



Desborough Town Council
Town Clerk: Graham Thomson
High Street, Desborough, NN14 2QS
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To: All Town Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend the monthly meeting of Desborough Town Council to be held in the Library building, on Thursday 15 February 2024, commencing at seven o'clock for the purpose of transacting the undermentioned business.

Signed,

Graham Thomson
Town Clerk

9 February 2024

How best to attend the meeting

The best and safest way of seeing and hearing what happens at the meeting is to watch online from the safety and comfort of your home. To join the meeting follow this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85800524092?pwd=ejUxbzdqTFYb3RkbU9CdIVsZFFsZz09>

If necessary, use the following - Meeting ID: 858 0052 4092 Passcode: 771829

If you wish to join by audio telephone only (your normal call charges will apply) dial one of the following numbers: 0131 460 1196, 0203 481 5237, 0208 080 6591, 0208 080 6592 and use the meeting ID and password given above.

Speaking at the meeting

If you wish to speak during the meeting you must raise your hand to alert the Chair. To raise your hand when you are following the meeting on Zoom by telephone please press *9, if the Chair invites you to speak you will need to press *6.

The Council will continue to use its best endeavours to make access to the meeting as easy as possible. All persons in attendance (physically or online) should be aware that they may be seen, heard, or recorded. No person may speak at the meeting unless invited to do so by the Chair.

AGENDA

130./23 To consider and if so resolved to approve reasons for absence.

131./23 To consider any requests for dispensation

To consider any requests for dispensation for Councillors with an interest to be allowed to speak and/or vote in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

132./23 Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest & other Registrable Interests

Members are reminded that they are personally responsible for ensuring that these declarations are complete and are kept up to date and that they should be submitted to the Monitoring Officer at North Northamptonshire Council. This is a legal requirement. Any Councillor who has an interest in any item to be discussed at the meeting should declare that interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

133./23 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 January 2024 have been circulated.

134./23 To hear representations from Members of the Public

Note: no decisions can be made in response to matters raised under this item.

135./23 To note any reports on activity from the Police, North Northamptonshire Councillors, and local groups

136./23 To consider a response to the biodiversity duty

Under the Environment Act 2021, public authorities (including town and parish councils) must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Government guidance clarifies that Councils should:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, and agree policies and specific objectives based on that consideration;
- act to deliver those policies and achieve their objectives; and,

- reconsider the actions within five years of their previous consideration, or more frequently if it chooses.

Unlike many Councils, Desborough Town Council owns no land and is not responsible for any planting, mowing, maintenance, or removal/replacement of trees or other flora. It cannot determine or require any specific planting schemes. It also owns no buildings and is not responsible for the power or water supplies in its leased offices. The Council is therefore not in a position to directly affect biodiversity through operation of policies related to land or property.

In its procurement choices, the Council is able to have regard to biodiversity issues to some extent. However, the Council is not a large consumer of physical items and the impact is therefore limited. The Council has already made an impact through the climate emergency consideration by drastically reducing printing and copying; buying green where possible; reducing and removing single-use plastics from the Council's operations where possible; minimising waste going to landfill or incineration; acknowledged the possibility of the replacement of Christmas lights to low energy LED or solar powered lights; and, allocating funding to replace the speed indicator signs with solar powered signs. Although used relatively rarely, the Council's expenses and travel policy states that our environment will be considered when making decisions and public transport will be preferred where practical and cost effective.

To comply with its duty, the Council might:

- consider the impact on biodiversity of the decisions it proposes to make in Council, committees, sub-committees, and other meetings;
- seek to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity as a result of the Council's activities;
- ensure it addresses biodiversity concerns when commenting on planning applications;
- note what action it is already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity;
- consider what further steps the Council should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Such steps may include:
 - including policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan;
 - reviewing what biodiversity or nature recovery plans are in place from neighbouring local authorities and North Northamptonshire Council;
 - signposting to local voluntary groups working on nature conservation;
 - adopting a biodiversity policy (draft at Appendix A) or statement (draft at Appendix B).

Whilst retaining the right to object to schemes as a whole or aspects of proposals, when commenting on planning matters the Council might:-

- support the protection of sensitive habitats from development;
- consider whether development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife;
- support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats; and,
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.

