



Desborough Town Council
Town Clerk: Graham Thomson
High Street, Desborough, NN14 2QS
01536 628816 clerk@desboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

To: All Town Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of Desborough Town Council to be held in the Library, High Street, Desborough on Thursday 17 October 2019, commencing at 7pm for the purpose of transacting the following business. Members of the press and public are invited to attend.

Signed,

Graham Thomson
Town Clerk

11 October 2019

AGENDA

- 88./19 Chair's welcome and announcements.**
- 89./19 To consider and if so resolved to approve apologies for absence.**
- 90./19 To note any declarations of interest from Councillors.**
- 91./19 To note or consider any requests for dispensation.**
To note any requests for dispensation for Councillors with an interest to be allowed to speak which have been considered by the Town Clerk in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Scheme of Delegation, and to consider any such applications not yet determined.
- 92./19 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019**
- 93./19 To hear representations from Members of the Public**
Note: no decisions can be made in response to matters raised under this item.
- 94./19 Police Report / Crime Figures**
Sgt Offord has been invited to the meeting and hopes to attend. The latest crime figures for the Kettering sector, Loatland area and St. Giles area are shown at Appendix A. Specific comments have been received about criminal damage to planted tubs and hanging baskets throughout the town.
- 95./19 To receive and note the Planning Report**
In accordance with the views expressed by Councillors, any comments which were uncontentious and uncontested were submitted to the relevant planning authority as set out in the report attached at Appendix B.
- 95.1./19 Update: Ket/2019/0540, 32 Victoria Street, Desborough, Change Of Use Of Domestic Property To Osteopath/Chiropody Clinic, Etc.**
This application, to which the Council objected, has been withdrawn and no further action will be taken by the Planning Authority.
- 95.2./19 Proposed Residential Development Of Up To 260 Dwellings With Access At Land Off Harborough Road (Land Off), Desborough ([KET/2019/0606](#))**
The Council is REQUESTED to consider its view on the application and any potential projects for S106 contributions.
- 95.3./19 Proposed Re-Development Of Site To Create 40 Dwellings With Access, Parking And Associated Works At Land Off Manor House Gold Street, Desborough ([KET/2019/0644](#))**
The Council is REQUESTED to consider its view on the application and any potential projects for S106 contributions.
- 96./19 Proposed stopping up of highway land**
The Council has been consulted by the Highway Authority on a proposal to "stop up" about two square metres of highway land in the County Council's ownership. The area of land in question is located at the external corner of the buggy store at the library and which was taken into the covered area when the then SureStart extension was built. It was formerly highway verge. The Highway Authority has no objection to the extinguishment of this area of highway and the subsequent registration of the land as part of the property. This must now happen irrespective of any potential change in ownership of the building.

The Town Council's views and the views of Kettering Borough Council have been sought under S116 of the Highways Act 1980 with a view to regularising the situation. The Council is REQUESTED to consider whether it consents to the proposal.

97./19 To receive an update relating to the traffic regulation in the Pioneer Avenue area

An update will be provided to the meeting.

98./19 Arrangements for filling the Town Council Vacancy: By-election

As Members will know, a by-election is to be held on 24 October 2019 between the hours of 07:00 and 22:00 to elect a Councillor to fill the current vacancy. The Town Council's large meeting room will be used as a polling station owing to the unavailability of the usual space at Loatland School.

99./19 To note a report from a meeting with KBC

Cllr Taylor and the Town Clerk attended a meeting with KBC's Head of Environmental Care Services. Although the meeting was intended to be about the Dunkirk Avenue play area a number of other issues of mutual interest and concern were raised, including the Braybrooke Road Play Area, car parking provision, Christmas Lights, CCTV, Cycle Paths, and asset ownership. Further information on progress will be reported in due course.

Other matters which will be raised with KBC include the standards of grounds maintenance which allow weeds to grow out of the paving slabs and in the gutters, and also the deteriorating state of the fabric of the Lawrence's building.

