51,000 bulbs have been planted enhancing the environment and biodiversity. A request has been received for the scheme to continue in November 2019. In order for the scheme to comply with the law, it is necessary to have consent from frontages and landowners, and it is also necessary to have a licence from the Highway Authority. The Council has been advised that written permission from the residents whose property abuts the planting site has been received, together with the consent of the Borough Council, and the Fire Service (as appropriate).

The proposed planting locations are:-

Rothwell Road: In front of nos. 87 & 89. Also, after no.134, in the grass verge to the left of the track, by the Clearway for 3/4 mile sign.

High Street: In front of Hazeland House to the left of the footpath leading to the entrance. This is KBC land and permission has been obtained from them.

Station Road: Two small areas of grass to the right hand side entrance to the Co-op Supermarket.

Rushton Road: In front of the Fire Station.

In front of nos: 231, 249, 251, 253, 255

The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve the scheme and apply to the County Council for a licence in accordance with Section 142 Highways Act 1980.

RESOLVED that:-

the recommendation be accepted.

Councillors Burnham, Holmes and McElhinney returned to the meeting at this point.

291./18 TO CONSIDER THE LOCATION OF A BENCH

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

Councillors may remember that £549 was awarded from the County Council's "Empowering Councillors & Communities Scheme for "the purchase & installation of roadside seat, adjacent to a bus stop, on one of the principal residential roads in Desborough". The location originally

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proposed (Dunkirk Avenue) was deemed unsuitable and investigations into alternative locations have taken place and a possible location has been identified. The suggestion is to locate a seat in the bus stop on Braybrooke Road at the corner of the football ground. Any decision to pursue this, or other, location would be subject to consultation with neighbours, and the County Council's Highways department.

The Council is REQUESTED to consider the if this location is suitable and if so to authorise consultation as appropriate.

County Councillor Matthews stated that the grant was specifically for a seat on Dunkirk Avenue and that the County Council's Head of Democratic Services had given him very strong advice that if the money was not used for a seat on Dunkirk Avenue then the money should be returned. The Town Clerk confirmed that the original approved application in County Cllr Matthews' own hand was not site specific but was for "the purchase & installation of roadside seat, adjacent to a bus stop, on one of the principal residential roads in Desborough" with which the Braybrooke Road suggestion was compliant, and he drew Councillors attention to the printed copies of the application form.

It was suggested that other possible locations in the vicinity of Dunkirk Avenue included Breakleys Road and Ise Vale Road.

RESOLVED that:-

consultations take place into the possibility of installing a bench in the three locations suggested with a view to one bench being provided in Braybrooke Road and another in the vicinity of Dunkirk Avenue.

292./18 TO RECEIVE THE FINANCE REPORT

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve the report (Appendix F).

RESOLVED that:-

the recommendation be accepted.

293./18 TO CONSIDER AND IF SO RESOLVED TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The report set out at Appendix G details those invoices and payments for payment, those authorised in accordance with the scheme of delegation, and those where payment is by continuous authority; and the Council is RECOMMENDED to approve payment. Details in the report will be updated before the meeting as information is received.

RESOLVED that:-

the recommendation be accepted.

294./18 TO NOTE ITEMS OF INFORMATION

Extracted from the report of the Town Clerk:

The report of the Town Clerk (Report No. 2) contains information on the following matters and the Council is recommended to note the information contained in the report. No decisions of a financial nature will be made in relation to this item.

294.1./18 To note any report received from the County Councillor

It was noted that the County Councillor had submitted a report after the agenda had been published and it had been circulated.

County Cllr Matthews stated that he attended a lot of Town Council meetings and he had to cherry-pick items on which to report.

294.2./18 To note any report received from Kettering Borough Councillors

294.3./18 To receive any report on Vehicle Speeds, Traffic, and CCTV

It was noted that there were a number of options for potential locations, types, and quality of CCTV camera, and corresponding cost variances. Three specific locations were suggested:-

- a) a fixed HD PTZ (pan, tilt, zoom) camera located underneath the south-west corner of the Borough Council's Grange Leisure Centre canopy and connected to an on site standalone recorder. The indicative cost would be £3,000 plus VAT and ancillary costs for the power supply in addition to £1,000 per year running costs;
- b) two fixed HD cameras mounted on a pole to cover a reasonably straight main road such as Rothwell Road or Braybrooke Road. The indicative

cost would be £3,000 plus VAT and ancillary costs for the power supply in addition to £1,000 per year running costs;

- c) a pole mounted PTZ camera at the western side of the Dunkirk Avenue recreation ground on the opposite side from the bowls club, power is nearby and there is an option to link by microwave to another camera close by, at a total installation cost of about £3,000.

