

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT 8.00 PM ON TUESDAY 2 JUNE 2009
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Cheesman (Chairman); Bevan; Ladds; Greenhead; Chainey; Weeks; Cllr Marchant (MBC); Mrs Irving (Clerk); PCSO Stevens (part); + four residents (part - Mr. Wright, Mr. Buck, Mr. Prescott & Mr. Chainey).

1 APOLOGIES: Cllr Clark (illness); Cllr Roberts (work commitment); Cllr Butler (holiday); Chris Chainey.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Cllrs Greenhead & Weeks re. item 14 i) Heart of Kent Hospice.

3 POLICE REPORT

13 May 2009 up until 1 June 2009.

22/05/09 Theft from shop – shoplifting.
Deringwood Drive.

Offender has been into the shop with her mother and paid for the goods and apologised – owner states that he does not want to take this any further.

30/05/09 Gorham Drive
Theft of items taken from property.

Telephone calls have been received in relation to nuisance vehicles and groups of youths gathering in the car park, to the rear of the shops*. PCSO Stevens stated that it is important that as many people as possible telephone the police to ensure these incidents are logged. Following a report that DPC's camera has not been working, Clerk to request dates that it was not operational. Clerk also to request return of mobile CCTV unit. Cllr Marchant suggested the Clerk makes contact with MBC's Anti Social Behaviour Team & Safer Maidstone Partnership.

4. ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

*Questions were raised regarding the above.

5. APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2009: The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

6 MATTERS ARISING:

- **Traffic Calming.** KHS Officer has agreed to view area to establish maintenance situation.
- **Foxden Drive Play Area/Hedge.** Quotation received from John Britcher via MBC for reducing hedge to 3m in height and shape as stated in report. It was resolved to accept the quotation in the sum of £300.00. Clerk to write to residents to advise of forthcoming tree works.

- **Orchard Spot Roundabout** – Cllrs Bevan & Greenhead suggested pieces of ragstone are cemented in place with heathers planted around. Clerk to contact Robert Boyd-Howell to request ragstone.
- **Additional CCTV** – MBC are checking whether a signal is available from an alternative network provider (this will mean a cost saving of £1,000 per year).
- **Annual Parish Meeting Report.** Due to the consistently low number of residents attending the APM, it was agreed that speakers will not be invited next year & the meeting will be held half an hour before the normal monthly DPC (May) Meeting.
- **Summer Sweep** – Brownies have a conflicting event, but they will try to attend for a short period.
- **Additional/Replacement Grit Bins.** Copy of KHS winter maintenance policy obtained which confirms they are reviewing their Winter Service Policy. Therefore until the review is complete, any requests for salt bins are being declined. KHS Liaison Officer to make contact with Clerk to confirm what the new approved policy states.
- **Planting Scheme.** Golden Hill Nursery has visited map locations and advised an additional £375 will need to be added to their quotation (making total quotation £1,644.00) to allow for clearing of overgrown undergrowth etc. A resolution was passed to accept the quotation.
- **DCA Fete.** It was noted that there was not as much advertising for this year's fete. Prizes have been purchased from Peeks (as agreed by email). Cllr Cheesman will use any left over prizes on the WI stall at Bearsted & Thurnham Fayre, with costs recharged accordingly.
Cllrs available to assist with the fete are requested to be at the Community Centre from 11.00 am onwards.

7. URGENT MATTERS: Proliferation of rubbish in Foxden Drive Play Area.

8. KENT INTERNATIONAL GATEWAY: The JPG finances were discussed. It was agreed that DPC would continue to contribute (one member abstaining) at a cost of £393.53 per month, for the three next months. JPG will be reviewing the cost in September '09.

9. GARDENING COMPETITION – Majority of shortlists have been received in readiness for the judging on 8 July. Cllr Ladds volunteered to undertake shortlist for Willow Rise/Len Valley Walk/Chiltern Close.

10. CLERK'S REPORT – No response from David Nuttall to date regarding KM Anniversary Tree planting. MBS have promised to check availability of guard & will advise accordingly.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS – None available.

12. REPORTS FROM SEMINARS ATTENDED – None attended.

13 PLANNING.

New Applications.

MA/09/0634 – 86 Murrain Drive

Erection of a single storey side/rear extension.