100./19 To consider the Council's response to the Climate Emergency question

The arguments about climate change are well known and information is available elsewhere. It has been suggested that the Council might review its activities with a view to minimising environmental impact. This would involve looking at all the Council's activities and building-in environmental and energy-saving measures. One way which has been suggested elsewhere is to have a separate budget for climate emergency matters. All projects and expenditure items would be assessed for climate change credentials and if there was a cost implication for using the "environmental advantageous" option then the additional cost should come from the climate emergency budget. Some specific activities might include:-

- reduction of printing by the use of a projector and screen for meetings instead of printing copies of minutes, agenda and reports;
- replacement (over time) of existing Christmas lights to low energy or solar powered lights;
- actively supporting small and large planning applications with specific provision for new renewable energy;
- promoting practical action by local people;
- Bringing together groups of people for bulk purchases;
- Developing and promoting lift-sharing schemes;
- Buying green;
- Reducing and removing single-use plastics from the Council's operations where possible;
- Using green transport;
- Minimising waste going to landfill or incineration;
- Ensuring the climate change or nature implications of decisions are known;
- Designating safe walking and cycle routes.

This is not a definitive list and there will be many suggestions in future in this emerging field. It should also be noted that climate change expertise is limited amongst town and parish Councils. The Council is REQUESTED to consider its response.

101./19 To reconsider the recommendation of Kettering Borough Council's Statutory Officers Group to cancel the Dispensations Granted to Councillors

Pursuant to the decision at the last meeting, further clarification was sought from the Borough Council's Monitoring Officer specifically in regard to the recommendation that the Council cancels the dispensations for Councillors who are Trustees of the DLCH.

The Borough Council's Monitoring Officer has clarified that nothing in the process the Town Council adopted has led the Borough Council or the Monitoring Officer to question the legal validity of the dispensations made. He also confirmed that the recommendation to cancel the dispensation is merely that, a recommendation. It is not a sanction and not a requirement. However, the Monitoring Officer's view is that the exercise of the dispensation is discretionary and with hindsight it turned out to be unhelpful that the Members concerned asked for a dispensation when there was a conflict of interest created at the point that they accepted the role of trustee, after they had been elected, and with again with the benefit of

hindsight no Councillors at all voted against making a building purchase loan of £120,000 to DLCH.

The Monitoring Officer's purpose in recommending that the dispensation was removed was in the interests of transparency, and to remove future challenges to the Council's decision-making. The Council is REQUESTED to consider the matter.

102./19

To consider a draft of the Council's Three to Five Year Plan

Members will recall that the Internal Auditor made a specific recommendation that the Council should allow the Town Clerk to bring forward a three to five year plan to ensure that the reserves are used effectively and to the benefit of the community over the course of time. The Council accepted this recommendation and it is time to start preparations for this work.

The Council will fix the budget for 2020/21 in January 2020 (at the latest). It will also fix the precept in January 2020 (after the budget). Councillors will be aware that the whole Council election is due in May 2020. Therefore the incoming Administration will be working with the current Administration's budget. Given the comments made over the last year by Councillors collectively and individually, it is assumed that whatever budget decisions are made, the precept next year will be similar to this year: sufficient to cover ordinary running costs in line with other towns, but excluding "project" expenditure funded from reserves.

There is nothing to prevent the Council from earmarking funds for some future purpose, but the Council needs to be able to show progress against these earmarked projects over time. Whatever the Council decides to do, it needs to be able to demonstrate that there is a plan to reduce the unallocated balances to somewhere in the region of 3 to 12 months' precept. There is no statute or law which specifies the amount of unallocated reserves which can be held but the Joint Panel on Accounting & Governance (JPAG) has clarified under "proper practices" this expectation for a Council of our type.

So, put simply, there are four basic options:-

- a) allocate (earmark) a sufficient amount of reserves for identified future schemes to reduce the un earmarked / unallocated amount to about £75,000;
- b) increase the precept to between £200,000 - £300,000;
- c) spend significant amounts of money this financial year to reduce the balances;
- d) identify specific areas where money could be spent and work up outline costed schemes, earmarking those for future spend when the circumstances are right.