294.4./18 *To receive and note updates from Desborough community groups and representatives.*

294.5./18 *To note any report received from the Police*

PS 782 R Offord reported that he had recently been covering Kettering and Corby areas but would return to usual duties soon. He stated that there had been a 3.9% increase in crime in Loatland ward, a 3.9% decrease in St. Giles, but this compared with an increase in crime in the Kettering area of over 16%. He added that a sizeable majority of the crimes related to road rage or parking disputes. In response to questions about police investigations he requested that anyone not content with the response should contact him. Sergeant Offord reported that he understood that the Police House in Desborough was to be retained and would only be vacated if an adequate replacement was provided. With regard to parking, he stated that the Borough Council's parking warden service would be extending to the rural areas. He concluded by referring to the recruitment drive for regular Police officers, and the recent seizure of nuisance motorcycles.

A number of incidents were reported where the complainant believed that there had been an inadequate response and Sergeant Offord requested specific details to be provided outside the meeting.

294.6./18 *Report of the Northants CALC Larger Councils' focus meeting*

Cllr Sawford explained that the meeting had concentrated on experiences elsewhere and the possibility of assets and responsibilities being passed from the Unitary Authorities to Town and Parish Councils. He stated that the indications from Northamptonshire Council were that no "income generating" assets would be transferred. He stressed that there was no indication that adequate funding would follow the duties and expressed the view that without sufficient funding Councils should refuse to accept responsibilities.

294.7./18 *Community Grants Applications*

RESOLVED that:-

the information contained in the report be noted.

295./18 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that:-

in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and members of the public be temporarily excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of information of a confidential nature and to do otherwise would be prejudicial to the Public Interest.

296./18 **HMRC AND LGSS PAYMENTS 2018/19**

Exempt from publication by virtue of the confidential nature of the information disclosed.

The Town Clerk reported on the outcome of investigations into HMRC and LGSS payments and the consequential effects on payments made in the financial year.

RESOLVED that:-

the information contained in the report be noted.

297./18 **RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The Chair welcomed members of the public back to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 20:55

Signed by the Chair: _____

Date: _____

Social Media Policy

This policy provides Councillors, volunteers, and staff, an overview of Social Media and outline the Council's position on various aspects of their use. In addition, it includes guidelines on Officer, Volunteer, and Councillor responsibilities when using such channels of communication.

Social media is a term for web content based on user participation and user-generated content. They include social networking sites and other sites that are centred on user interaction. Social media has the following characteristics:

- covers a wide variety of formats, including text, video, photographs, audio;
- allows messages to flow between many different types of device;
- involves different levels of engagement by participants who can create, comment, or just view information;
- speeds and broadens the flow of information;
- provides one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many communications;
- allows communication take place in real time or intermittently.

Examples of popular social media tools include: Twitter, Facebook, Wikipedia, You Tube, Pinterest, Instagram, and Linked In. Groupings of interest are a natural feature of the development of such systems with people with similar interests being attracted to share information.

Whilst these tools are very useful to share information quickly with other people, there are some pitfalls to be aware of:

- the information in most cases is shared in the public domain and can be viewed by anyone in the world. In many cases it is not even necessary to register to view the content. Registering is only required should you wish to participate and post to the site;
- groups on specific themes can set up easily and posts then edited by the owners of that group to reflect their single interest, ensuring theirs is the only voice heard;
- there is no guarantee of truth, and it is more likely that ill informed comment and gossip will be found than useful information;
- the nature of these tools is that information is shared immediately and it is all too easy to respond instantaneously which can result in unintentionally inflaming a situation. Information can then be shared with other sites and be spread far beyond the intended audience: friends of friends may not be our friends;
- it is very easy to spend a lot of time viewing and responding to messages that would outweigh any value gained in the first place.

The Council will not use any social media platform, and no-one is authorised to post material on any social media website in the Council's name or on its behalf. The Council will use the Council's own website to provide commentary (in accordance with the law and Regulations) and to provide information. The Council will not use its website to link directly to the social media of any organisation or individual.

