

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT 8.00 PM ON TUESDAY 1 JUNE 2010  
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs Cheesman (Chairman); Bevan; Butler; Weeks; Roberts; Ladds; Mrs T. Irving (Clerk); Vikky Quinnell (part); Cllr David Marchant (MBC).

**1 APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Greenhead & Cllr Chainey – work commitments; PCSO Stevens; PC Tallon.

The Chairman stated that she would like ‘Councillor Vacancy/Co-option’ (Item 8) brought forward in case a new member is elected and wishes to participate in the meeting.

**Councillor Vacancy/Co-Option.** The Borough Council has confirmed that co-option is in order as an election has not been requested.

Mrs Quinnell was asked to adjourn from the meeting whilst her application was considered. Mrs Quinnell was then asked to rejoin the meeting & was advised that her application had been considered favourably. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed. Clerk to advise MBC of Co-option & forward paperwork.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None.

**3 POLICE REPORT**

**DOWNSWOOD CRIME FIGURES** (Report forwarded to the Clerk)  
From 15 April to 29 May 2010.

15.05.10. Theft of money from youth’s bag whilst playing manhunt in Mallards Park.

14.05.10. Damage to a motor cycle parked in lay-by at Ravens Dane Close.

01.05.10. Theft of handbag left on bench in play area at Mallards Park.

- Smart Water – Item deferred to July’s meeting.

**4 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR’S REPORT** – No Independents have seats on the Scrutiny or Standards Committees. However, Cllr Marchant has now got a seat on the Standards Committee and will be staying on Transport and LDDAG.

Clive English is still requesting a representative for the Neighbourhood Forum.

Cllr Marchant warned of a telephone call he had received from an unobtainable number. The caller was foreign and claimed to be from Social Services, enquiring ‘How are you’?

A meeting was attended at Foxden Drive Play Area with MBC Officers and the Clerk with a view to discussing an Ash tree which overlooks a private garden and has been causing problems for the family. Youths have been climbing the tree & shouting abuse at the children.. Branches will be trimmed and one of the branches will be cut off where there is a fork.

**5 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** – Not available.

**6 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

None raised.

**7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 MAY 2010:** Following amendment to *'Balance of Current Account should be '£20,770.02 credit' not '£18,770.02'* the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

**8 MATTERS ARISING:**

**Mallards Way.** A site meeting was attended by Tony Morris (MBC), Mary Tate (MVCP), Jeff Davis/Nick Delahay (LVPAS), Roz Cheesman, Cllr Marchant and Teresa Irving (Clerk). Work is needed to repair a breach in the river (Otham side). LVPAS to repair work on a voluntary basis, once permission is obtained by MBC. Area around lake - where the lifebuoy is - has been eroded by wildlife again. Various options to overcome this were discussed, including a ramp for the wildlife to enter/exit the lake.

MBC to investigate whether they can help by providing labour or materials for the project. Despite asking several times, LVPAS have not been given a signed copy of the lease – the last draft copy was provided a couple of years ago,

Investigations are taking place to determine whether Siltex can be used in October (to be funded by LVPAS).

**Orchard Spot Roundabout.** A meeting was attended by Cllr Weeks and the Clerk to discuss the roundabout. The officer in charge of the work did not attend the meeting, but sent a deputy. A plan of action was discussed and a quotation was requested in time for June's meeting, but this has not been forthcoming. Further concerns were expressed as some of the heathers are dying where the roots have not been eased out, the ragstones are inadequate and the ground is full of weeds. Clerk to pursue the matter with MBC and state that councillors are totally dissatisfied with the work. Another meeting to be set up with the responsible officer; Cllrs Weeks/Marchant and the Clerk to attend. Cllr Marchant suggested the Cabinet Member is copied in on correspondence.

Cllr Quinnell left the meeting at 9.05 due to a recent family bereavement.