DPC do not wish to comment.

14 FINANCE

i) Donation Requests:

DCA External doors + Modernisation proposal. DCA have been advised by MBC that they will require planning permission for replacement doors.

Wish list includes; new central heating boilers, new units and sinks for the kitchen, improvement to the fire exit (next to ladies) and slope down to Chiltern Close footpath, new vanity unit/basins in ladies toilet & new basins & urinals in the gents. Clerk has again requested timescales/costing for the above.

Kent Air Ambulance – Request for textile bank to be forwarded to DCA.

Kenward Trust – It was resolved to donate £250.00 (S137) in response to the request

The Heart of Kent Hospice – It was resolved to donate £150.00 (S137) in response to the request.

ii) Subscription Request: Kent County Playing Fields Association. Members resolved not to subscribe this year.

iii) Items for payment

Balance of Current Account £21,927.55 credit, after all cheques sent.

Balance of Investment Account £9,911.72 credit.

The council confirmed approval of the following payments.		£
KCC (KCS)	Newsletter Printing	131.25
PCC of Otham with Langley	Churchyard Donation	150.00
H. Newman	APM Speaker	60.00
Peeks of Bournemouth	Prizes for DCA Fete	76.28
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary & Expenses (May)	839.74
J. Noyce	Litter Picking (May)	244.20

Cheques received:

Gorrings	Newsletter Advertisement	105.00
HM Rev & Customs	VAT Refund	4,253.83
DCA	Litter Picking Contribution	62.50
Caxtons	“ “ “	182.00

iv) Internal Audit Report. Auditing Solutions Internal Audit Report 2008/09 was reviewed. The Clerk responded to comments raised in the report as follows:

- Contrary to the comments in the report, Auditing Solutions Internal Report for 2007/08 was discussed & recorded in the minutes- see 01.07.08 Minutes Item 14 iii).
- A Statement of Variance was prepared and accompanied the Annual Return (submitted to the Audit Commission last week, to arrive by the requested date of 1 June).
- The Clerk is not reluctant to prepare the accounts on a spreadsheet. However, as the previous RFO had purchased a new ledger at a cost of £63.20, it seemed sensible to make use of it.
- Out of pocket expenses were, originally, included in staff costs. The spreadsheet prepared by AS was incorrect. Expenses for May & June were: £165.04 (not

£147.62) & £61.45 (not £56.69) respectively. Item 4 - Staff Costs – was reduced to read £13,250 & Item 6 - Total other payments - was increased to £33,514 accordingly.

- The three missing vouchers referred to are; 19 - DCA (Fete proceeds from last year) £30. 34 - Downswood FC (£100 donation) - receipt requested but not returned. 56 - Alex Torbica (£20 Youth Achievement Award). This cheque has not been cashed (this has previously been chased by the Clerk). Again, a receipt was requested but not returned.
- VAT element of phone bill & other minor expenses (i.e. ink cartridges) not reclaimed. Clerk to check whether she is correct in her understanding that invoices have to be made out to DPC, and that invoices made out personally to the Clerk are not acceptable.
- It was agreed to contact insurers to enquire about a reduction in fidelity guarantee cover.
- Section 1, Box 9 was left blank at the time the Annual Return was submitted to Auditing Solutions as an estimate was awaited from Gala Lights on the current value of the motifs. Upon receipt of the information, the Clerk emailed Cllrs to advise that a value of £4,000 had been suggested by Gala Lights. At the agreement of members, £4,400 was then entered in Box 9 (+ £400 for the computer, allowing for depreciation).
- It was agreed that CCTV should be considered for "self-insurance". Clerk to make enquiries.

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

15 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE. A draft Complaints Procedure - as prepared by KALC – had previously been emailed to Cllrs for their consideration. Following Cllr Marchant's advice, it was agreed to delay the adoption of the procedure until comments are received from the Borough's Standards Committee.

16 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES – None.

17 CORRESPONDENCE. KHS – Speed Limit Review. To be considered by cllrs with comments made to the Clerk prior to the deadline of 3 August. Additional, non urgent, correspondence included in circulation pack.

18 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – No further matters to report.

19 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING: Please advise Clerk prior to the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 7 JULY 2009.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.00 pm.