The Council is RECOMMENDED:-

- (a) to note that as it does not own any land or buildings its ability to have a positive impact on biodiversity is limited;
- (b) to consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity;
- (c) to consider adopting a biodiversity policy or statement and the terms to be included;
- (d) to resolve that biodiversity be considered in the Council's responses to planning matters as appropriate;
- (e) at the next review of the Council's Standing Orders, to insert a new Standing Order requiring the reconsideration of biodiversity actions at the meeting following the annual Council meeting after each ordinary election.

137./23 To consider and approve the draft terms of reference for the proposed Rothwell and Desborough Healthcare Advisory Group, and appoint three Members

Members will recall the recent discussion about current and future medical provision in Desborough and Rothwell and the proposal that a joint Committee of the two Town Councils be formed with a focus on securing better service provision (rather than a new building).

As requested, the Town Clerk and the Clerk of Rothwell Town Council have collaborated on draft terms of reference for the proposed joint Committee and these have been circulated to Councillors. In order to ensure equity between the towns it is proposed that meetings alternate

between Desborough and Rothwell, that the host town provides the secretariat for each meeting, and that meetings be chaired by a Councillor from the host authority.

The Council is REQUESTED to

- (a) approve the terms of reference for the Rothwell and Desborough Healthcare Advisory Group; and,
- (b) appoint three Members of the Council to the Advisory Group.

138./23 To consider recommendations from the Community Grant Advisory Panel

Recommendations from the Advisory Panel in relation to grant applications received and the review of the guidelines for grant applications will be presented. The Council is REQUESTED to consider the recommendations.

138.1./23 Desborough Town Cricket Club

A grant of £2,500 was requested towards the cost of the refurbishment of the playing surface of the existing double lane practice facility. The Advisory Panel RECOMMENDED a grant of £1,250 be made

138.2./23 Desborough & District Twinning Association (including European Charter Group)

A grant of £1,000 was requested towards the cost of coach transfers from airports and visits for a Charter meeting on Desborough in 2024. The Advisory Panel RECOMMENDED a grant of £1,000 be made

138.3./23 Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance

A grant of £2,000 was requested towards the cost of medical consumables: these are single use items that are used to treat our patients in the field until they are received at the hospital. The Advisory Panel RECOMMENDED a grant of £2,000 be made.

138.4./23 Magpas Air Ambulance

A grant of £1,000 was requested towards the cost of medical supplies for emergency care for cross border emergencies. The Advisory Panel RECOMMENDED no grant be made.

138.5./23 Desborough Developments Working Party

A grant of £600 was requested towards the cost of ongoing activities for arranging meetings, producing banners, documents, and other associated materials. The Advisory Panel RECOMMENDED no grant be made.

138.6./23 To review the guidelines for grant applications

The Advisory Panel has reviewed the grant guidelines and made recommendations for alterations as set out in Annexe 1. The Advisory Panel did not reach a conclusion in any changes to paragraph 2.6:

“At the discretion of the Council any organisation or group with permanent bar facilities in operation may be excluded.”

The Advisory Panel RECOMMENDED that:-

- (a) the Council determine any changes deemed necessary to paragraph 2.6; and,
- (b) the guidelines set out in Annexe 1 be otherwise adopted.

139./23 To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

140./23 To receive an oral update on projects

141./23 To consider any response to planning and licensing applications and note any responses made

The Council is REQUESTED to consider making comment on any planning or licensing matter set out in the report attached at Appendix C and to note any comments made.

142./23 To receive the finance report

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

143./23 To consider and if so resolved to note and 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 payments. Details in the report may be updated before the meeting as information is received.

Draft Biodiversity Policy

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Desborough Town Council will from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take to further the general biodiversity objective consistent with the proper exercise of its functions.

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020),

“Biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet. Biodiversity is important for its own sake, and human survival depends upon it.

“Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of ground-breaking studies ... have shown this value also goes further. It is the building block of our ‘ecosystems’. These provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.”

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council’s area and within the Council’s influence. The Council, and any committees etc. of the Council, will consider sustainability, environmental impact, and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways subject to legislation so allowing:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications;
- support the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices in the Council’s operations;
- support residents and local organisations’ activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

The Council owns no land or buildings but if that situation changes then the policy will be reviewed. The Council will however, continue to strive to source sustainable materials whenever practicable when procuring supplies and equipment for the Council’s use.