Individual Councillors, volunteers, and staff may of course have personal accounts on social media and may use these for their own purposes. So long as they do not refer to Council business at all then there should be no problem. It is when a personal account, or previously personal account, is used to discuss an issue of relevance to the Council or a Council issue that problems may ensue.

Individual Councillors, volunteers, and staff are very strongly advised to refrain from using personal accounts to refer to Council issues. To do so may render all the activity on that account liable to judgement in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy, and the law as it applies to the Council.

Individual Councillors, volunteers, and staff must ensure that they use social media sensibly and responsibly, and ensure that its use will not adversely affect the Council or its business, nor be damaging to the Council's reputation and credibility or otherwise violate any Council policies.

The following guidelines will apply to online participation and set out the standards of behaviour expected as a representative of Desborough Town Council:

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All staff, volunteers, and Councillors

- Be aware of and recognise your responsibilities identified in the Social Media Policy, and the Council's Code of Conduct.
- Remember that you are personally responsible for the content you publish on any form of social media.
- Never give out personal details of others such as home address and telephone numbers.
- Ensure that you handle any personal or sensitive information in line with the Data Protection legislation.
- When using social media for personal purposes, you must not imply you are speaking for the Council. Avoid use of the Council e-mail address, logos or other Council identification, and do not post or comment on items of relevance to the Council.
- Show respect to all. You should be respectful of the authority and employees. Derogatory comments are always wrong.

All staff and volunteers

- Staff and volunteers must not use Social Media accounts in relation to the Council's business.

Councillors

- Councillors must be aware that any use of social media in which reference is made to the role as a Councillor, or to Council business (however tenuous) may be deemed to make the whole account and every comment in it a "Council" account and therefore the standards of the Code of Conduct will be applied.
- Councillors are at liberty to set up accounts using any of the tools available but should ensure they are clearly identified as personal and do not in any way imply that they reflect the Council's view. Councillors should at all times present a professional image and not disclose anything of a confidential nature. Comments of a derogatory, proprietary or libellous nature should not be made and care should be taken to avoid guesswork, exaggeration and colourful language.
- Know your obligations: you must comply with other Council policies when using social media. For example, you should be careful not to breach Council confidentiality and proprietary information policies.
- Where Councillors choose to use personal accounts for the Council's business they must make it clear that what they say is representative of their personal views only. Where possible a standard disclaimer should be used such as: "*Statements and opinions here are my own and don't necessarily represent the Council's policies or opinions*".

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Desborough Town Council Anti-bribery, Anti-fraud, and Anti-corruption Policy Statement and Procedures

The Council is committed to applying the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity to its activities.

This policy statement applies to all Councillors and employees, as well as agency workers, volunteers, consultants, and contractors both in the UK and overseas, and anyone carrying out work on behalf of the Council (people affected by this policy). All people affected by this policy are required to familiarize themselves with and comply with this policy.

All Members of the Town Council are required to abide by Standing Orders, the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations, and any Councillor/Staff Protocols. All employees are required to maintain conduct of the highest standard such that confidence in their integrity, motives and impartiality is sustained.

When acting on behalf of the Council, all people affected by this policy are responsible for maintaining the Council's reputation and for conducting business honestly and professionally. The integrity and reputation of the Council depends on the honesty, fairness and integrity by everyone associated with the Council. The Council is committed to implementing and enforcing effective systems throughout the Council to prevent, monitor, and eliminate bribery, in accordance with its obligations under the Bribery Act 2010. Bribery is a criminal offence. The Council will not tolerate any form of bribery, whether direct or indirect, by, or of, any person affected by this policy.

The Bribery Act 2010 introduced a crime of "failure to prevent" bribery, which means that bodies unable to demonstrate that they have implemented "adequate procedures" to prevent corrupt practices within their ranks, or by third parties on their behalf, could be exposed to unlimited fines. A bribe is defined as a financial advantage or other reward that is offered to, promised to, given to, or received by an individual or company to induce or influence that individual or company to perform its public or corporate functions or duties in an improper manner (i.e. not in good faith, not impartially, or not in accordance with a position of trust).

