

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT 8.00 PM ON TUESDAY 7 APRIL 2009
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Cheesman (Chairman); Bevan; Butler; Ladds; Greenhead; Chainey; Roberts; Mrs Irving (Clerk); PCSO Stevens (part); Mr Chris Chainey. Three representatives from the DCA (part); Vanessa Meads, Diane Thompson & John Everett.

1 APOLOGIES: Cllr Clark (illness); Cllr Weeks (work commitment); PCSO Stevens (rest day).

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: - Cllr Roberts - Item 11. Cllr Cheesman - Item 17.

3 POLICE REPORT

Crime figures from 01/03/09 up until 04/04/09.

08/03/09. Ravens Dane Close. Criminal Damage to vehicle window

10.03.09. Murrain Drive. Theft of motor vehicle.

14.03.09 on pavement of Grampian Way. Garden pot that was positioned outside of property smashed

16.03.09 in car port to the side of Ellenswood Close. Theft of pedal cycle.

4. ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

5. APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3 MARCH 2009: The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Note. A minor amendment was made to Item 6 of minutes dated 03/02/09 '*4 November 2008*' was changed to '*4 December 2008*'.

6 MATTERS ARISING:

- **Mallards Way Open Space.** Mr. G. Newton's letter to MBC - dated 03/04/09 - regarding coppicing of trees during the bird nesting season was discussed. Cllr Cheesman stated the actions of LVPAS were "disgraceful" & concern was expressed by all present. Clerk to write to MBC stating DPC are not satisfied with what has happened & would like to see tighter controls on LVPAS. Clerk also to enquire what action MBC has taken/plans to take against LVAPS. Disappointment was further expressed that LVPAS had not supplied reports to DPC or attended meetings to explain their actions in person.

- **Foxden Drive Play Area.** Third quotation is still awaited to permit Clerk to apply to for 100% funding from MBC for replacement play equipment. It was agreed that an Ariel Runway is likely to be too noisy for the location and maintenance too costly. Therefore, it was agreed that a 'Buddy Swing' would be a better choice. Additional items to include; slide, roundabout, basket ball hoop and refurbishment of toddler swings.

- **Orchard Spot Roundabout** – Open Spaces Committee requested to come up with planting ideas that will meet the criteria of KHS Cultivation Licence.

Traffic Calming - Church Road/Deringwood Drive. Ball park figure of £5,000 has been received for extension of anti skid surface in Church Road. As KHS have advised DPC may be liable for maintenance of the surface for 10/15 years, Clerk to make enquiries with Toby Howe to clarify the position.

Additional CCTV – MBC confirmed that it will not be possible to locate the camera inside a cylinder. However, it will be possible to deploy the camera to alternative sites in Downswood providing power & 3G signal is available. Representatives from the DCA confirmed they are in agreement for the wall overlooking the car park to be used as one of the three suggested locations. Cllr Cheesman stressed how important it is to keep the area around the shops, ‘the heart of the parish’, clean and tidy.

It was resolved that DPC would proceed with the purchase of the camera as per quotation dated 17.02.09.

- **Newsletter/Website.** NL is currently in the process of being printed & is likely to be delivered in the next week. **Website** – Thanks were expressed to Cllr Butler for working on the new website. (Update to be provided soon).
- **Annual Parish Meeting/Annual DPC Meeting.** Mr. Newman has confirmed his fee will be £60. Mike Ramsden has confirmed he will be attending the APM to collect the donation for Otham Churchyard.
- **Summer Sweep** will be held in the Community Hall. Paul Simpson from Bearsted Community Church will not be available on the 11 July, but he will be requesting other members of the church to attend & advertising the event in various publications.
- **Additional/Replacement Grit Bins.** Clerk to enquire with KHS whether they are agreeable to proposed location of; Rhodewood Close, Murrain Drive and Mallards Way (close to steps leading to Cotswold Gardens).
- **Maintenance of Hollies.** New weeding schedule was circulated to Cllrs. If suggested dates prove to be difficult, Cllrs are requested to contact each other with a view to swapping dates.
- **Christmas Ceremony/Lights.** Approximate costing of £1,700 received from Gala Lights to replace existing filament bulbs with LED’s. In view of the long-term cost saving, it was resolved to accept the quotation.
- **DCA Fete.** Representatives from the DCA agreed DPC will be able to erect two gazebos for approximately four games. Full details of games to be provided to the DCA as soon as possible - Cllr Cheesman to check what is available.

