

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 5 OCTOBER 2021 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Cheesman, Alden-Morris, Butler, Rajalingam, Everett, 3 members of the public.

In the absence of Cllr Newton, the meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Cheesman.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllr Newton - conflicting MBC meeting (subsequently arrived during Item 14); Cllr Brooks – family celebration; Fincham (received retrospectively – called to work); Cllr Cooke (KCC).
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:** Awaiting confirmed from MBC that co-option can proceed. As yet, no interest has been expressed in the vacancy.
6. **APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 7 SEPTEMBER 2021:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Cheesman.
7. **CRIME REPORT:** No new crimes reported on e-watch.com for Downswood. However, it was noted that a container at St Nicholas Church, Otham was broken into and a mower, fuel and strimmer were stolen.
8. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Not available.
9. **BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Cllr Newton reported via the Clerk that whilst he believes the Local Plan is not sound, he is being pressured to support it.
10. **REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE:** Nothing of significance to report. The AGM was held last week, during which the accounts were agreed.

11. FINANCE:

i. Items for Payment

Aylesford Bulls	White Lining (Olympicnic)	48.00
St John Ambulance	First Aid Cover (Olympicnic)	120.00
HMRC	PAYE	173.76
KCC Re. Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - Sept	349.25
Mr J. Noyce	Litter Picker's Wages (Sept)	347.49
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (Sept)	987.15
J. Everett	Bark for Murrain PROW	28.00

Cheques Received:

DCA	Litter Picking Contributions	137.50
HMRC	VAT Refund	1431.88
Grove Green Med Centre	Litter Picking Contribution (2020)	120.00

Balance of Current Account: £37,302.45 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,604.38 credit

- ii. **Banking Procedures:** Electronic Banking Update: The Bankline application form was signed off at the meeting for return to NatWest. **ACTION: CLERK**
- iii **Donation – Royal British Legion (Wreath):** A donation of £50 was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed in accordance with LGA S137. **RESOLVED.** Cllr Fincham to be requested to represent DPC at the War Memorial. **ACTION: CLERK/PF**
- iv **Other Matters to Report:** No further updates are available for the National Salary Award.
Clerk to pass the accounts to Cllr Alden-Morris during October for the agreed six monthly audit. This will be followed by an interim audit by Auditing Solutions during November. **ACTION: CLERK/K.A-M**

12 PLANNING: New Applications and Existing Applications Update:

21/504534 – 6 Redsell's Close

Demolition of shed, erection of single side and rear extension and insertion of rear glass canopy.

21/504454 – 80 Murrain Drive

Erection of single storey side extension

Some attachments shown the planning portal were incorrect/missing. This has now been rectified.

- 13 **REVIEW OF OLYMPICNIC:** Due to the uncertainty caused by Covid there was some doubt whether the event would be allowed to go ahead, this meant that a lot of time was spent discussing strategies which proved to be unnecessary. However, the event was very successful, despite fewer helpers than hoped.

The Guides were a great source of help and the girls proved to be a credit to the organisation.

Help from Mr Tanswell and Mr Young was also vital in making the event such a success.

The bouncy castles were very popular but it was agreed not to hire the gladiator duel again.

It was noted that the track had been marked out too close to the trees.

Consideration to be given how medals will be awarded in the future? **ACTION: ALL**

Assurance was given that the PA system will be checked prior to the next event.

- 14 CHRISTMAS CAROLS & LIGHTS CEREMONY – 4 DECEMBER:** KCC are reviewing the Load Testing Report before it is forwarded to DPC. The Licence should be received next week.

The Choir has advised they are unable to assist this year (currently no choir at the church). Cllr Cheesman's suggestion to invite Maidstone Rock Choir was agreed. Clerk to make arrangements. **ACTION: CLERK**

Following due consideration of Rev Mark Pavey's suggestions for the ceremony, it was agreed that the 2 hours agreed for the event goes so quickly there's insufficient time to incorporate major changes at this stage.

Mr Weeks has not responded to requests to return the Father Christmas suit (or additional DPC items). Cllr Everett has a standby suit that could be used. Rev Pavey is trying to find someone to take on the role of Father Christmas.

Cllr Butler to purchase the refreshments/Cllr Cheesman to purchase glow sticks & wrapped sweets. **ACTION: A-M/RC**

Cllr Everett confirmed that the snow machine can be used if not too windy. **ACTION: JE**

- 15 QUEEN ELIZABETH II PLATINUM JUBILEE (2022):** Cllr Newton to provide a sketch of the plinth which will be approx. 3'ft tall (max of 4'ft). Plinth will be located far enough back on the wide area of (south facing) verge adjacent to Reinden Grove so as not to affect sight lines.

- 16 HALLOWEEN TRAIL:** Pumpkins will spell out 'Witchcraft' and will be located outside the houses of people known to the PC. Cllr Alden-Morris to draw up the maps and purchase the required supplies. It was **RESOLVED** to have a maximum budget of £50 for this event. **ACTION: K-A-M**

- 17 GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE:** It was agreed to dissolve this committee and

and return to the previous arrangement of discussing such matters during Full Council meetings.

18 OPEN SPACES REVIEW: PROW rear of Murrain Drive/Bee Corridors & Boxes:

The PROW has been cleared by Cllrs Everett & Newton with 4 bags of bark chippings spread where water used to lay.

Cllr Everett volunteered to weed the steps by The Orchard with a strimmer.

ACTION: JE

It was agreed that plants for the bee corridors will be planted directly into the ground, rather than in boxes.

A meeting has been arranged with MCVP for 15 October at 11 am – all invited to attend.

Details of Bee Corridors to be included in the next edition of the newsletter.

ACTION: CLERK

Downswood Diggers to be restarted in the autumn with a view to cutting back vegetation. It was noted that pedestrianised Old Church Road requires attention.

The triangle section of Pedestrianised Old Church Road needs tidying. Native plants to be purchased to enhance the area.

19 CCTV – Training: NT Security can offer a training session for 3 to 4 people at a cost of £348.75 + VAT. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to go ahead, with the training if it proves to be absolutely necessary. Cllrs Everett, Newton, Butler and the Clerk will take part. **RESOLVED.**

Once the app is downloaded, a trial period will initially take place without training to see if training can be dispensed with.

ACTION: JE/A-MB/GN/CLERK

20 CONSIDER PURCHASE OF DPC A-BOARD: Cllr Everett suggested that an A-Board could be chained to the top of the road to make members of the public more aware of meetings/what's going on. It could be used to state: 'DPC MEETING ON 1ST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 8PM'. (Approx. cost of £49).

A 6ft banner was suggested as an alternative.

Further discussion required. Cllr Butler to obtain a price for a banner as a comparison.

ACTION: A-MB

21 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:

- **Caxtons.** Email received to ask if the PC would be able to charge to remove the bags that have been fly tipped in the car park at the rear of the shops and going forward if anything is dumped. Unfortunately, the PC does not have the manpower or services to be able to dispose of fly tipping.

Additionally, would the PC consider installing a CCTV system subject to a contribution from the tenants and residents from the Spires Centre?

Whilst the PC would like to be able to help with another CCTV system to cover The Spires, they are unable to do so due to the restrictions governing how public money is spent.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8 pm on Tuesday, 2 November 2021

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