In law, there is no requirement for the Council to consult residents on spending decisions or strategy. Last year, the Council decided to carry out a consultation exercise but despite the attendant publicity and a personal hand-delivery of leaflets, the Autumn Update 2018 consultation did not produce a massive response on any particular suggestion - perhaps leading to a conclusion that the community accepted that the Council should be deciding these things.

In no particular order there are some items which might be worthy of further consideration.

- (1) Road / Traffic Improvements (inc Gladstone Street / Nicholls Street)
There are a number of hotspots in the town where traffic movements are problematic, together with multiple parking problems.

One area of specific interest is the Gladstone Street / Nicholls Street loop, which has been suggested as a one-way system on a number of occasions. If the Council was minded to pursue a scheme it would be necessary to approve the details of the proposals, and a new consultation process would be necessary in accordance with The Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. This would be carried out by the Highway Authority. When the proposals were last costed the anticipated cost was approximately £77,000 (plus VAT). If the Council wishes to proceed with this proposal it will be necessary to work through the Highway Authority.
- (2) Signage improvements
The signage into, and around, the Town could be reviewed, standardised, and improved. This might include signposting towards notable businesses such as factory shops, Union Street shops, parking, schools, health services, library, and of course the Town Council's offices.

- (3) Working with businesses
There are a number of factory shops and retail units in the town. The Council could seek to bring these together to co-ordinate and co-operate with advertising and to synchronise opening hours, for example.
- (4) Local Government Reorganisation
The new Unitary Authority (UA) may wish to delegate or contract with the Town Council to deliver services on behalf of the larger authority. Although the matter has not been discussed in any detail by the Town Council, the presumption is that the Town Council will either not accept any downward delegation, or will not accept any unless the full cost (and on-costs) are completely covered. It is speculated that the UA will not wish to transfer to Town / Parish Councils anything which is income generating. Although it is too early to have any certainty, the most likely items would include streetlights, estate grass cutting, grounds maintenance (the Recreation Ground, the Pocket Park, possibly the Greenspace).
- (5) Compulsory purchase of derelict ground sites
It is possible for the Town Council to ask the Borough Council to exercise compulsory purchase powers of derelict sites in very specific circumstances. However, it must be remembered that the costs of doing so are likely to be high, as will legal costs, and there are no guarantees that a proposed compulsory purchase would be successful.
- (6) Employ a local amenities officer / "lengthsman" / handy person
This idea has been around for some time. The idea is for the person to carry out those small tasks around the town that others neglect to do, or cannot / will not do in a reasonable time. Equally, this post might undertake tasks such as maintaining the speed signs. To some extent, it would perhaps be better to delay consideration of this idea until the likely views of the Unitary Authority are known.
- (7) The Lawrence's site
Over the course of the last year the Borough Council has indicated that the site is to be razed and replaced with residential property. It has been noted elsewhere that the building is in a poor and deteriorating state and informal indications from the Borough Council suggest that development of the site may not be too far in the future.
- (8) Public toilets
This was investigated at the time of the preparations for the current year's budget. Given that the Council does not own any property in the town it is difficult to see where toilets could be located.
- (9) Welcome Packs / Town Guides
There are a quite a few towns and parishes where a welcome pack is provided to new residents. Some have a simple postcard directing people to the Council's website. Other places have a parish guide which is distributed to all residences. These packs / guides usually include details of the Council, other elected representatives, what major organisations do, where to go, regular "what's on?" events, reports on Council activity, and so on.
- (10) War Memorial
The war memorials where the poppy wreaths are laid each year are listed and no further names can be added. There is a lengthy process for names to be added to any (non listed) memorial (mainly to ensure that the fallen appear on only one memorial in the country). In the last year one potential omission was suggested but this was not proceeded with. It has been suggested that a new obelisk could be installed (at the southernmost corner) which would not be part of the existing monument but could be used in future to mark the fallen from previous conflicts who have been missed and for those lost in current or future conflicts.
- (11) Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)
There are very few publicly accessible defibrillators (AEDs) in the town. Advice from East Midlands Ambulance Service suggests that the maximum distance between casualty and any AED that they would ask anyone to fetch is 500 metres. The use of an AED and effective CPR are the only definitive treatment for victims of sudden cardiac arrest. Without immediate treatment, 95% of cardiac arrests are fatal. When a heart beats in an irregular rhythm, it requires a shock from a defibrillator. Delivering a shock within 3-5 minutes after the victim has collapsed increases their survival chance from 6%

to 74% Further coverage across the town could be provided in a planned way in collaboration with building owners and businesses.