7. URGENT MATTERS:

- Large amount of beer cans etc in wooded area (used for BMX riding) of Old Spot Lane.
- Branch overhanging section of footpath in Otham.
- Crack Willow at Mallards urgently requires attention.

8. KENT INTERNATIONAL GATEWAY: Time to respond to proposals has been extended to 29 May. Next JPG Meeting to be held on Monday, 11 May - Cllrs Cheesman & Ladds to attend. Group are discussing the preparation of one petition, possibly to include Larkfield and Aylesford.

9. GARDENING COMPETITION - Mr. Newman is not available to judge the competition. Mr. Chris Dyke - former Bearsted tree warden - to be asked to undertake judging.

10. CLERK'S REPORT.

- Bearsted Deputy Clerk has confirmed that she will bring the condition of Madginford's footpath to the attention of their Open Spaces Committee.
- The following quotations were obtained for the planning proposals & circulated to Open Spaces for consideration:

Paul Waring – £1,983.80

ALS - £1,618.80

Golden Hill Nursery - £1,269 .00

(GH has not visited the site. Whilst their quotation includes supply /planting & removal of top soil, it does not include removal of additional debris).

In view of concerns expressed by Paul Waring regarding lateness of season for planting/maintenance of plants during the summer, Clerk to make enquiries with GH regarding best time to plant. Request to be made for site visit to determine if any additional costs are likely to be incurred/advise on maintenance.

11. ALLOCATION OF SCHOOL PLACES. Well documented in the local press and a matter of great concern for parents of school children in Dowswood. Children offered places at New Line Learning Academy, rather than more local schools, will have to rely on an inadequate bus service. Promises made by Paul Carter to resolve the situation to be monitored.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS – None available.

13 REPORTS FROM SEMINARS ATTENDED – Cllr Cheesman and Clerk attended KHS Meeting on 17 March to discuss outstanding issues. Follow up meeting to be held in approx. three months.

14 PLANNING.

MA/09/0391 – 28 Gorham Drive.

Erection of an attached garage.

DPC do not wish to comment.

15 FINANCE

i) DCA Solar Project: Unable to proceed due to lack of funding.

Donation Request: External doors. DCA representatives advised three quotations have been obtained from; Southern Glass, Harlequin Windows and Glaze-Tech Services with a view to replacing all external doors at the centre. DCA's preferred supplier is Southern Glass at a cost of £7,592.00 (inc VAT). Additional option available at a cost of £1,370.00. It was agreed in principle that DPC would finance the project. Clerk to make further enquiries regarding VAT element & request to be made for quotations to be resubmitted in DPC's name. DCA to manage and liaise with landlord with a view to installation taking place during the summer '09.

ii) **Items for payment** (Inc. annual subscriptions(s); KALC)

Balance of Current Account £3,259.17 credit, after all cheques sent.

Balance of Investment Account £9,911.72 credit.

The council confirmed approval of the following payments.		£
W. Greenhead	Reimbursement of Website Charges	53.00
EDF Energy	Electricity for Christmas Lights	389.10
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE – Clerk	356.14
J. Noyce	Litter Picking (March)	243.00
T. Irving	Clerk’s Salary, Expenses (March)	745.70
KALC	Membership 2009/10	598.72

Cheques received: None

iii) Other matters to report – Donation request received from Downswood Under Fives Parent & Toddler Group for new tables. It was resolved that a donation be made in the sum of £250.00. A representative to be invited to the APM to receive the cheque.

16 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES – None available.

17 CORRESPONDENCE.

- Copy of letter from Mr & Mrs Letham of 37 Reinden Grove (emailed by Cllr Cheesman on 07/04/09) regarding proposed granny annexe was discussed. Cllr Cheesman will take no part in the Planning Committee’s decision making process due to being a near neighbour.
- Further correspondence included in circulation pack.

18 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr Marchant advised that the Scrutiny Committee is looking at the Borough’s assets. Mallards Open Space and the Safer Route to School are not mentioned.

19 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING:

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING –5 MAY, 2009.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.15 pm.