Desborough Town Council recognises that over and above the commission of any crime, any involvement in bribery will also reflect adversely on its image and reputation. The purpose of this Policy Statement is to limit the Town Council's exposure to bribery by:

- setting out a clear anti-bribery policy;
- training all employees and Members so that they can recognise and avoid the use of bribery by themselves and others;
- encouraging all people affected by this policy to be vigilant and to report any suspicions of bribery, providing them with suitable channels of communication and ensuring sensitive information is treated appropriately;
- rigorously investigating instances of alleged bribery and assisting police and other appropriate authorities in any investigation and resultant prosecution;
- supporting all people affected by this policy who report suspected bribery in good faith even if, following an investigation, it is found that no bribery took place;
- taking firm and vigorous action against any individual(s) involved in bribery.

The prevention, detection, and reporting of bribery is the responsibility of all people affected by this policy. Suitable channels of communication by which employees and others can report confidentially any suspicion of bribery will be maintained by the Whistleblowing Procedure as detailed in the Council's Grievance Procedure Policy.

All people affected by this policy are prohibited from offering, giving, soliciting or accepting any bribe, whether cash or other form of inducement to or from any person or company in order to gain any commercial, contractual or regulatory advantage for the Council in a way which is unethical or in order to gain any personal advantage, monetary or otherwise, for themselves or anyone connected with them.

The Council may provide bona fide hospitality to clients and may incur promotional expenditure. However, all such expenditure must be transparent, proportionate, reasonable, and authorized in advance, in accordance with the Council's anti-bribery procedures.

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The Council recognises that market practice varies across the areas in which it does business and what is normal and acceptable in one place may not be in another. This policy statement prohibits any inducement which results in a personal gain or advantage to the recipient or any person or body associated with them, and which is intended to influence them to take action which may not be solely in the interests of the Council or of the person or body employing them or whom they represent.

This policy is not meant to prohibit the following practices providing they are customary in a particular market, are proportionate, and are properly recorded:

- normal and appropriate hospitality (for example light refreshments at meetings);
- the giving of a ceremonial gift on a festival or another special time;
- the use of any recognized fast-track process which is available to all on payment of a fee;
- the offer of resources to assist the person or body to make the decision more efficiently provided that they are supplied for that purpose only.

In the course of providing services to clients, or in dealings with suppliers, or any other person having similar connections to the Council, people affected by this policy should not accept money, gifts or other forms of reward with a value exceeding the *de minimis* limit set annually (£25 in 2018/19). All **offers** of gifts to people affected by this policy must be reported to the Town Clerk and shall be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality register held by the Town Clerk. Detailed guidance is set out in the Gifts and Hospitality Procedures.

Inevitably, decisions as to what is acceptable may not always be easy. If anyone is in doubt as to whether a potential act constitutes bribery, the matter should be referred to the Town Clerk before proceeding or accepting (or in the case of the Town Clerk, to the Council).

Any breach of the Council's Anti-Bribery procedures will normally be treated as Gross Misconduct, or a breach of the Code of Conduct, and may be reported to the Police, the Monitoring Officer, or other enforcement agency.

The Council will not conduct business with third parties including clients, suppliers, agents or representatives who are not prepared to support its anti-bribery objectives.

Anti-bribery, Anti-fraud, and Anti-corruption Procedures

1. All employees and Members are required to assist in ensuring adherence to legal requirements, policy decisions, proper procedures, and promising practice.
2. All employees and Councillors must register with the Town Clerk any gifts or hospitality, above the *de minimis* level set from time to time (£25 in 2018/19) and abide by the provisions of Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding any interest in contracts let by the Town Council.
3. The Council will maintain a system of financial control based on a framework of regular management information, financial regulations and administrative procedures which include segregation of duties, appropriate management and supervision, and a policy of delegation and accountability.
4. The Council's internal auditor is independent and reports to the Council.
5. A programme of regular internal audit is carried out in accordance with proper practices by selected members as determined from time to time as well as a programme of special investigations to include economy, efficiency and effectiveness of operations.
6. The Town Council's operations, accounts, assets, and systems are subject to an independent annual audit by an external auditor appointed by the Audit Commission, following availability of the accounts for public inspection for the period prescribed by Statute.
7. The Grievance Procedure is available for use by any employee wishing to make a "*qualifying disclosure*" under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and details of the criteria for this are set out in the Grievance Procedure.
8. If any such "*qualifying disclosure*" is made an "Investigating Officer", normally the Town Clerk, will be appointed to be in charge of any investigation on a day to day basis.
9. The Investigating Officer will keep records as the investigation proceeds and report them to the Internal Review Councillor(s). Pending this, any employee making a "*qualifying disclosure*" must not discuss their suspicions with anyone. The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Internal Review Councillor(s) is empowered to decide when, or whether, any matters should be referred to the Police, the Monitoring Officer, or other enforcement body.
 - (a) Any such "*qualifying disclosure*" made in good faith, even if subsequently held to be unfounded, would result in no consequences whatsoever for the employee concerned unless found to have been initiated maliciously.