The Council is REQUESTED to consider the report, identify any items it does not wish to consider further, identify items it would like to see in a three to five year plan, and suggest priority items for action in the short term.

103./19 Insurance Arrangements 2020/2021

As Members may recall, the Council entered into a three-year deal with Inspire arranged through Came & Company Local Council Insurance at a cost of £1,746.19 for each of the next three years (index-linked by 4%) and the covers detailed in the Council's current schedule of insurance. Confirmation has been received that the Council's renewal premium will be £1,747.08, including insurance premium tax (IPT) plus the Administration fee of £50, giving a total annual premium of £1,797.08. This takes into consideration the Council's long-term agreement which expires in November 2021. The Council is RECOMMENDED to authorise the continuation of the insurance.

104./19 To consider purchasing The Clerks' Manual 2019

The Clerks' Manual published by the Society of Local Council Clerks is one of the most respected reference works in the local Council sector. The law in this country is ever-changing and the 2019 edition of The Clerks' Manual has been brought firmly into the digital era, without losing the wealth of knowledge which it has always included. The Manual covers English and Welsh law and has over 80 different categories from Accounting and Audit through to Websites, Newsletters and Council Publicity. The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve the purchase of the reference work at a cost of £47.50.

105./19 To Consider Community Payback Ideas

The Council has been informed that nominations are being received for placements and projects suitable for community payback. Anyone can nominate a project or placement on behalf of their community to be undertaken by Community Payback. Suggestions should be sent to the Northamptonshire Probation Trust. The Council is REQUESTED to consider nominating a project or placement.

106./19 To consider any response to a consultation on 5G

The Government is currently consulting on proposed reforms to permitted development rights to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage. This consultation seeks views on the principle of amending permitted development rights for operators with rights under the Electronic Communications Code (Code Operators) to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, and the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to do so. The consultation also seeks views on whether it is appropriate to impose specific limitations, conditions and restrictions on any amendments to permitted development rights to mitigate the impact of any new development. The Council is REQUESTED to consider making a response.

107./19 To consider a report from the Community Grants Advisory Panel and determine any grant payments

A report and recommendations for any grants considered appropriate will be submitted to the meeting.

108./19 To note an update relating to the proposed CCTV upgrading

In accordance with the decision at the last meeting, KBC has been requested to provide costs for a camera covering Braybrooke Road, and discussions have also taken place with a view to reducing the monitoring costs. Further details will be provided to a future meeting when received.

108.1./19 Northants CALC AGM

To receive any report from the annual meeting of Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils (Northants CALC).

109./19 To note a report on the Braybrooke Road play area

See Appendix C.

110./19 To receive reports on activity from Borough Councillors, the County Councillor, local groups and volunteers

110.1./19 County Councillor Matthews

Cllr Matthews has stated that he has no report for the meeting.

111./19 Finance Report

111.1./19 To receive the finance report

The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve the report at Appendix D. Details in the report will be updated before the meeting as information is received.

111.2./19 Referendum Principles

Confirmation has been received that referendum principles (capping) will not apply to English parishes for the coming financial year. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is an expectation that Councils need to continue to exercise restraint in setting precepts. Any significant increases in precepts / Council tax (for example those necessitated by taking on additional services) are clearly articulated to the local community and, if at all possible, have already received their support.

111.3./19 To receive the audit report

The external audit report has been received and the accounts signed off (available [here](#)).

Two items were raised:-

(a) Basis of Accounts

“Section 2 has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices. The income and expenditure basis must be used to prepare its accounts for the third and subsequent years that the income and/or expenditure exceeds £200k. Please ensure that the 2018/19 figures are restated in the prior year comparatives when completing next year’s AGAR.”

