

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Cllrs Weeks (Chairman); Fairhurst; Cheesman; Rajaratnam; Butler, Fincham, Newton (DPC & MBC); Alden-Morris; Brooks; Mrs Irving – Clerk; Mr Everett & Ms Thompson (DCA & residents) + 2 further residents

- 1 APOLOGIES:** Cllr Cooke (KCC) Unwell.
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS.** The Clerk stated that she will be recording the meeting.
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** None received.
- 4 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

The meeting reconvened.

- 5 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 4 AUGUST 2020:**
The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Councillor Weeks.
- 6 CRIME REPORT:** Provided by PCSO Kirsty Greaves
2 Crimes of note:
Bin bags stolen – Ravens Dane Close
Push bike stolen – Ravens Dane Close

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:
Off road bike reports in (Old) Spot Lane – regular patrol.

- 7 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** (Submitted by email)
August has been a quiet month at KCC as it traditionally is - so there is little change from what I reported in July, nevertheless work continues and the following should be noted.

The financial challenge to balance the current budget post coronavirus remains immense, as does the challenge of the 2021-22 budget.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children also has also presented huge challenges and has proven beyond the resources of County to fully meet demand.

The return to school for Kent's young people has involved considerable planning and cooperation with public transport. Arriva should be running a full (pre coronavirus) schedule as of 1st September and in the mornings certain services have been designated "school use only" with some additional services also being provided. I'm sure there will be some problems but hopefully these

will be corrected as quickly as possible and the young people will be able to resume their education.

8 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

David Hatcher (CAARA) has written to MBC with a FOI request for details of meetings and all correspondence between MBC & Bellway Homes.

Cllr Newton has written to Martin Cox twice to ask why the request has not been responded to, but has received no response.

An increase of garden waste being thrown over fences has been noted.

Cllr Newton to provide the Clerk with details to enable MBC to be informed/ letters to residents to be requested.

GN/TI

Warnings to be added to social media/the website that offenders are liable to be prosecuted.

MW/AF
/TI

Future incidents to be reported to the Clerk to allow them to be dealt with.

Cllr Newton & MBC have removed some of the graffiti that has recently appeared.

9 REVIEW OF COVID 19: No new news to report.

10 CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND LIGHTS: 5 DECEMBER 2020: It was **RESOLVED** that the lights will go ahead as usual, but a decision on whether a ceremony will be possible was deferred until October's meeting. This will allow more time to see how the government restrictions for the pandemic have moved forward.

11 REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE: Mr Everett reported that in line with government guidelines, some more groups have been able to return to the centre. Additional T & C's have been issued to users. Whilst some have chosen not to return, these will be replaced by new groups including; a breakfast/after school club, a sewing club and a sign language group for children. Weddings and large private parties cannot be catered for.

Unfortunately the DCA has not been able to run their usual fund raising events which has reduced their income in a big way. However, £17,500 has been raised in grant funding*. The management remain optimistic that things will return to some sort of normality next year.

The AGM will be held next Tuesday, 8 September.

*Due to successful fund raising, a grant is no longer requested from DPC.

12 LONGHAM COPSE HEDGE: It has been noted that the hedge is very overgrown as it was not cut back last year. It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from Paul Waring in the sum of £525.00 + VAT. This includes cutting the path side and top, clearing arisings off site and leaving the site clean and tidy.

13 WILDFLOWER PLANTING: Cllr Newton to start the project by approaching MBC to determine suitable sites in Downwood. (Possible sites could be on Deringwood Drive – by Downwood Stone, opposite Bournemouth Close – the wide verge by Reinden Grove or the bank adjacent to Mallards play area?). MVCP may also be able to assist?

GN

It is hoped that it will be possible to have children assisting with the project.

14 CONSIDER SAFETY MEASURES FOR STEPS AT ORCHARD SPOT ROUNDABOUT: Concerns were expressed regarding the steps on PROW KM80 which lead from the Orchard Spot roundabout to the SSSI. The steps are uneven and considered to be ‘somewhat lethal’ when wet, as they become slippery.

Clerk to request a site meeting with PROW officer and MW to see what measures can be taken to help.

TI/MW

15 FINANCE

i. Items for Payment

Cheques sent:

Zurich Insurance	Annual Premium	282.48
CPRE	Annual Membership	36.00
KALC	“ “	782.88
Paul Waring	Roundabout Maintenance	79.20
DCA	Hall Hire (Reissued Invoice/Cheque)	250.65
J. Noyce	Litter Picker’s Salary - July	309.72
Mrs T Irving	Clerk’s Salary/Expenses - July	965.94
KCC Re. Kent	Employer/Employee Pension	339.84
Pension Fund	Contribution - July	
J. Noyce	Litter Picker’s Salary – August	366.24
T. Irving	Clerk’s Salary/Expenses – August	969.97
KCC Re. Kent	Employer/Employee Pension	339.84
Pension Fund	Contribution – Aug	
RBLI	Tommies x 2	258.30

Cheques Rec’d

DCA	Invoice Reissued/Cancelled	306.35
	Litter Picking Contribution	137.50

Balance of Current Account: £32,589.09 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,528.58 credit

Approval of the above was proposed by Cllr Alden-Morris, seconded by Cllr Butler and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

- ii **Annual Return Update:** No news received from PKF Littlejohn
- iii Donation Requests: Following discussion, the following were proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** in accordance with LGA S137.
 - Air Ambulance - £150.00
 - Bearsted Parish Council Summer Play Scheme – Regret unable to assist
 - Folly Wildlife - £50
 - The Swan Sanctuary - £50
 - Marie Curie UK - £50
 - Red Cross – Regret unable to assist
 - DCA – Request withdrawn (see Item 11)
- iv Other Matters to Report: Cllr Weeks mentioned that he will be submitting expenses for materials used to repair the notice boards & the Mallards Way banners.

16 PLANNING (New applications and updates on existing applications)

- **Update re Church Road Outline Planning Application.**

MBC has submitted their statement to the Planning Inspector.
Cllrs Weeks and Fairhurst will represent the council at the Inquiry on 24 November.
It was agreed that a newsletter to inform residents what is happening will be prepared/delivered early November.
- **Update re FOI Report.** Cllr Newton’s FOI has been addressed.
Cllr Weeks has spent a considerable amount of time finding the information and it will probably be available to submit by the end of this week.

MW

17 RATIFY CANCELLATION OF PICNIC EVENT RE GOVERNMENT ADVICE: It was agreed that due to the restrictions currently in place, it is not possible to hold the event. All arrangements have been cancelled with no costs incurred.

18 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE: None received.

19 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA & ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- Outdoor Table Tennis
- It was asked how MBC’s project for Mote Park Lake might impact on the River Len? Cllr Newton has flagged with MBC (AF) that the river is full of debris and he has been assured they will be deal with it.

- DCA are unable to host a MacMillan Coffee Morning this year due to the restrictions.
- A tree is down on the Bearsted side of Spot Lane.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.17 pm

Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you wish to be considered for future agendas.

Date of next meeting: 6 October 2020.