

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT 8.00 PM ON TUESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2008
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Cheesman (Chairman); Bevan; Butler; Greenhead; Laing; Ladds; Mrs Irving (Clerk); PCSO Stevens (part); Cllr Marchant - MBC (part) Cllr Clive English (part); two members of the public (part).

1 APOLOGIES: Cllr Clark (unwell); Cllr Weeks (family bereavement); Cllr Chainey (work commitment).

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

3 POLICE REPORT

Crime figures from 02/09/08 to 06/10/08.

04/09/08. Longham Copse. Criminal damage - tenant caused damage to water pipes.

16/09/08. Ravens Dane Close, Parking Area. Motor vehicle stolen. The vehicle was un-driveable and the owner said that it was going to be scrapped.

29/09/08. Horton Downs. Theft of motor vehicle (keys possibly left in ignition).

30/09/08 Community Centre Car Park. Theft from vehicle. Front near side window broken. A bag and spectacle case stolen.

30/10/08. Theft from vehicle, no damage to vehicle. No signs of forced entry, no marks on vehicle.

PCSO Stevens issued a reminder not to leave items on display where they may be an easy target for thieves.

PCSO Stevens is to make a request that the mobile police camera is reinstated by the car park, Chiltern Close. Clerk to contact MBC to the same end.

A request is to be made to the Parish Council for a donation towards 'yellow bands' for local children. PCSO Stevens to contact Clerk with figures.

Next Police Surgery will be held on Tuesday, 21 October between 7-8 pm.

Next PACT meeting will be held after Christmas (date tbc).

4 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC –
No questions.

5. CLLR CLIVE ENGLISH (MBC & KALC Representative) - Planning & KALC Queries.

Planning. Cllr English advised that a very good local advisory meeting was held yesterday. A new document re. residential extensions will be circulated shortly for consultation. Participation from Parish Councils will be welcomed.

Rural Conference will be held in November when it is hoped that Enforcement will be on the agenda.

In response to Cllr Cheesman's concerns regarding what will be allowed without planning permission, Cllr English stated there are still a lot of rules in place and most extensions will still require planning consent.

KALC. Cllr English explained that KALC membership can be likened to an insurance policy, with their services possibly only being required when there are technical or legal problems.

KALC have helped to secure changes to the Concurrent Function scheme in a positive way.

Two more planning training sessions have been arranged with MBC. (A workshop on Enforcement will take place in February).

Cllr English stated that he should be informed of any problems with Head Office in Folkestone & he will be happy to try and help sort them out.

Cllrs Marchant and English left the meeting.

6 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 AUGUST & 2 SEPTEMBER 2008: The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of proceedings

7 URGENT MATTERS:

- Traffic island on Deringwood Drive has been knocked over & requires attention.
- Vegetation around the old brick bridge, Spot Lane requires cutting back.

8 KENT INTERNATIONAL GATEWAY: Cllr Laing was unable to attend the last meeting. However, his business group will be holding a brain storming session prior to next meeting of 29/10/08.

9 MATTERS ARISING:

• **Mallards Way:**

Roundabout. KHS are looking into formalities regarding a Licence to Cultivate (this has been complicated due to their recent restructuring process). **Grass Verges.** As cars overrun the verge, concrete/asphalt has been ruled out by KHS as it would pose a health & safety risk. Clerk to enquire whether 'pyramid' type paving could be used. Clerk to ask The Orchard Spot to ensure deliveries are made via Deringwood Drive, not Mallards Way.

• **Foxden Drive Play Area** – Equipment for 2009/10 to be considered at Open Spaces Committee Meeting w/c 14/10/08.

• **Traffic Calming** – Church Road/Deringwood Drive. No further news from KHS.

• **Gardening Competition.** Rumwood Nursery very kindly stepped in at short notice to judge this year's competition. Due to high standards, it was resolved that a third prize of £15 would be awarded. Winning gardens are; 1st place 48 Reinden Grove, 2nd place 13 Rhodewood Close & third place 66 Longham Copse. Number 4 Pennine Way was selected as being 'very nice' and was highly commended.