The accounts have been produced in the same way for many years, and exactly the same as last year. There are two methods of drawing up accounts “Receipts and Payments” and “Income and Expenditure”. Receipts and Payments is used for Council’s whose income or expenditure is under £200,000 whilst Income and Expenditure is used for those over £200,000 for three or more years. This accounting year was the third year and the guidance is for accounts to be prepared on the “Income and Expenditure” basis.

The Council’s precept has been set as follows:-

2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
£20,000	£67,000	£350,000	£349,700	£280,000	£76,016

Given the stated position of the Council, it seems very unlikely that the precept would return to a figure over £200,000 in the coming year. Therefore the 2019/20 accounts will probably be prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis. We cannot know what might happen following the election but any new administration will not be able to increase the precept so next year’s accounts will be on the Receipts and Payments basis too.

Comparing different years is not possible when they are prepared on a different basis. In the interests of openness and transparency the accounts for 2018/19 were prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis that will be likely to be used in the forthcoming years.

To use the "income and expenditure" method for 2018/19 would require 2017/18 to be recalculated on the "income and expenditure" method, 2018/19 would be completed using the "income and expenditure" method; with the precept having fallen to well below the £200,000 level 2019/20 would be calculated using the "receipts and payments" method, meaning that 2018/19 would have to be recalculated using the "receipts and payments" method. In summary: the Council would have to draw accounts in both "income and expenditure" and in "receipts and payments" for three years. This was explained and accepted by the external auditor, however they failed to reflect this in the certificate.

If the accounting basis next year is Income and Expenditure then this year’s will have to be restated. If the accounting basis next year is Receipts and Payments then this year’s will not need to be restated, which would save confusion.

(a) Variances between years

The Council was informed that all information requested had been provided and the external auditor report and certificate would be issued in due course. However, on the

afternoon of Tuesday 24 September 2019 an email was sent to the Council asking for further explanations by Thursday 26 September 2019. These further explanations were sent early on Thursday morning, within the timescale set, and to the satisfaction of the auditor. Unfortunately owing to a mis-communication the external auditor issued the final certificate at one minute past midnight on the morning of 26 September 2019.

The auditor has confirmed:

“Firstly we would like to apologise that a mis-communication lead to the file being closed ahead of the extended deadline given for providing additional information. As previously explained; we are not permitted to re-issue our report once the closure documents have been issued.”

“We can confirm that had the information regarding the numerical breakdown of the variance in Section 2 Box 3 between the current and prior years been provided prior to the signing and certification of our report, it would not have been necessary to have raised the other matter stated below:

The smaller authority has not provided an adequate explanation for the variance between the current and prior year for Section 2, Box 3.

“Unfortunately we are unable to re-issue our report once it has been issued. Therefore, please feel free to display this email along with the report to clarify the situation, as we are now in receipt of an adequate explanation.”

The Council is REQUESTED to note the position.

112./19

To consider and if so resolved to approve accounts for payment

The report set out at Appendix E 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.

The crime figures for September 2019 are available in .pdf form on the Council's website here: <https://desboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Crime-figures-201909.pdf>

Planning and Licensing Matters

[KET/2019/0606](#)

Harborough Road (land off), Desborough

Proposed development: Residential development of up to 260 dwellings with access considered

[KET/2019/0632](#)

165 Dunkirk Avenue, Desborough

Proposed development: Single storey rear extension

[KET/2019/0644](#)

Manor House (land rear of) Gold Street, Desborough

Proposed development: Re-development of site to create 40 no. dwellings with access, parking and associated works

[KET/2019/0646](#)

Desborough Road (land off), Braybrooke

Proposed development: Agricultural store

[KET/2019/0651](#)

17 Leys Avenue, Desborough

Proposed development: KET/2018/0829 - Amended scheme: First floor rear extension with attic

[KET/2019/0671](#)

The Cedars, Rushton Road, Desborough

Proposed development: Demolition of outbuildings and erection of an ancillary residential annexe room

Report on meeting of Braybrooke Road Play Park, held on Monday 7 October 2019.