- **Foxden Drive Play Area** (see also Item 4). The PC will be invited to comment on a Management Plan once it is drawn up by the Borough.

**CCTV** – Installation has been delayed as the Surveillance Controller is on annual leave for three weeks. Disappointing comments which appear on the DCA's website were discussed.

- **Website/Newsletter** – Website to be updated with the latest edition of the NL.
- **Councillor Vacancy/Co-option** - See Item 1.
- **Garden Competition** – Hugh Vaux to judge competition on 22 June accompanied by Cllr Butler. Those councillors that have not submitted their shortlist are requested to do so as quickly as possible.

**9 URGENT MATTERS:**

- Directional signposts (numbers) to be requested for Cotswold Gardens.
- Branches from tree near Foxden Drive bus stop (heading towards Maidstone) are hitting buses.
- Litterbins full in Old Spot Lane. Clerk advised the meeting that two additional bins are being provided by MBC.

- News that a youth club is being set up in Bearsted to be investigated by Clerk to determine whether Downswood youths can attend.

## 10 FINANCE

### i) Donation Requests:

#### Items for payment

Balance of Current Account £21,903.64 credit, after all cheques sent.

Balance of Investment Account £9,938.62 credit.

The council confirmed approval of the following payments:

Heart of Kent Hospice	Donation	200.00
Ryan Perkins	Newsletter Delivery	50.00
Jim Noyce	Litterpicking (May)	243.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary & Expenses (May)	911.33
Peeks of Bournemouth	Prizes for DCA Fete	71.24

### Cheques Received

Caxtons	Litter Picking Contribution	182.00
DCA	“ “ “	62.50
HM Revenue & Customs	VAT Refund	2,364.69

- ii) **Risk Assessments** – Cllr Weeks has arranged for an electrical inspection of equipment on a date TBA.

**Standing Orders.** In view of comments received from Auditing Solutions, it was agreed to delay amendments to Standing Orders for the time being.

iii) **Internal Audit Report.** The Annual Return has been signed off by Auditing Solutions with no items giving cause for concern. Two recommendations are noted on the Action Plan: 'R1 The statutory Accounts of the Council, as summarised in the Annual Return at Section 1 should be prepared on a receipts and payments basis, reflecting only moneys received and payments released during the course of the financial year'.

R2 Litter picker.....consideration to be given to placing him on an appropriate spinal point on the NJC national salary scale.'

(A copy of the full report has been circulated to councillors for information purposes).

The Annual Return will now be sent to the Audit Commission.

- v) **Other matters to report** – None.

11 **DCA SUMMER FETE.** Meet at 10.30 am (with watering cans) to start setting up.  
1 Gazebo will be required.

12 **CLERK'S REPORT** – The damaged notice board has been repaired to a very high standard by Mr. Edward Cheesman, free of charge. The quotation received from MBS amounted to £147.50. The Parish Council would like to record a formal note of thanks to Mr. Cheesman.

13 **REPORTS FROM SEMINARS ATTENDED** – None.

**14 PLANNING** – Nothing to report.

**15 COMMITTEE REPORTS** – None available.

**16 CORRESPONDENCE**

- **Safer Kent Awards** – It was agreed that PCSO Stevens should be nominated for an award. Cllr Butler to complete form.
- **ACRK – Rural Community Retailer of 2010** – No entry to be submitted this year.
- Card received from 5<sup>th</sup> Bearsted Brownies thanking the PC for the recent donation.
- **KCC** – Highways and Waste Directorate: Statement of Community Involvement: Draft for consultation. Clerk to circulate document by email for comment.
- **Hi-Kent** – Summer Ball on Friday 11 June (details to be emailed).
- **KALC** – ‘The Progressive Council’ training to be held on 19 June. (Details to be emailed).
- **KCC** – Expect Respect Campaign

**17 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING** – Please inform the Clerk at least one week prior to the meeting.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05 pm.**

**DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 6 JULY, 2010.**