• **Youth Achievement Award.** Alex Torbica has confirmed he will be attending the Christmas Ceremony to collect his award. Alexandra Adams to confirm attendance at a later date as she will be in training for an important swimming event.

- **Additional CCTV.** Clerk to keep chasing as MBC have still not responded. DCA to be approached as to whether they are able to contribute towards costs. (CCTV would cover part of Community Centre + main car park).
- **Newsletter Delivery.** A letter has been received from Michael Butcher in which he expressed his gratitude to the PC for the additional payment & for the opportunity of delivering the newsletter. Cllr Ladds to make further enquiries with Zoe Sturgess as she has expressed an interest in taking over the delivery.
- **Christmas Carols & Lights Ceremony.** It was resolved to accept the quotation from Hilights in the sum of £2,084.38 + VAT for installation/dismantling of this year's lights. Brownies have confirmed they will be attending. Jim Noyce to be requested to resume his role of Father Christmas.

10. GRASSCUTTING/REPLACEMENT FENCING (Parish Council land, rear of Murrain Drive). Open Spaces Committee to consider quotations at meeting w/c 13/10/08.

11. COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR 2009. Cllrs to give some thought as to whether additional event(s) should be pursued. Suggestions should be made to the Clerk in writing. Cllr Cheesman has circulated details of Applause performance group.

12 CLERK'S REPORT:

- The Honours Board has now been removed for updating.
- Following concerns regarding the gabion wall in Spot Lane, KHS have carried out an inspection & report it to be 'structurally sound'.
- KHS have stated that the hedgerow in Spot Lane is not protected.
- As a meeting has already taken place between MBC/LVP & AS and a decision made to continue fishing at Mallards, it was decided to abandon asking representatives to attend October's PC Meeting. Mr Gordon Newton is in the process of arranging a meeting with MBC to discuss fishing at the lake.
- David Nuttall has put together a plan for planting & will be forwarding to the PC in the near future for Open Spaces to consider.
- Still no response from MBC regarding; missing roundabout, replacement wooden posts at The Orchard Spot, vehicles parking inside Mallards and graffiti on climbing wall.
- Thanks to Cllr Butler for carrying out three of the weeding sessions scheduled for the hollies. Cllrs were reminded of their participation. (Cllr Bevan - W/C 27/10/08, Cllr Clark - W/C 24/11/08 & Cllr Chainey - W/C 22/12/08).
- The Clerk is considering changing internet provider (this will marginally reduce costs). Therefore, to avoid problems with emails in the future, is it recommended that the following email address is used; clerk@downswoodpc.kentparishes.co.uk

13 COMMITTEE REPORTS – Cllr Butler attended the KALC Local Branch Meeting of 23/09/08.

- Adam Wilkinson (Head of the part of KCC that includes KHS) has left KCC.
- PIPKIN is felt to be very unfair as 'points' for your suggested scheme are awarded according to how much it will reduce the air pollution, lower congestion etc which by their very nature seem to favour the urban areas. However, if a 'Rural PIPKIN' is introduced this may be unfair too as the necessary urban schemes may not receive funding.
- The KCC Reserves of £5 million have been wiped out due to the increased fuel charges.

- When developers are in the area and ruining roads, signs, kerbs etc, KCC have now decided that under the terms of the Kent Design Guide Parishes can ask for a pre and post development study to agree what damage has been done and can charge the developers accordingly.

Next meeting will be 20 January 2009, Town Hall at 7.30pm.

14 REPORTS FROM SEMINARS ATTENDED – Clerk attended Town & Parish Rural Liaison Meeting of 29/09/08. The meeting was poorly attended with the evening session being cancelled due to lack of interest.