Initialed by Chair: _____

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- (b) Any such “*qualifying disclosure*” found to have been initiated maliciously, even if subsequently held to be unfounded, might result in consequences for the employee concerned under the Disciplinary Procedure;
 - (c) Any “qualifying disclosure”, if subsequently upheld after investigation, could lead to action under the Disciplinary Procedure or Code of Conduct.
10. At the end of any such investigations, whether there is Police involvement or not, a report will go to the Town Council and to the internal auditor.
 11. The Town Council supports the principle of continuous development for staff, especially for those involved in the operation of internal control systems, to ensure that there is a culture of continuous improvement.
 12. Any member of the public who believes there has been an incidence of fraud or corruption must submit the allegation in writing to the Town Clerk or (if the allegation is against the Town Clerk) to the Chair of the Council, who will decide whether to initiate a formal investigation. Any investigation conducted will be carried out in the method as recommended at that time by the Audit Commission and appropriate enforcement agencies.

April 2019

Initialled by Chair: _____

MEETINGS WITH DEVELOPERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

Desborough Town Council has exercised its right to be consulted on planning matters. As such, the Council's views are heard by the Planning Authority. The Town Council does not make decisions on applications. The Planning Authority makes decisions having heard the views of applicants, consultees, and members of the community.

The Council wishes to encourage appropriate sustainable and safe development, whilst at the same time attempting to preserve and protect the environment and character of Desborough; having due regard to the duties of the Town Council in relation to conserving biodiversity and the prevention of crime and disorder.

Desborough Town Council acknowledges that developers may wish to seek the Council's views and those of the local community before applications are submitted, after submission but before consideration by the Planning Authority, or before determination of appeal against refusal.

How the Council engages with developers

As community leaders and local representatives Councillors will want to be involved in relevant pre-application discussions and public meetings. Following this policy, Councillors can involve themselves in discussions with developers and others about planning matters.

Members of the community may take a very jaundiced attitude towards any contact between developers and the Council as a whole, or individual or groups of Councillors, or even Officers of the Council, especially where contact is not in the public gaze. However, if the contact is carefully managed and details are recorded then there can be benefits to all, without tying the Council to supporting or otherwise any application or proposal (predetermination).

Under the Localism Act 2011, predetermination occurs where someone has a closed mind so that they are unable to apply their judgment fully and properly to the issue requiring a decision. This can lead to legal challenges and decisions being set aside.

A Member is not deemed to have had a closed mind on an issue just because they have indicated what view they have taken or may take before the issue is decided. A Member is not, for example, prevented from participating in discussion of an issue or voting on it if they have campaigned on the issue or made public statements about their approach to it.

The general position, however, remains that, whatever their views, Members must approach their decision-making with an open mind in the sense that they must have regard to all material considerations and must be prepared to change their views if persuaded that they should.

It is an offence under section 1 of the Bribery Act 2010 for a developer or their agent to promise or give a financial or other advantage to the Town Council with the expectation of an improper consideration of a planning application. If the developer is an organisation, such as a charity or company, the Council may request sight of the developer's anti-bribery policy.

Where developers organise a public exhibition or display of their proposals, it is acceptable for Councillors to visit to examine the proposals and ask questions of the developers to ensure that they are fully informed of the nature of the proposals. Councillors may feed in their own and the local community's concerns and issues and engage in discussion, so long as no Councillor purports to speak on behalf of the Council (unless specifically authorised to do so by a meeting of the Council).

Pre-application meetings with developers or prospective applicants may be a positive way of engaging the developer to seek to ensure that community needs are met. However, if approached directly, Councillors must refer any requests for such a meeting to the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk can then help organise the meeting and ensure that those present are advised from the start that the discussions will not bind the authority to any particular course of action.