Present at the meeting were Cllrs Archer, Burnham, James and Watson along with two Desborough residents, Anne Liddle and Donna Varley.

The park is of a triangular shape, flanked on each side by Braybrooke Road, homes and Straight Furlong. It is historically a designated play area and up until end of 1991/beginning of 1992, was well equipped with four swings, a roundabout and a slide. The equipment was removed and residents were told at the time that it had to go due to wear and tear and it would be replaced. However, this didn't happen. Many times since, the issue of equipping the park has been raised, but to no avail. Prior to 2011, a goalpost was erected, despite some neighbours concerns and this was well received following their concerns. However, in more recent times, this site has been under used by the town's youth and demands to revitalise the area have been received.

Following a member of the public's heartfelt request for this issue to be raised and looked into further, DTC appointed a working party to look at the possibility of moving forward with the idea of revitalising the play area.

At the meeting on Monday, the working party discussed the options that seemed viable. It was agreed by the working party (WP) that a park, suitable for children between the ages of 0 and 7 years, should be created. This would suit the space and would lead to less opportunity for anti-social behaviour as the equipment would not suit those older than 7. Children in this age range are generally accompanied by a parent or guardian and these adults should also be provided with suitable seating. Environmental aspects could be a welcome addition, possibly in the form of a bug hotel. The equipment should be a mix of pre-fabricated, built for purpose equipment, along with more natural items such as rocks, natural wooden structures and suitably safe surfaces to encourage the use of both gross and fine motor skills in this age range. As part of a wish list, to go alongside the much wanted, and needed, equipment, the working party would like to encourage local businesses and charitable donations to enable the purchase of more sensory equipment and possibly equipment to improve inclusivity to children of all needs.

A request for the area to be cited as a no dogs allowed is also put forward as, due to the size of the area, it would be almost impossible for the toddler park to be fenced off securely. Bins should be provided to maintain the area and to keep with the environmental theme, these should cater for recyclable and non-recyclable waste.

With the constant warnings of a rise in childhood obesity, homes being built with smaller gardens and an obvious lack of facilities in this part of the town, the need for parents to be able to access somewhere for their children to run around, improve their motor skills, to learn the value of social interaction, improve skills in communication and to foster a sense of community is priceless.

The WP are aware that there has to be a price put on everything. We have been assured by Environmental Services, at KBC, that the park can be equipped, using a mix of manmade and natural structures, for a cost of £30,000 or less. The working party would like to propose that DTC invests this funding into the park for the young people and their parents in this town with a view to raising funds from grants to fulfil their wish list for more specialised equipment.

It is also requested that the money is paid to KBC for the installation of this equipment and that any future liabilities or maintenance of the facility remains with them.

Proposal to the full council: To approach KBC to survey the area and to provide estimated costs and plans for equipping the area.

To agree to fund, to a maximum of £30,000, the equipping and installation of equipment for Braybrooke Road Play Park.

Finance Report

Monthly Bank Reconciliation

Bank reconciliation 30/09/2019	Amount
Barclays Current	£53,799.49
Barclays business saver	£400,300.14
Unity Current T2	£35,137.94
Unity Deposit	£14,323.65
CCLA	£25,010.00
	£528,571.22

Accounts for payment

Table may be updated before the meeting.

	Cost centre	Supplier	Reason	VAT	Total
	Administration	Printers4u.com	Printer toner	£31.99	£191.94
	Administration	Pocket Park Committee	Pipe laying (invoice to be provided)	£66.67	£400.00
	Administration	Came & Company	Insurance	£0.00	£1,797.08
+	Town Council Office	TalkTalk business	Internet and telephone	£3.91	£23.48
+	Democratic Services	Mr G Thomson	Salary (October 25 hours/ week) Overtime (September 60 hours)	£0.00	£2,065.16
+	Democratic Services	LGSS Pensions	Pension (employee's and employer's contributions Oct)	£0.00	£981.04