- It was confirmed that MBC will not be proceeding with their proposal to deduct 10% from the Concurrent Functions scheme to give to Quality Parishes.
- Jim Boot would welcome suggestions for the agenda re. Annual Rural Conference (to be held on 22 November in Lenham).

Cllr Cheesman attended MBC's Ghurkha Ceremony for the unveiling of the tribute statue at Maidstone Museum.

15 PLANNING

New Applications

MA/08/1691 - 15 Frithwood Close

Conversion of integral garage & erection of new detached garage.

No objections.

Applications Granted

MA/08/1275 - 26 Cotswold Gardens

It was noted that there is a 'for sale by auction' sign in the garden.

Cllr Bevan to check drawings to ensure building work at 48 Longham Copse is being carried out as authorised.

Cllr Greenhead to attend meeting re. Training on Conditions and Section 106 Agreements on 17/11/08 at the Town Hall between 18.00-21.00 hrs.

16 FINANCE

i) Items for payment.

Balance of Current Account £2, 097.95 credit, after all cheques sent.

Balance of Investment Account £ 9,586.14 credit.

The council confirmed approval of the following payments.

		£
J. Butcher	Newsletter Delivery	80.00
Downswood FC.	Donation	100.00
KCC (KCS)	Newsletter Printing	137.50
HM Rev & Customs	Clerk's Tax & NI	239.85
J.A. Noyce	Litter Picking (Sept)	225.00
T.A. Irving	Clerk's Salary & Expenses (Sept)	706.81
BTCV	Tree Warden Scheme (Replacement Cheque)	100.00

Cheques received

Caxtons	Litter Picking Contribution (balance of amount o/s)	31.85
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As requested, the Clerk provided a projection of costs for the remainder of the financial year 2008/09.

Details	In	Out	Invest + Crrt Acct b/f
			13141.40
MBS (Mallards seat bases)		2390.99	10750.41
Donation - DFC		100.00	10650.41
Youth Achiev/Gard Comp		115.00	10535.41
D. Marchant - Devolved			
Budget	2000.00		12535.41
MBC - C/Functions	6385.00		18920.41
MBC - Foxden Grant	10000.00		28920.41
Litter Picking Cont	489.00		29409.41
Wages - Litter Picker		1575.00	27834.41
- Bin liners/Glvs		150.00	27684.41
Wages (net) - Clerk* (x 7 M)		4274.34	23410.07
- Expenses		680.00	22730.07
- Tax & NI		775.00	21955.07
Highlights		2084.38	19870.69
Gala		750.00	19120.69
EDF		450.00	18670.69
Christmas Ceremony		120.00	18550.69
Newsletter		181.25	18369.44
Wreath		35.00	18334.44
Bank Interest	650.00		18984.44
Murrain Fencing/Grass			
Cutting		1304.01	17680.43
Murrain Grass Cutting (MBC)		60.00	17620.43
Tree Planting		1000.00	16620.43

*At current rate

£3,017.61 VAT refund

ii) Other matters to report.

- Further information has been submitted to the Audit Commission to enable the audit to be completed.
- Open Spaces are requested to provide details of 2009/10 budget prior to November meeting.
- It was resolved to spend £35.00 from the Chairman's allowance on a wreath for Armistice Day.

17 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES – None available.

18 CORRESPONDENCE.

- Donation requests received from; Kent Congo & Willow Rise Pre-School. To be considered at November meeting.
- The Orchard Spot have confirmed that their annual firework display will be held on 2 November. Clerk to make enquiries regarding policing of parking. It was suggested that a 'brown' directional sign should be erected on Willington Street.

- Zurich Insurance Company. Legal notice regarding transfer of policies to the UK Branch of Zurich Insurance Ireland Ltd & planned change of name to Zurich Insurance plc on 01/01/09. There will be no changes to cover, premiums & policy terms and conditions will stay the same.

19 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT.

- Nothing further to report.

20 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING: Cllr Bevan requested a ban on fishing at Mallards to be considered between April-October.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 4 NOVEMBER, 2008

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05