The Council notes that the biggest single action it can take to promote the biodiversity duty is in influencing future development of the environment by commenting on planning matters. Developments, especially housing developments, which take account of biodiversity issues in the initial planning stage and throughout construction and which conserve and integrate existing habitats or provide new habitats are more likely to have a positive long-term beneficial impact on biodiversity (net-gain). The Council will also include policies in support of biodiversity within the emerging draft neighbourhood plan.

When commenting on planning matters, the Council will:

- support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats (whilst retaining the right to comment or object to other aspects of any such applications);
- support the protection of sensitive habitats from development;
- consider whether any development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife;
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.

This policy will be reviewed after every ordinary election or sooner should legislation dictate.

Draft Statement on Duties Related to Biodiversity

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, every public authority in exercising its functions must have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Desborough Town Council's aim is to care for the environment through its own policies and practices, and by encouraging others to do the same. The Town Council will endeavour to be as conscientious as possible about biodiversity, conservation, and the use of resources, in both its own activities and in any influence it has on the actions of others.

Desborough Town Council's current practices and initiatives to improve biodiversity include:

- drastically reducing printing and copying;
- buying green where possible;
- reducing and removing single-use plastics from the Council's operations where possible;
- minimising waste going to landfill or incineration;
- Considering the possible replacement of Christmas lights with low energy LED or solar powered lights;
- providing funding to replace the speed indicator signs with solar powered signs;
- setting money aside for planting trees on other people's land, and using indigenous species as far as possible;
- considering the environmental implications of procurement and travel decisions, and preferring public transport where practical and cost effective.

The Council aims to:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website;
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can make a difference;
- work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote, and enhance biodiversity within the council's area;
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the draft neighbourhood plan;
- over time, review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

This statement will be reviewed after every ordinary election or sooner should legislation dictate.

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Planning and Licensing Matters

Click the underlined text to go to details of the application on the Planning Portal of North Northamptonshire Council (link is outside the Town Council's control).

Application:	AOC/0169/1715
Location:	North Desborough (land at), Desborough (Bellway Homes East Midlands Ltd)
Proposal:	Condition No. 25 (Contamination) of KET/2017/0169
Biodiversity issues:	Yes - contaminated land
Application:	AOC/0230/2101
Location:	Buxton Drive & Eyam Close (land off), Desborough (Avant Homes Midlands)
Proposal:	Condition No. 23 (Surface water verification) of NK/2021/0230
Biodiversity issues:	Yes - contaminated land
Application:	AOC/0230/2102
Location:	Buxton Drive & Eyam Close (land off), Desborough (Avant Homes Midlands)
Proposal:	Condition No. 20 (water use) of NK/2021/0230
Biodiversity issues:	Possible - water use
Application:	AOC/0356/2105
Location:	Desborough North (land at), Desborough (Bellway Homes (East Midlands))
Proposal:	Condition No. 5 (external lighting) of NK/2021/0356
Biodiversity issues:	Yes - lighting
Application:	AOC/0321/2302
Location:	Manor House, Gold Street, Desborough
Proposal:	Condition No. 4 (Roof slates) of NK/2023/0321
Biodiversity issues:	None identified
Application:	NK/2024/0016
Location:	50-52 (land rear of), Rushton Road, Desborough
Proposal:	Variation of condition 2 of KET/2017/0903 in respect of approved plans for plot 7
Biodiversity issues:	None identified
Application:	NK/2024/0069
Location:	13 Roman Way, Desborough
Proposal:	Conversion of garage into habitable accommodation and store with change of roof from flat to pitched. Amended fenestration throughout with insertion of window to side and door to rear
Biodiversity issues:	None identified

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Finance Report
Monthly Bank Reconciliation (31/01/2024)

Unity Trust Bank Current	£3,561.61
Unity Trust Bank Saver	£94,334.05
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£166,075.37
Reconciled Balance	£263,971.03

The dividend from the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund is reinvested each month into the fund. The dividend reinvested was £1,035.64.

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Accounts for payment

Items may be added or adjusted as information is confirmed.

