

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 8.00 PM**

Present: Cllrs Weeks (Chairman); Fairhurst; Butler; Alden-Morris; Rajalingam; Brooks; Cllr Cooke (KCC); Mrs Irving – Clerk.

- 1 APOLOGIES:** Cllr Newton (conflicting meeting).
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO RECORD ANY ITEMS.** The Clerk
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** Cllr Weeks – Item 14.
- 4 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** None received.
- 5 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETINGS 5 JANUARY 2021:**  
The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and will be signed by Councillor Weeks at his earliest opportunity. **MW**
- 6 CRIME REPORT:** No new crimes reported on e-watch.co
- 7 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**  
Cllr Cooke will not be supporting KCC's 4.99% increase in the Precept as he believes there should be no increase.  
  
Cllr Cooke apologised for the confusion over the publicised Covid targeted testing. Door-to-door testing will take place in parts of the ME15 areas of Kent, a small number of households in ME16 & ME 17 will also be included.
- 8 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Not available.
- 9 REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE:** It was reported that only Willow Rise is hiring the centre at present.
- 10 FINANCE**
  - i. Items for Payment:**

<b>Cheques sent:</b>		
KCC (Highways)	Commando Sockets (Christmas Lighting)	288.02
HMRC	PAYE	106.67
M. Weeks	Expenses (Printer/Cartridges/Road Signs)	621.91
KCC (Highways)	Permit for Attachment to Columns	29.00
Paul Waring	Roundabout Maintenance	39.60
KCC Re. Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - Jan	349.25

J. Noyce	Litter Picker's Salary - Jan	313.92
Mrs T Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses – Jan	972.75

**From Whom Rec'd**

KCC	Combined Member Grant – Table Tennis +	2,500
KCC	Landscaping/Visual Enhancement	2,000
Caxtons	Litter Picking Contribution	500

Balance of Current Account: £21,540.30 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,604.38 credit

Acceptance of the previously circulated report was proposed by Cllr Alden-Morris, seconded by Cllr Rajalingam **RESOLVED**.

**ii. 2021/22 Budget Recommendation:**

The recommendations were circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

The budget has been broken down into mandatory and discretionary payments, with £12,500 held at the bank as reserves and the remainder to be spent on projects.\*

**iii Finance Committee Report/Recommendations including Reserves**

The report from the FC meeting of 20 Jan was circulated with a draft Reserves Policy for consideration.

\*Cllr Weeks proposed acceptance of the Reserves Policy and the Budget, seconded by Cllr Alden-Morris **RESOLVED**.

Thanks are recorded to Cllr Fairhurst for the time that he spent preparing the above.

**iv. Review of Standing Orders:** The following requests were made:

Clause 18 c to be removed – To remain as it's a regulatory clause.

18 d iii 'the invitation to tender shall be advertised *in a local newspaper or in any other* manner that is appropriate. Words shown in italics to be removed.

**Financial Regulations:** Reference to the Financial Reserve Policy to be included in the Financial Regs.

**Fixed Asset Register:** No amendments required.

It was queried why depreciation of the assets is not shown? The Clerk confirmed that the recorded value of the assets do not generally change from year to year. Relevant extract from guide to be circulated, although it was noted that this has been discussed previously.

The above was proposed by Cllr Weeks, seconded by Cllr Fairhurst.

**v. Donation Requests:**

**Heart of Kent Hospice** – A donation of £300 was proposed by Cllr Weeks, seconded by Cllr Fairhurst **RESOLVED.**

**DCA** – The Council regrets that they are currently unable to support the kitchen refurbishment project. Cllr Weeks requested that he speaks to the DCA Chairman with the news.

MW

**vi. Maintenance of Roundabout:** The quotation from Paul Waring was discussed. Acceptance proposed by Cllr Cheesman, seconded by Cllr Fairhurst **RESOLVED.**

**vii Other Matters to Report:** MBC has confirmed that the PSS grant for 2021/22 will be reduced by 20% from £297 to £238.

**11 PLANNING: New applications and Updates on Existing Applications:****Permitted Applications:**

20/503323 – Mallard Way Recreation Ground

20/505413/FULL - 23 Longham Copse

**Pending Applications:**

20/506090 – 17 Kings Acre

- **Planning Inspectorate Decision re 421 Dwellings Church Road.**

Members are very disappointed with the decision to uphold the appeal by Bellway Homes.

There is a need to ensure mitigation steps are put in place re;

Inability of traffic to deal with the width of Church Road

Traffic lights required for Deringwood Drive/Willington Street.

- **Campaign for Judicial Review.** MBC will be seeking independent advice for a JD. DPC has no powers in this regard and no financial resources to take it on. However, the Council would consider support for a review of the current planning process, if able to do so.

**12 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE:** See Item 7.

**13 EVENTS: OLYPICNIC/CHRISTMAS CEREMONY 2021:** It was agreed to delay the Olympicnic until 11 September as there is a greater chance that it could go ahead. Clerk to reschedule.

TI

The Clerk confirmed availability of the Community Centre for Saturday 4 December. This date was agreed for the ceremony, subject to the lifting of Covid restrictions and providing that it is considered safe to go ahead.

New motifs may be considered, subject to findings from load testing/budget permitting.

- 14 TABLE TENNIS QUOTATIONS:** Cllr Weeks declared an interest as the PlayFix representative is a relation.

Quotations from PlayFix and Red Lynch/Lappsett were considered. It was proposed by Cllr Cheesman, seconded by Cllr Alden-Morris **RESOLVED** to accept the PlayFix option at a cost of £2,280 (Cllr Weeks to place order).

**MW**

It was agreed that any surplus from the grant will be spent on bats/balls for use during the Olympic picnic. Alternatively, an application will be submitted to KCC requesting a transfer of surplus funding to the Planting/Visual Enhancement project.

- 15 OPEN SPACES/WILD FLOWER PLANTING:** Deferred to March meeting when it is hoped that a date for an Open Spaces walkabout can be agreed.

- 16 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:** Reference was made to a social media post on the Downswood Community Hub which states the litter in Downswood and Otham 'is terrible'. An individual is trying to recruit volunteers to have an independent litter pick.

Clerk requested to call the gentleman to advise that a litter picker is employed by the Council to clear certain areas in Downswood. In addition, voluntary litter pickers regularly tackle the issue.

**TI**

- 17 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS & ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you wish to be considered for future agendas.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55 pm

The next meeting will be held at 8 pm on Tuesday, 2 March 2021