

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Newton, Cheesman, Alden-Morris, Everett, Brooks, Fincham, Cllr Cooke (KCC), 3 members of the public.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllr Butler – Family commitment; Cllr Rajalingam – unwell,
2. **NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO RECORD ANY ITEMS:** None received.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** None declared.
4. **ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** None received.

The meeting was reconvened.

5. **COUNCILLOR VACANCY/CO-OPTION:** Confirmation has been received from MBC that co-option can proceed. One member of the public has expressed an interest in the vacancy and will advise her decision in due course.
6. **APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 5 OCTOBER 2021:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Newton.
7. **CRIME REPORT:** No new crimes in the parish have been reported on e-watch.com
8. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**
KCC are focusing on core business.
Reviews are being carried out of their estate - which comprises 600 buildings – as they will be thinned down. Whilst County Hall will be retained, a large area by the prison is being considered for alternative use.

Cllr Cooke attended a meeting with the West Kent CCG when access to GPs was discussed. It was noted that whilst the whole of West Kent has seen an increase in the population, Maidstone has seen the largest expansion.

An alternative site is being sought for Grove Green. Cllrs Cooke and Newton will be working together to see if The Spires Medical Centre can meet CCG requirements. The surgery has recently been used for inoculations.

The sad and sudden passing of KCC's Vice Chairman, Ann Allen, was noted.

9. **BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**
The draft Local Plan was discussed and voted on. After a lot of discussion and lobbying, it was agreed to progress the plan for submission to Regulation 19.

Cllr Newton stated that he has a great deal of sympathy for the residents of Lidsing where a 2,000+ homes development is being considered.

The safety of people in Brenchley Gardens continues to be discussed, with Cllr Newton championing the closure of the gardens at night, fencing erected and pyracantha bushes on the inside.

The town centre requires 'proper policing' at night, rather than PCSO's. CCTV in the town centre forms part of the discussion.

Five or six Liberal Democrats have moved away from the group and have formed their own Independent group.

Problems with the garden waste collection continues due to a shortage of drivers.

10. REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE:

All groups have now returned to the centre, although one small group has left.

Hiring fees will be increased by 5%, with the exception of children's parties which will remain at the same rate.

The car outside the centre has been reported to the police. MBC has also been requested to place an order on it.

The centre will be hosting a Quiz Night on Saturday, 13 November with tickets priced at £5 per person. Tables need to be booked in advance.

11. FINANCE:

i. Items for Payment

Royal British Legion	Wreath Donation (LGA S137)	50.00
Paul Waring	Maintenance – OS Roundabout	121.86
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary & Expenses (Oct)	988.61
J. Noyce	Litter Picker's Salary (Oct)	347.49
KCC Re Kent Pension Fund	Clerk's Pension (Employer/Employee Conts)	349.25
R. Cheesman	Expenses (Christmas Ceremony)	33.80
ICO	Data Protection Fee Renewal	40.00

Cheques Received:

Caxtons	Litter Picking Contributions	500.00
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Balance of Current Account: £35,871.44 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,604.38 credit

Acceptance of the previously circulated financial report was proposed by Cllr Cheesman, seconded by Cllr Everett and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

- ii. **Banking Procedures:** NatWest is unable to offer free of charge Community Bankline as this is only available to registered charities. It was agreed that the charges for an ordinary Bankline account are not acceptable.
Clerk to investigate accounts with Unity & Metro Banks. **ACTION: CLERK**
- iii. Majority of the work on the draft Financial Regulations has been completed.
Finance Committee to consider, prior to submission to full council. **ACTION CLERK/FC**
- iv **Financial Risk Assessment:** Having duly considered the document, the Council does not wish to make amendments. Proposed Cllr Alden-Morris, seconded Cllr Brooks. **RESOLVED**
- v **2022/2023 Budget Proposals:** Finance Committee will meet and set proposals for consideration at December's Full Council meeting. **ACTION: FINANCE COMM**
- vi **Other Matters to Report:** Accounts handed to Cllr Alden-Morris to carry out an interim audit. **ACTION: K. A-M**

12 **PLANNING: New Applications and Existing Applications Update:**

21/503538/SUB Land West of Church Road

Submission of Details to Discharge Conditions 9 (Ramp to Public Right of Way KM86), 11 (Pedestrian/Cycle Route Details), 35 (Pedestrian/Cycle Link to South), and 38 (Upgrade Works to PROW KM86), subject to the Appeal Decision of Application 19/506182/FULL

Following discussion of the application, DPC wish to object most strongly.