	Power	Supplier	Description	Reason	S137	VAT	Total Amount
+	1	Lloyds bank	Town Council Office	Lloyds bank card fee	-	£0.00	£3.00
+	1	Unity Bank	Town Council Office	Bank charges	-	£0.00	£18.00
+	4	LGSS Pensions, HMRC, and Mr G Thomson	Salaries & all Employment Costs	Pension & salary payments (Feb)	-	£0.00	Tbc
+	1	Desborough Library and Community Hub	Town Council Office	Office Rent	-	£0.00	£798.00
+	2	Talk Talk Business	Town Council Office	Internet and telephone	-	£8.33	£49.96
	1	Starboard Systems	Town Council Office	Scribe software	-	£93.60	£561.60
	6	Society of Local Council Clerks	Membership and Subscriptions	Membership 2024/25	-	£48.00	£288.00
+	1	Harlequin Printer supplies	Administration	Ink cartridges	-	£8.00	£47.99
+	1	Co-operative food	Administration	Postage	-	£0.00	£6.00
+	4	Autela Payroll Services	Salaries & all Employment Costs	Payroll	-	£0.00	£57.98
+	25	Zoom Video Communications	Administration	Computer Software	-	£0.00	£155.88

Rights, Duties and Powers

+ Paid in accordance with delegated or continuous authority

1 Local Government Act 1972 s.111 & s.150

4 Local Government Act 1972 s.140 & s.140A and s.145 & s.150, Local Government Act 2000 s.101

2 Local Government Act 1972 s.112

6 Local Government Act 1972 s.143

25 Local Government Act 1972 s.111

1. Guidelines for Grant Applications

- 1.1. It is a condition of any grant ~~application~~ funding that the activity must bring direct benefit to the residents of Desborough ~~commensurate with the expenditure incurred~~. The Council cannot give financial assistance to individuals under this Policy.
- 1.2. Grant Aid application forms will ~~be~~ remain available on the Council's website and when completed, must be submitted along with ~~details of the purpose for which the grant is requested, a breakdown of costs with estimates,~~ the latest set of the applicant group's accounts, and other required documentation ~~and information~~.

Applications will be considered by a Community Grants Advisory Panel in ~~the month~~ following application closing dates ~~at the end of January, April, July, and October. The Advisory Panel as shown in the table, and the Advisory Panel~~ will present recommendations to the Council. The grant recommendations will be considered by the Council at the subsequent Council meeting and any payments made thereafter.

Relevant dates are:-

Action	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Application closing dates	30 Apr	31 Jul	31 Oct	31 Jan
Community Grants Advisory Panel consideration	May	Aug	Nov	Feb
Council decision expected consideration	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar

- 1.3. National Charities are unlikely to be supported unless it is for a specific project in Desborough where there will be obvious benefit to the Council's area.
- 1.4. ~~In accordance with the Local Government Act 1894, the Council will only grant aid churches for town clocks and possibly for environmental purposes. Church Halls can be grant aided if they are used by the community.~~
- 1.5. Schools will only be grant aided for environmental purposes or, if in the opinion of the Council, their application is for the benefit of the wider community.
- 1.6. At the discretion of the Council any organisation or group with permanent bar facilities in operation may be excluded.
- 1.7. Grants will not be payable to or for any commercial venture for private gain ~~unless providing a community service~~.
- 1.8. Grant applications cannot be made retrospectively ~~or for any works or purpose already commenced~~.
- 1.9. The Council reserves the right to refuse any grant application which they consider to be inappropriate or against the objectives of the Council.
- 1.10. All grants must only be used for the purpose for which they were awarded unless the ~~prior~~ written approval of Desborough Town Council has been obtained for a change in use of the grant monies; ~~and that any~~ Any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the Council by the end of ~~the financial year in which~~ ~~twelve calendar months from the date~~ it was awarded.
- 1.11. Grant recipients must provide a written report to the Council on how the grant has been spent, together with satisfactory evidence including copies of quotes and invoices, that the grant has been used for the purposes approved ~~by the end of twelve calendar months from the date it was awarded~~.

- 1.12. ~~As a condition of grant funding,~~ Grant recipients may be ~~asked~~ **required** to acknowledge Council support, for example in any press releases, on stationary, and on promotional material.
 - 1.13. The Council reserves the right to reclaim the balance of any funds ~~not spent in accordance with the approved grant application~~ left unspent ~~after one year of receipt.~~ **by the end of twelve calendar months from the date it was awarded.**
 - 1.14. **The Council reserves the right to reclaim any funds not spent in accordance with the approved grant application whether already spent by the grant recipient or not.**
-