

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 4 APRIL, 2023 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs G Newton - Chairman; R Cheesman; A-M Butler; K Alden- Morris; J. Cottis; B. Cottis; J Tournay; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk/RFO; Cllr Gary Cooke (KCC); 9 Members of the Public.

The meeting was delayed until 8.45 pm due to the Annual Parish meeting overrunning.

- 1. APOLOGIES:** Cllr Alex Pallant – work commitment.
The above reason for absence was noted and accepted.
- 2. NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO RECORD ANY ITEMS:** The Clerk for the purpose of minuting.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** Cllr Cheesman – Item 8.2 Donation for St Nicholas Church.
- 4. ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** No questions were raised during this session.
- 5. APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF 07.03.23:** Following deletion of text duplication ‘that they’ re Item 7.2, the minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Newton.
- 6. CRIME REPORT:** No new crimes reported on e-watch.co.uk.
- 7. REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**
 - 7.1 COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT:**
 - Buckingham Palace has announced that an official photograph of King Charles is now available. Cllr Cooke to forward the link to the Clerk, who will then request a photograph for the Community Centre.
 - The Community Safety Team and the Chief Inspector of Kent Police met with Cllr Cooke today. The issue of young people with catapults was discussed and it was confirmed that this is something that they are very aware of. The youths causing trouble in the parish are known to the police. A new system of policing is going to be introduced whereby contact details will be made available for a designated police officer. The idea is to move to a more neighbourhood friendly approach to policing. A police officer will attend parish meetings in the future.
 - A new Youth Hub is available between 3 pm to 6 pm by The Mall. This is a joint KCC/MBC/Police project.
 - 7.2 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR’S REPORT:** No further issues to report.

7.3 DCA REPORT: An Easter Egg Hunt will be held at 10 am on Sunday

8 FINANCE:

8.1. Approve Statement of Account

Items for payment:

Staffing Costs (March)	Payroll & Expenses	1999.81
Steven Waring	Trim Foxden Drive Hedge	648.00
Auditing Solutions	Internal Audit 2022.23	288.00
Four Jays	Portaloos – Olympicpicnic 2023	298.50
Steven Waring	Roundabout Maintenance	42.66

Cheques received:

DCA	Litter Picking Contribution	144.38
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Balance of Current Account: £19,401.91 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,615.31 credit

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

8.2 Donation Requests:

- **St Nicholas Church** – Churchyard Maintenance. In accordance with LGA S137, a donation of £100 was proposed, seconded and agreed. **RESOLVED.** Downswood Diggers may be able to offer assistance in the churchyard?
- **KSS Ambulance Service.** In accordance with LGA S137, a donation of £100 was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED.**

8.3 Other Matters to Report: It was agreed to delay a review of banking arrangements until the May/June meeting.

9 PLANNING: New Applications and Existing applications Update:

New Applications

23/501546/TNOT56 PROPOSAL: Electronic Communications for installation of 15m high Phase 8 monopole, 2no. ground-based equipment cabinets, 1 no. meter cabinet and ancillary development thereto.

DPC consultation comments to be reviewed prior to the submission of the planning application response.

ACTION: Planning Committee

Applications Pending:

23/500557 – The Nature Reserve Spot Lane.

23/500960 FULL – 31 Pennine Way.

10 ARRIVA BUS SERVICE: Cllr J Cottis contacted Arriva following the poor service.

The service has been reduced from half hourly to hourly.

Buses are currently being upgraded but they are short of drivers.

A report from a member of the public regarding poor customer service was noted.

Clerk to contact Arriva with concerns.

ACTION: Clerk

- 11 TRAFFIC RELATED ISSUES/HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN:** A new date of 28 April has been agreed for the survey cables. However, notification received today that Church Road will be closed from 24 April to 23 July will mean postponing the survey again.

ACTION: Clerk

12 CLERK'S REPORT: To receive reports & update on previous actions:

- Foxden Drive Hedge has been cut back. Residents whose gardens back onto the hedge, all confirmed that they would like the hedge to remain.
- Orchard Spot roundabout has vine weevil present and a lot of the plants need replacing. Downswood Diggers to look at the plants and give their opinion.

ACTION: Downswood Diggers

- Pensions Regulator: Enrolment process has been reissued.
- An application for the MBC Love Where You Live Grant has been submitted. As the deadline for applications was between PC meetings, a grant for the Bee/Insect Post (as previously suggested by MVCP) was applied for.

13 OPEN SPACES/DOWNSWOOD DIGGERS UPDATE:

- All to consider locations for trees on Deringwood Drive and other sites in the parish. (The trees will be financed by the Parsonage Place development.) Please let the Clerk know exact location details.

ACTION: All

14 CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III – Fruit Trees Proposal:

It is proposed that 5 mixed fruit trees – each no higher than 6 to 8 feet - are planted to provide a mini community orchard. Configuration to be as a figure 5 on a dice. Unanimously agreed **RESOLVED**.

1 x Crab Apple tree, or similar, to be planted on the verge by Grampian Way.

Further liaison required with MBC as landowners will be required.

Wording for a small plaque to be agreed.

It was subsequently agreed that the trees will be planted early autumn to ensure they have the best chance of survival.

15 OLYMPICNIC – Saturday, 15 July:

Bouncy castles x 2 to be ordered (as per last year) and ice cream van to be requested to attend.

Grass cutting and white lining will be required

A separate committee to agree games schedule.

ACTION: Clerk

ACTION: All

16 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:

- KALC – Cllr Butler attended the meeting in Yalding on 27.03.23. Similar comments regarding the police as reported by Cllr Cooke. Draft minutes have been provided.
- Clerk attended PAYE End of Year seminar.

17 GARDEN COMPETITION – Including suggestions for a judge:

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The Manager of Millbrook Garden Centre has confirmed that he will be happy to judge the competition. Cllr Tournay has volunteered to accompany the judge.

ACTION: Cllr Tournay

- 18 DCA FETE – Saturday, 15 July:** Prizes, games, etc for DPC stall to be discussed.
- 19 CCTV –** Quotations to be sought to replace the existing equipment. **ACTION: Clerk**
- 20 CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDRESSED:**
- DCA request for small easter eggs was received by Cllr Butler. The Chairman agreed that eggs up to a value of £20 can be purchased from his annual allowance.
- 21 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:** 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 10.00 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8pm on **Tuesday, 9 May 2023** (This meeting will be preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.45 pm).