Developers attending meetings of the Council

Official meetings of the Council and its committees are open to the public (Section 1(1) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) and developers may attend. Developers may not speak at a Council or committee meeting to present or discuss a proposed development affecting the Town unless they are invited to address a meeting or they do so during the public participation section.

Initialed by Chair: _____

Developers may regard information about a proposed development as either confidential or “sensitive” and therefore not suitable for discussion at a meeting open to the public. However, Councillors at the Council or committee meeting will decide if there are grounds to exclude the public from the meeting when the proposed development is being discussed and considered. The Town Council may do this if the matter being considered at the meeting would prejudice the public interest due to its confidentiality or for other special reasons (Section 1(2) Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960).

The minutes of the Council and committee meetings which record the decisions made at them are public and therefore available to all on the Town Council’s website, in the folder in the library, and on application from the Town Clerk.

General Guidance for Councillors

- refer those who approach you seeking planning, procedural, or technical advice to the Town Clerk or the Principal Authority as appropriate;
- advise those looking for policy guidance to examine the policies in adopted local plans and the Local Development Framework;
- avoid meeting developers alone or putting yourself in a position where you appear to favour a person, company or group;
- remember that you must comply with the Members’ Code of Conduct at all times.

MEETINGS WITH DEVELOPERS PROCEDURE

In order to avoid improper lobbying by a developer, or creating a perception that the Council has a predetermined position about a proposed development, the Council will adopt the following procedure:-

1. The Council will not seek out developers for meetings.
2. Approaches to the Council from developers should be made through the Town Clerk, and if received by any Councillor must be immediately referred to the Town Clerk who will acknowledge the communication.
3. In law, individual Councillors or a group of Councillors may not purport to speak on behalf of the Council unless specifically authorised to do so by a meeting of the Council. It follows that any meeting between a Councillor or Councillors (acting in that capacity) and developers should be attended by the Town Clerk.
4. Where a request for a meeting is received, the Town Clerk will consult with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and will then determine whether or not a meeting is in the interests of the Council.
5. Where it is determined that a meeting is appropriate, the developer must provide written information about the proposed development and the developer’s desired outcome from the meeting before any meeting is arranged.
6. Developers will be made aware that information held by the Town Council about a proposed development is subject to disclosure under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.
7. If a developer considers that information provided to the Town Council is sensitive, this will not require the Council to treat it as confidential. The developer must identify information that they want to be confidential, and explain the reasons in writing. If the developer has a legitimate expectation for confidentiality about the proposed development, the Council will keep a written record of the confidential and non-confidential issues.
8. Communications (including informal and formal meetings) between a developer and the Council (or with individual Councillors, and/or the Town Clerk) about a pre-planning application development, or an appeal, will not bind the Council to making a particular decision or withdrawing any objection. Any views expressed are, at best, provisional because not all of the relevant information will be available to the Council and formal consultations will not have taken place.
9. Informal meetings and telephone conversations between a developer and individual Councillors or the Town Clerk will be documented in writing and are subject to disclosure under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation. The Town Clerk will arrange and attend meetings with Councillors and send a follow-up in writing.

April 2019

Initialed by Chair: _____

DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
18 APRIL 2019

APPENDIX D

CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund fact sheet

See attached.

DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
18 APRIL 2019

APPENDIX E

Planning and Licensing Matters

[KET/2019/0169](#)

23 Chestnut Drive, Desborough
First floor side extension

[KET/2019/0195](#)

Mr C Brunning
26 Ise View Road, Desborough
Single storey front extension with pitched roof incorporating garage

[KET/2019/0192](#)

Mr & Mrs J Gardiner
36 Leys Avenue, Desborough
Single storey rear extension

[KET/2019/0202](#)

Ms K Taubman
5 Swift Close, Desborough
Erection of flat-roofed garden shed

Initialled by Chair: _____

DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
18 APRIL 2019

REPORT NO. 1

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Desborough Neighbourhood Plan Working Party
held on Thursday 4 April 2019**

Present: Councillors: S Draycott, I James, J Read, P Sawford, and J Taylor
Community: Mesdames Holmes, Watson, and Mr Britton

Also present: Councillors Burnham, Holmes, one member of the community, and G Thomson (Town Clerk)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

AGREED that:-
Councillor Sawford be elected Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Keys, and Ms McLennan.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. TO HEAR REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No members of the public requested to speak.

5. DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Working Party referred to the draft Plan (dated 25 October 2017) prepared by the former Desborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, together with other documents including:-

- Desborough Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment (May 2017)
- AECOM Evidence Base Policy Review (July 2018)
- Public Realm Vision and Strategy for Station Road, Stage 1 & 2 Draft 1 (September 2015)
- The Good Councillors's Guide to Neighbourhood Planning (2017)

An oral report was received on the background and history to the Desborough Plan. It was noted that parts of the draft Plan had been superseded and would need to be updated in any event. It was also noted that there were deficiencies with the evidence base, policies, and subject area coverage. The Working Party considered it appropriate to have a Plan in place, or at least an adequate draft, by the time that Unitary Councils were formed. It was also suggested that the concept of shared space for pedestrians and vehicles be revisited, along with whether or not the Plan needed a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

6. WHAT LOOKS GOOD ELSEWHERE

Members of the Working Party had previously been directed to, and reviewed, Plans of Broughton, Higham Ferrers, and Moulton, and had had the opportunity to review other plans. It was considered that a plan written in plain English (as far as possible) would be preferable to a technical document.

7. ASPIRATIONS FOR THE PLAN

The Working Party discussed what the Plan should aim to be and do. In discussing the hopes for the Plan the following suggestions were made, that:-

- it be an aspirational Plan for the future;
- the image of Desborough as a dormitory town be shaken off and should aim to retain young people;
- leisure provision be covered in the Plan and green spaces be improved;
- the Plan should make the town attractive for jobs especially in technology and emerging businesses including the "evening economy";
- it should encourage retailers to adjust opening hours to suit local needs;
- It should seek to improve provision for safe walking around the town;
- development on brownfield sites be preferred to greenfield sites;
- car parking be addressed.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL ON THE WAY FORWARD

The Working Party considered the options available to the Council in making the Plan, the previous work undertaken. The Working Party AGREED that the Council be recommended to:-

- e) determine that it was still appropriate for Desborough to have a Neighbourhood Plan;
- f) aim to have the Plan as far advanced as possible before local government reorganisation in the County;
- g) employ a good, locally experienced, specialist Neighbourhood Planning consultant to review the available documentation and provide an appropriate framework draft Plan, with up-to-date references to national, regional, and local policies to which the views and policies from the town can be added;
- h) once the local views and policies have been added, external support be used to ensure that the draft is fit for purpose; and,
- i) any future group established to work on the Plan should provide for the inclusion of business and industry, and groups not traditionally represented.

The meeting closed at 20:00

Initialed by Chair: _____

DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
18 APRIL 2019

APPENDIX F

FINANCE REPORT
Monthly Bank Reconciliation

	Bank Statement date	Consolidation date
Bank reconciliation	29/03/2019	12/04/2019
Unity Trust Current	£0.00	£0.00
Unity Trust Deposit	£0.00	£0.00
Barclays Current	£11,089.43	£13,317.27
Barclays Business Saver	£515,522.27	£505,884.18
Unpresented payments	£8,839.92	£1,263.76
Continuous payments	£0.00	£57.54
Reconciled Balance	£517,771.78	£517,880.15

Bank statements were reconciled and verified, visits by the Internal Control Councillors have taken place, and an informal meeting has taken place with the internal auditor. In accordance with the policy, funds were transferred between accounts to preserve a working balance. Interest of £361.91 was received at the end of March for the period January to March 2019.

Unpresented payments

Cost centre	Code	Description	Total	Unpresented
Administration	MS Office	MS Office Business for Mac	£113.76	*
Administration	Community Grant	Desborough Town Junior FC	£500.00	*
Administration	Community Grant	Desborough District Guiding	£150.00	*
Administration	Community Grant	Vine Community Trust	£500.00	*
Administration	Pocket Park Maintenance	Desborough Pocket Park	£369.86	
Administration	Pocket Park Maintenance	Arien Designs Ltd	£255.60	
Democratic Services	Salaries & Employment	HMRC	£4,814.80	
Democratic Services	Salaries & Employment	LGSS	£2,135.90	
Membership & Subscriptions	Society of Local Council Clerks	SLCC	£196.00	
Balance			£8,839.92	

DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
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APPENDIX G

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Further items will be added as received.

