

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 8.00 PM  
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Cllrs Weeks (Chairman); Cheesman; Alden-Morris; Rajaratnam; Fincham; Newton; Butler; Mrs Irving – Clerk; Cllr Cooke (KCC); PCSOs Zachary Budde & John Boyd; Mr Everett & Ms Thompson (DCA & residents); Susan Skipp – Chapman Avenue Residents Association; 3 residents.

**1 APOLOGIES:** Cllr Fairhurst (family bereavement).

The apology and reason for absence was noted and accepted.

**2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS.** Cllr Weeks stated that he will be recording the meeting.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** Cllr Cheesman – Item 11 vi.

**4 COUNCILLOR VACANCY DUE TO RESIGNATION:** Thanks were recorded to Bill Greenhead who has regrettably resigned due to an imminent move and increased workload. He will particularly be missed for his role as vice chairman and the graphics that he provided.

**CONSIDER THE NEED FOR A VICE CHAIRMAN:** Following an email from Cllr Fairhurst to confirm that he was willing to be nominated for the role in his absence, Cllr Rajaratnam proposed Cllr Fairhurst, seconded by Cllr Butler and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED** until 2020 AGM when all roles/committees are reviewed.

Item moved forward to allow PCSOs to return to work.

**7 CRIME REPORT:**

PCSO Zac Budde advised the meeting that he is temporarily sharing responsibility for the area with PCSO Zoe Turner whilst new PCSOs are being trained.

No crimes reported in Downswood.

Dates for MPE fixtures have not been received. However, the PCSOs are limited in what they can do, as parking is not a police matter.

It was reported that the no stopping/waiting cones are helping the situation.

**5 ADJURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

The meeting reconvened.

**6 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 7 JANUARY 2020:**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were

subsequently signed by Cllr Weeks.

#### 8 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

- KCC's budget is still to be settled.
- 'Keep Maidstone Moving' has six highway improvement schemes, which aim to reduce congestion, travel times and pollution across Maidstone. The consultation runs from 29 Jan to 11 March

#### 9 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

- Cllr Newton advised the meeting that whilst he is not fully back in action, he attended a Policies and Resources meeting but is unable to disclose the content.
- A letter has been sent to Robert Jenrick regarding the proposed Church Road development.
- An increase in litter and dogs mess in the parish has been noted.

Cllr Weeks stated that he is glad to see Cllr Newton "back in the saddle".

Item moved forward for the benefit of members of the public

#### 12 PLANNING (New Applications and updates on existing applications)

- **Update re. Church Road Outline Planning Application**  
Revised outline objections were submitted just over a week ago. Subsequently, KCC submitted objections on highways grounds.

The application is expected to be heard at MBC's planning committee of 27 February. If this is successfully refused, the full application cannot proceed. Cllr Weeks and Mr Everett wish to speak at the meeting.

Tony Ellis is the main driving force in the planning sub-committee who have been working hard on objections for the full application. These will need to be submitted by 10 February.

All were thanked for helping to deliver the planning advice leaflets throughout the parish and beyond.

#### 10 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

- **CCTV (Update re training)**. A couple of dates have been proposed in April. These are being checked against the availability of the hall.
- **Spires Shops**. It was noted that the area is being better maintained recently. Monitoring to continue.

MW

ALL

**11 FINANCE:****i. Items for Payment**

**Balance of Current Account: £15,680.23 credit, after all cheques sent**

**Balance of Investment Account: £10, 528.58 credit**

<b>Cheques sent:</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
HOKH	Donation	300.00
DCA	Hire of Hall	306.35
J Noyce	Litter Picker's Salary – Jan	295.56
T Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses – Jan	976.32
KCC Re Kent Pension Fund	Employer/Employee Pension Cont Jan	282.08

**Cheques received:****From Whom Rec'd**

DCA	Litter Picking Contribution	137.50
NS & I	Interest	83.56

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

**ii Financial Regulations:** A draft document had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Weeks, seconded by Cllr Newton and unanimously agreed to adopt the document. **RESOLVED**

**iii Financial Risk Assessment:** Following a review of the document, it was agreed that:

- i. Cllr Butler to contact Clerk with details of contractor to carry out PAT testing of equipment.
- ii. GDPR to be included as a Governance Risk

**A-MB/  
TI  
TI**

Subject to the above, the document was agreed - proposed by Cllr Weeks, seconded by Cllr Fincham and unanimously agreed – **RESOLVED**.

**iv Fixed Asset Register:** Reviewed - no updates required **RESOLVED**

**v Review Standing Orders:** Reviewed - no updates required **RESOLVED**

**vi Consider Donation Request from Otham and Langley PCC:** A declaration of interest was made by Cllr Cheesman.

It was proposed by Cllr Weeks that a sum of £250 be transferred from the Open Spaces budget, seconded by Cllr Newton & and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED** in accordance with LGA S137

**vii Clerk's Expenses:** Clerk to request that OPC Chairman makes contact with DPC Chairman to discuss the way forward with regards to sharing the Clerk's expenses.

**TI/MW**

**viii Other matters to report.**

- Following the meeting with Aylesford Electrical (see Item 16), it was agreed to release the cheque in payment for the festive lighting.
- PSS Grant to be reduced by 20% from £371 to £297 for 2020/21.
- Gift for Bill Greenhead in recognition of services as vice chairman to be considered prior to him leaving the parish.

**13 SPEEDWATCH:** Cllr Cooke to consider rolling the grant provided during 2019/20 over to the next financial year.

GC

**14 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN:** Awaiting update re footpath extension.

KHS

**15 ROUNDABOUT MAINTENANCE:** Awaiting quotation from contractor for maintenance on a more frequent basis.

It was noted that the repairs previously carried by KHS have been damaged again.

**16 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:** Cllr Weeks and the Clerk attended a meeting with Aylesford Electrical on 28 January with a view to resolving the festive lighting issues.

It was suggested that, with the exception of the motifs at The Spires, timers are removed from columns. This will help to overcome many of the problems that are being experienced. Whilst the motifs will be illuminated 24/7, the energy costs for LED's are minimal and it will be more cost effective than call outs. Timers to be removed FOC and retained by DPC

**17 COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None received.

It was noted that Downswood Diggers will delay meeting until March to allow members to concentrate on the Church Road planning application.

**18 RECEIVE DCA UPDATES:**

Forthcoming events: As listed in January's minutes

Mr Everett stated that donations of very small wrapped eggs are required for the Easter Egg Hunt. DPC to include purchase of eggs as an agenda item.

**19 CORRESPONDENCE:** Various correspondence circulated by email for comment.

Photographs of damage to the wooden bridge in pedestrianised Spot Lane were passed to the Clerk by Mr Everett for attention.

TI

**20 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA & ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Dates of Parish Meeting & AGM

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 9.45 pm

Date of next meeting: 3 March 2020