Cllr Everett had collated information which was passed to the Clerk.

Clerk to draft response for approval by the Planning Committee, prior to submission to MBC.

ACTION: CLERK/PLANNING COMM

21/503585 Land West of Church Road

Application for Variation of Condition 30 to vary the trigger point for the delivery of the Willington Street/Deringwood Drive improvements, to prior occupation of 100 units rather than prior to commencement above floor slab level) pursuant to application 19/506182/FULL (allowed on appeal) for - Residential development for 421 dwellings with associated access, infrastructure, drainage, open space and landscaping.

Transport Technical note added to website 28 October

Comments required by 15 November.

21/505109 – 4 Longham Copse

Erection of decking area in rear garden with wooden roof and creation of storage area (retrospective).

DPC do not wish to object to this application.

21/505728 – 15 Ellenswood Close

Single storey side extension

Comments required by 19 November

21/505762 – 12 Kings Acre

Erection of a two storey rear extension with pitched roof to gable end and a detached garden room including alterations to elevated garden and erection of retaining structure.

Comments required by 23 November

Applications Granted

21/504534 – 6 Redells Close

Applications Awaiting decision

21/504454 – 80 Murrain Drive

- 13 CHRISTMAS CAROLS & LIGHTS CEREMONY – 4 DECEMBER:** The load testing report has been received but it is unclear whether the test has been carried out in accordance with the information provided by DPC. The results will not permit motifs to be displayed in the usual fashion. Report is currently being checked.

Rev Pavey has confirmed that he would like to say a few words at the ceremony.

Cllr Everett and Ms Thompson kindly agreed to be Santa and an elf.

Event posters to be printed for the notice boards and A5 flyers to be delivered to all households.

ACTION: ALL

- 14 QUEEN ELIZABETH II PLATINUM JUBILEE (2022):** See also Item 15 – Bee Corridors. Due to pressure of work, Cllr Newton has not been able to provide a sketch of the plinth. This will be supplied in the New Year. The exact site for the plinth has been identified.

ACTION: GN

- 15 BEE CORRIDORS:** Notes of the meeting held on 15 October* circulated to all.

Following discussion of the various options that are available, it was formally agreed that Option B from the notes* is the plan that will be followed: *'Prepare ground at both locations and lay wild flower turf after Gordon erects the plinth.'*

Clerk to request quote from MVCP's volunteer group.

ACTION: CLERK

Bee friendly plantings to be located as follows: Deringwood Drive, on the left (coming from Willington St), just before Reinden Grove – with plantings at either side of the plinth. If affordable, 2 additional wild flower strips on the verge where the Downswood stone is sited. The first opposite the central refuge/Bournewood Close and the second a little further up towards Foxden Drive.

Project information & insect posts to be considered for the locations.

Visual enhancement grant – as provided by Cllr Cooke – to be used to fund the project.

- 16 HALLOWEEN TRAIL REVIEW:** The event was very popular and Cllr Alden-Morris was congratulated for running it. Approximately 30 maps were provided.

- 17 REMEMBRANCE DAY:** Cllr Alden-Morris will represent DPC by laying the Council's wreath at the Otham War Memorial. **ACTION: K.A-M**

Cllr Newton hopes to set the Tommies in a concrete boulder, with an anchor to secure.

ACTION: GN

- 18 CCTV Review:** The camera is fully accessible from the Community Centre, but a factory reset is required to allow access from mobile phones. Confirmation of the costing is awaited from NT Security. **ACTION: CLERK**

- 19 CONSIDER PURCHASE OF DPC A-BOARD:** Item deferred to December's meeting.

20 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:

- It was noted that the 'soakaway' at Mallard Way Open Space is, in fact, a manhole that collects silt before going into the pond. It is supposed to take water away but is not working properly, as one of the pipes is broken. KHS are arranging further investigation/repairs.

Cllr Fincham stated that water is still backing up from Mote Park.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.55 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8 pm on Tuesday, 7 December 2021

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