Supplier	Reason	VAT	Total Amount	Cost Centre
Office Depot	Toner and stationery	£30.53	£183.20	Administration
Autela Group Ltd	Payroll (Jan - Mar & EoY)	£0.00	£47.00	Democratic Services
NetwiseUK	Domain name registration	£0.00	£80.00	Administration
LGSS Pensions	Pension (employee's and employer's contributions) March	£0.00	£866.60	Democratic Services
Graham Thomson	Salary (April 25 hours / week) Overtime (March hours)	£0.00	£1,953.79	Democratic Services
Printerinks4u.com	Toner	£31.99	£191.94	Administration

Continuous authority for payments (amount may vary slightly month to month)				
TalkTalk	Internet and Telephone	£9.59	£57.54	Town Council Office

Initialed by Chair: _____

DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
18 APRIL 2019

REPORT NO. 2

Information Items

294.1/18 To note any report from the County Councillor

Cllr Alan Matthews: *"Thank you for the attached.
"May I have some details of the issues of concern to the Town Councillors in advance of the next meeting please?
"Residents normally telephone, or e-mail, their concerns and questions to me and, as many are confidential in nature, the Town Council Meeting may not be the appropriate place to reply to them."*

Councillor Matthews subsequently submitted this report:-

"Agenda Item 288/18

"I was included on an e-mail, from a member of the public reporting this unfortunate accident. The reply to my enquiry from NCC Highways, regarding a pedestrian crossing at the location where the accident happened, was relayed to this member of public.

"I can summarise this reply here:

"While clearly concerned about all road accidents, NCC Highways report that a crossing at this point on this road is unlikely in the immediate future. Pedestrian crossings are [normally] only constructed where a significant demand exists, to cross a road at a particular point.

"Pedestrian counts are undertaken to quantify the need, but [essentially] most crossings are located near schools, shops, hospitals and major road junctions. Currently the number of requests for crossings exceeds the budget available in the county.

"The typical cost of a signalled crossing is £120k and a zebra crossing £35k."

"Agenda Item 291/18

"My Empowerment Grant was for a seat/bench on Dunkirk Avenue, not Harborough Road and not Braybrooke Road.

"I accept that the location at the bus stop would be tight, as DTC has concluded, but there are two wide corners on Breakleys Road and Ise Vale Avenue which could accommodate a seat, without obstructing access on the pavement for wheeled baby carriages and mobility scooters.

"The whole point of the grant was to satisfy the requests from residents walking to and from the town along Dunkirk Avenue."

"It is also noted that the footpath from the new petrol station to Harborough Road was completed recently after a small technical delay."

294.2/18 To note any report from the Kettering Borough Councillors

Cllr Mark Dearing:

Cllr June Derbyshire: *"Town Clerk I will be attending the meeting tomorrow evening 18/4/2019."*

Cllr David Soans: *"Thank you for your kind invitation, unfortunately, due to ongoing health issues I will be unable to attend. Please offer my apologies to the meeting.*

"Local Government re-organisation.

"Council may be interested to know that a working party has been set up to look into the future governance of Kettering Town following the creation of the North Northants Unitary Authority. The most likely outcome is that Kettering Town will become "parished" as a separate Town Council with the same authority as Desborough, Rothwell and Burton Latimer Town Councils under the auspices of the Unitary Authority. The results of the working party will be made public when complete.

Initialled by Chair: _____

Cllr Mike Tebbutt: *“I am unable to attend as am out of the country, I will provide a report for the next meeting as I hope to be able to provide an update on the Local Plan progress.”*

294.2/18 To receive any report on Vehicle Speeds, Traffic, and CCTV

294.4/18 To receive updates from Desborough community groups and representatives

294.5/18 To note any report from the Police

294.6/18 Report of the Northants CALC Larger Councils' focus meeting

The Council was represented at a focus meeting for larger Councils organised by Northants CALC to talk about asset and service devolution / transfer. The meeting heard the processes in use at Cornwall and Milton Keynes and the lessons learned from there. The experiences of Councils in dealings with the County Council and with District and Borough Councils were shared. Another meeting will be held in a few months time.

294.7/18 Applications for Community Grants

The closing date for applications for community grants has passed and a meeting of the Community Grant Advisory Panel is being organised to make recommendations to the next Council meeting.

Graham Thomson
Town Clerk

Initialled by Chair: _____