

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

Present: Cllrs R. Cheesman; K Alden- Morris; J Tournay; A-M Butler; R. Wingett; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk/RFO; 6 Members of the Public.

Please note, item 19 was shown as Item 21 on the agenda but renumbered due to duplication.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors B & J Cottis – Holiday, Councillor Newton – conflicting engagement.
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO FILM/PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD THE MEETING:** 1 Member of the public; the Clerk for the purpose of minuting.
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** Cllr Cheesman – Planning Application for 32 Reinden Grove (neighbour), Cllr Butler – Highways related issues (family member is an employee).
- 4 COUNCILLOR VACANCY:** Consider Co-option: Ongoing.
- 5 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**
- 6 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 06.06.23:**
The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Cheesman.
- 7 REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**
 - 7.1 County Councillor – Not available.
 - 7.2 Borough Councillor – Not available.
 - 7.3 DCA Representative – Not applicable.
- 8. CRIME REPORT & POLICING UPDATE:**
Willow Rise between 22.00 on Saturday 17 June and 12.00 on Sunday 18 June. Somebody stole a number plate from a Mercedes C230K parked in the road.

Cllrs Cheesman, Wingett and the Clerk attended a productive meeting with area PC Mitch Hunt and his Sergeant Paul Cook.

It is hoped that by September '24 there will be 100% of the planned policing numbers (this currently stand at 50%).

A request was made for PC Hunt to visit the local shops, Mallards, to attend the Olympic and as many PC meetings as possible.

9. FINANCE:

9.1 Approve Statement of Account:

Opening Balance

Balance of Current Acct: £58,087.94

Balance of Investment Acct: £10,615.31

Less cheques sent:	Details	Amount
Zurich Insurance	Annual Premium	457.90
Staffing Costs (June)	Payroll & Expenses	2407.72
KALC	Training x 2 (R. Wingett)	168.00
J. Tournay	Expenses: Garden Comp/Water Olympicnic	23.32
R. Cheesman	Expenses: Chairman's Allowance	5.00
Scarbutts	Printing of Olympicnic Flyer	155.00
		Total: 3,216.94

Cheques Rec'd:	MBC PSS Grant	76.00
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Closing Balances:

Balance of Current Account: £54,947.00

Balance of Investment Account: £10,615.31

Acceptance of the previously circulated accounts was proposed by Cllr Alden-Morris, seconded by Cllr Butler and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED.**

9.2 Donation Request: Bearsted Parish Council – Summer Play Scheme. A donation of £100 was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED.**

9.3 Other Matters to Report: Following the statement by Cllr Alden-Morris that she will soon be moving out of the parish, Cllr Tournay agreed to carry out the upcoming quarterly internal review. **ACTION: Clerk/Cllr Tournay**

10 PLANNING: New Applications and Existing Applications Update:

Cllr Butler confirmed that she will be happy to be a member of the Planning Committee.

New Application(s)

23/502544/full – 32 Reinden Grove

Creation of raised patio to rear of garden with steps to either side, including associated retaining walls, landscaping and replacement of existing fencing (retrospective).

(Comments awaited)

Applications Granted:

- **APPLICATION REF: 23/501546/TNOT56 PROPOSAL:** Electronic Communications for installation of 15m high Phase 9 monopole, 2 no. ground-based equipment cabinets, 1 no. meter cabinet and ancillary development thereto.

Despite there being very little that could be done to oppose the application (by either MBC or DPC), it was noted that the consultation from MBC regarding the application was 'dreadful'.

11 TRAFFIC RELATED ISSUES/HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

It is understood that the Willington Street/Deringwood Drive traffic lights are going ahead.

The dreadful condition of Deringwood Drive has been reported for action.

HIP: ATC survey data was gathered for Deringwood Drive & Willington Street. The exercise is due to be repeated in September '23 (due to Church Road being closed at the time of the survey).

The results:

Deringwood Drive West bound in the 30mph speed limit Average over 7 days between 26.9 and 28.2 mph (97% of vehicles under enforcement threshold of 35mph)

Deringwood Drive East bound in the 30mph speed limit Average over 7 days between 29.6 to 30.5 mph (99% of vehicles under enforcement threshold of 35 mph)

Willington Street North Bound average speed over 7 days 27 mph
91% of vehicles under enforcement threshold of 35 mph

Willington Street South Bound average speed over 7 days 26.9 mph
93% of vehicles under enforcement threshold of 35 mph.

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

- **Retaining walls.** From the search carried out by Cllr Alden-Morris, it is understood that whilst the Ravensdane/Deringwood Drive wall is the responsibility of the residents, a freehold is still held by Taylor Wimpey.
Cllr A-M was thanked for carrying out the search, which her employer permitted on a FOC basis.
Clerk to contact Taylor Wimpey to request an inspection of the wall and any necessary repairs to be carried out. **ACTION: Clerk**
- Litter bins in Mallards Park were found to be overflowing, with litter left nearby on the ground. Subsequently reported to MBC and emptied.

13 OLYMPICNIC – Saturday 15 July 2023: Notes from the sub- committee meeting held on 13 June '23 have been circulated to all.

- MPE FC has offered volunteers to assist on the day.
- Finishing line tape to be acquired.
- Cllrs Cottis & Newton will be collecting equipment from the shed.

14 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:

- Olympicnic Sub-Committee 13.06.23 – Notes circulated.
- Police meeting 03.07.23 – See Item 8 above.

15 GARDEN COMPETITION: The competition was judged by Mr Dan Stevens – Snr Plant Manager of Millbrook Garden Centre, Staplehurst. Winners of the competition have been notified and invited to attend September’s meeting to collect their prize. Details of the three winning gardens will be announced shortly.

16 CCTV – Following a lot of investigation and discussion it was stated that as a Local Authority, DPC has to comply with legislation and the Government Policy Framework. The Government Policy: ‘12 Guiding Principles’ sets out how the use of CCTV has to be justified and draw a balance of why it is used and the protection of passersby human rights. It is very clear that if you cannot justify the use of CCTV, you could end up being prosecuted.

Based on what we now know regarding compliance, and having reviewed the parish crime stats for this year, at this moment in time there is no justification to have the cameras. Additionally, if the camera(s) do not work, they should not be up.

The good news is that the police have stated that they will be happy to liaise with DPC and look at whatever evidence there might be for CCTV justification in other areas.

The Police believe that Maidstone Community Safety Team hold a stock of mobile CCTV cameras and they will be happy to consider where a mobile camera(s) might be required. This would then be monitored by Medway Council and recorded.

It was noted that social media comments stating that the cameras are not working were very unhelpful.

The community needs to work together to ensure all crimes are reported to the Police.

17 LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE GRANT/Bio Totem – Location: Cllr Butler confirmed that the best location for the totem will be between the Foxden Drive bus stop and Longham Copse. Cllr Butler to circulate the information that she has obtained to all.

ACTION: Cllr Butler

18 CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDRESSED: Various correspondence previously circulated by email.

- Community Governance Review - Stage 2 Consultation: All are requested to formulate comments and submit to the Clerk, prior to the 5 September '23 deadline. Residents can comment individually.

ACTION: All Councillors

Please note the following was shown as Item 21 on the agenda but has been renumbered due to duplication.

19 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS: Newsletter (to include CCTV, Police Focus, Governance and Community Voice, Garden Competition, Christmas Lights). All are requested to consider articles).

ACTION: All Councillors

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 9.30 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8pm on **Tuesday, 5 September 2023.**