

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Cheesman (Chairman); Greenhead; Butler; Weeks; Roberts; Carmichael; Pearson; Mrs T Irving (Clerk); Rajen Kantaria; Richard Young.

1 APOLOGIES: Cllrs Brooks (family commitment), Eady (detained in traffic); Cllr G. Newton – MBC; Cllr Cooke – KCC; PCSO Timon Gurr.

2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS – None.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations.

4 POLICE REPORT: 03/10/15 to 31/10/15
Bournewood Drive - Theft from motor vehicle.

1 x Anti-social behaviour call: - Outside shops on Deringwood Drive.
Shopkeepers and youths spoken to by PCSO.

5 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

The meeting was reconvened

6 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2015:
The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

7 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (Cllr Cooke): (Written Report provided).
No. 8 bus consultation. We were shocked to hear of this without having received formal notification as local elected Members, and this should not have happened. We have received an apology from officers, who erroneously only sent the consultation to the three Bearsted borough councillors (Mr Ash, Mr Cuming and Mrs Springett) and forgot Gary, Paul Carter and Cllr Newton.

The request came from Arriva some 2 years ago to try to improve bus time reliability along the no.8 route and was supported by the Maidstone Quality Bus Partnership Scheme (QBP). The QBP is made up of bus operators, KCC and the borough councils, who work together to improve bus services for residents. KCC agreed to investigate the scheme to see if it was feasible. A feasibility study was completed which judged that the scheme would be possible, should it be desired. The next stage was to conduct a small scale informal consultation with local residents to gauge opinion. This is what has recently been circulated by Amey on behalf of KCC.

In summary Arriva would like to send their no. 8 bus up and down Spot Lane rather than going through Downswood. The plans show in order to accommodate the buses the removal of traffic calming at each point pinch point and changing the priority of traffic. The option is to have speed cushions in place of the removed pinch point. Additionally there would need to be an extension of the carriageway at various points as marked on the plans.

The normal process would be to review opinion and then decide whether to progress to a wider full consultation with more stakeholders. However we have received assurance that we will NOT be progressing with the scheme without support from Members, and be assured that I am 100% opposed to this scheme due to the problems it will cause in Mallards Way.

Local Plan. There is a meeting of the JTB tomorrow evening, (one week later than promised by the chairman). This will look at traffic modelling for Maidstone with an emphasis on Maidstone South East. My understanding is that the modelling now demonstrates clearly what we've known for ages and that is the local road network is already overloaded and thus we now have the evidence to support highway objections to future local development proposals. I hope to be there to get such an assurance from officers.

8 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (Cllr Newton): Not available.

9 URGENT MATTERS:

- It was noted that the litter bin at the top of Church Road is regularly overflowing.
- Vegetation overhanging the footpath from both sides of Church Road/Deringwood Drive junction.
- Remembrance Day arrangements to be confirmed with Cllr Brooks.

10 FINANCE

Items for payment:

Balance of Current Account £19,578.63 credit, after all cheques sent
Balance of Investment Account £10,183.17 credit

The council confirmed approval of the following payments:

To Whom Payable

M. Weeks	Oak Tree Expenses	75.69
L. Greenhead	NL Delivery	75.00
J. Noyce	Litter Picker's Wages (Oct)	243.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary & Expenses (Oct)	842.66
KCC	Clerk's Pension (Employer + Employee Contributions)	201.67
R. Cheesman	Chocolate Coins (Christmas Ceremony)	9.90

Cheques Received:

MBC	PSS 2 nd Installment	314.50
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ii) 2016/17 Budget: Draft budget to be circulated for consideration prior to December's meeting.

iii) **Other Matters to report:** None.

11 PLANNING – Local Plan: Response has been submitted to MBC.

12 TREE PLANTING UPDATE: Oak tree was successfully planted on 17 October. This and the earlier plantings are all reported as doing well.

13 DEFIBRILLATOR PROPOSALS: It was unanimously agreed that no training will be undertaken. KALC has now provided a date of 8 Jan 2016 for all orders to be received at their offices.

14 CHRISTMAS CAROLS & LIGHTS CEREMONY:

Following the statement from KHS that all columns with motif attachments will require load testing on an annual basis, it was agreed to continue with arrangements for the ceremony & negotiate about the cost after. KHS has also expressed concern about the size of some of the decorations.

Cllr Butler to order supplies on a sale or return basis from the Convenience Store.

Cllr Greenhead agreed to play the role of Father Christmas.

Apologies from Cllr Carmichael due to other commitments.

Cllr Weeks to provide Christmas tree & Cllr Pearson will supply a disco ball.

Meeting at 4pm (to be ready for the 5.30pm start).

15 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:

DCA. Attended by Cllrs Cheesman & Greenhead. A 10% increase was suggested by the committee, as it was reported that hire charges have not increased since 2009.

KALC. Attended by Cllr Cheesman - minutes circulated.

16) PLAY AREAS/FOXDEN DRIVE HEDGE:

It is understood that MBC has put out the tender for the first year of play area works for across the Borough. Foxden Drive is on the list for the 1st year of works but is shown as not available due to arrangements already in place

It was agreed to request Steven Waring to carry out the hedge cutting (alternative quotation has not been received).

17) SPIRES MEDICAL CENTRE CLOSURE: Cllr Cheesman responded to Dr Paul Hobday letter in the KM but it was not published. Therefore she replied direct to Dr Hobday, with a copy to Helen Whately MP.

The meeting originally planned for November has been postponed as it has proved difficult to agree a date with NHS SE England & Dr Singh.

18 SSSI: The citation forwarded by Natural England refers to the site as 'the best cross-section through a series of cambers and gulls currently visible in Britain.'

It was agreed for a working party to start cutting back vegetation at 10.15 am on Saturday, 12 December. Representatives from KCC are also likely to attend as part of the Autumn Clean offer.

Clerk to make enquiries what can be used to stop regrowth, once buddleia etc. has been cut back.

19 NEWSLETTER: As articles have not been forthcoming, it was agreed that the Christmas poster will be printed and delivered separately. Newsletter will follow at a later date.

20 CARBON NEUTRAL P-ROJECT?: It was noted that the double glazing in the hall is no longer to the required standard and it is not clear if the cavity walls are insulated? Attempts are still being made to set up a meeting with DPC/DCA working group/KCC's Sustainability Projects Manager.

21 KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2016: Cllr Butler to investigate further & report back.

22 COMMITTEE REPORTS: None received.

23 CORRESPONDENCE: Various emails from residents objecting to the proposal to change the bus route – see item 7.

Notice of **Maidstone District Neighbourhood Watch AGM** – 25/11/15 at 7.30pm.

Various items circulated by email.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35 pm

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: 1 DECEMBER AT 8.00 PM