

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 6 JUNE, 2023 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs R. Cheesman; J. Cottis; G. Newton; B. Cottis; K Alden- Morris; J Tournay; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk/RFO; Cllr Gary Cooke (KCC); 11 Members of the Public.

Councillor John Cottis initially chaired the meeting as outgoing Chairman.

- 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Cheesman was proposed by Cllr Tournay, seconded by Cllr J. Cottis and unanimously agreed.
- 2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:** Cllr Cheesman signed the declaration to confirm her acceptance of the office of Chairman. Cllr Newton being absent from the previous meeting, also signed a declaration of acceptance as Councillor. Both documents were signed by the Clerk.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Roz Cheesman from this point onwards.

- 3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:** Cllr John Cottis was proposed by J. Tournay, seconded by Cllr B. Cottis and unanimously agreed.

It was agreed to bring item 7 forward to allow possible co-option(s) to be considered prior to Item 4.

- 7. COUNCILLOR VACANICIES:** Consider Co-Option(s). Members of the public were invited to come forward for consideration of the above.

Following confirmation from Mr Richard Wingett that he would like to be considered for co-option - in accordance with LGA 1972 Schedule 12, Section 1 - it was RESOLVED that members of the public were asked to leave the meeting for a brief period. Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed to co-opt Mr Wingett.

A Declaration of Acceptance was duly signed by Richard Wingett and witnessed by the Clerk.

- 4. FORMATION OF WORKING GROUPS/COMMITTEES:**

Planning/Transportation: Cllrs K Alden-Morris, R Wingett, R Cheesman and A-M Butler.

Open Spaces: Cllrs R Cheesman, J Cottis, B Cottis, J Tournay.

KALC: Cllr A-M Butler

Social: Cllrs Cheesman, J Tournay, B Cottis, A-M Butler

Police: Cllr R Wingett

School: Cllr A-M Butler

DCA: Cllrs J Tournay as a member of the public, whilst representing DPC

Finance: Cllrs A-M Butler, K Alden-Morris, J Tournay, Clerk.

Governance Review: Cllrs A-M Butler, K Alden Morris, R Cheesman, Clerk.

- 5 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Butler – conflicting (work) appointment.
- 6 **NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO RECORD ANY ITEMS:** 1 Member of the public; the Clerk for the purpose of minuting.
8. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** No declarations were received.
9. **ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**
Questions were raised regarding:
 - Additional/replacement salt bins.
Cllr Cooke requested the resident to liaise directly with him.
 - As advised by the former PCSO, the crime report is obtained from e-watch.co.
10. **APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF ANNUAL PC & FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 09.05.23:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Cheesman.
11. **CRIME REPORT & POLICING UPDATE:**
Murrain Drive. Between 22.00 on Saturday 13 May and Sunday 14 May. Someone damaged a kitchen window of a residential property.
12. **REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**
 - 12.1 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**
 - A progress report has been requested in respect of Deringwood Drive/Willington St traffic lights. Cllr Cooke was advised by Highways that nothing has been concluded as yet and he will be informed as soon as things start to happen.
Cllr Cooke has advised that physical improvement needs to be seen, rather than mitigation through cash.
 - Cllr Cooke is aware that 2 motorbike accidents have taken place in the last four weeks on Deringwood Drive.
 - It is believed to be the first time that a parish has both the Mayor of Maidstone and the Chairman of KCC serving the community.
 - 12.2 **BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**
 - Cllr Newton's busiest month is likely to be June.
 - He will continue to do his best for the community.
 - Cllr Newton has spoken to the head of planning about the mast that is planned for Deringwood Drive, but cannot comment further.
 - Chosen charities for the year are Peggy Wood Foundation, The Macular Foundation and Dandelion Time.

12.3 DCA REPRESENTATIVE – Fete Report: The Community Association was thanked for another great day. It was unanimously agreed to donate the proceeds of £42 - as raised by DPC - to the DCA.

Cllr Tournay (or in her absence another member of DPC) will attend future DCA meetings as a member of the public.

13. FINANCE:

13.1 Approve Statement of Account:

Opening Balance

Balance of Current Acct: £61,669.15

Balance of Investment Acct: £10,615.31

Less cheques sent:	Details	Amount £
A-M Butler - Expenses	DCA Easter Eggs	15.05
KALC	Annual Membership	798.10
CPRE	" "	45.00
Aford Awards	Medals - Olympicpicnic	435.6
First Rescue Supplies	Defibrillator Pads	125.94
A.M. Butler	Expenses - DCA Fete Novelties	90.91
Staffing Costs (May)	Payroll & Expenses	2,070.61
	Total:	£3,581.21

Cheques Rec'd: Nil

Closing Balances:

Balance of Current Account: £58,087.94

Balance of Investment Account: £10,615.31

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

13.2 Annual Insurance Renewal: Acceptance of the renewal quotation from Zurich Insurance @ £457.90 – a nominal increase of £9.42 pa – was proposed by Cllr Alden-Morris, seconded by Cllr B Cottis and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED.**

13.3 Love Where You Live Grant Agreement – Approve/Witness Signature: The agreement was signed by the Clerk in the presence of Members and was witnessed by Cllr Cheesman.

The suggested location(s) have been checked and found to have utilities in the area. However, it was agreed not to write off the locations as digging to the required depth of 0.6 metre may not be a problem. The Bumblebee design was agreed.

MVCP to be requested to install at an approx. charge of £150 (approx. excess to funding of £50 to be met by DPC) proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED.**

13.4 Proceeds from DCA Fete: It was agreed to donate the proceeds to the DCA – see item 12.3

13.5 Other Matters to Report: Accounts have now been forwarded to the External Auditor. Notice of Public Rights – running from 5 June '23 to 14 July '23- are displayed on the website/noticeboards.

14 PLANNING:

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

*An amended proposal for a slimmer Phase 9 monopole in lieu of the wider Phase 8 version was submitted, in light of responses received during the consultation process.

Prior approval granted by MBC.

- **Consultation: Maidstone Design & Sustainability DPD – Reg 18 Preferred Approaches**
An online workshop was attended by Cllrs Alden-Morris & Butler.

Cllr Alden-Morris clarified that it is basically a framework to set certain standards for developments going forward, to ensure they are of a good quality.
Cul-de-sacs/rat runs are trying to be avoided.

Applications Granted:

23/500557 – The Nature Reserve Spot Lane.

15 TRAFFIC RELATED ISSUES/HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

Willington Street/Deringwood Drive traffic lights is ongoing.

It was agreed that we need to wait to see what the outcome is before action is considered.

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

- **Retaining walls:** Cotswold Gardens/Spot Lane. KCC do not believe they are responsible for the wall. However, following initial checks by the Highway Steward, no problems were thought to be visible.
Ravensdane /Deringwood Drive wall is believed to be the responsibility of the homeowner, but an online land registry search is required to confirm this (likely to be £3 per search). Clerk to send Cllr Alden-Morris the location details to allow her to carry out the land search. **ACTION: Cllr Alden-Morris/Clerk**

If the wall is thought to be dangerous, it can be reported to MBC.

17 **OLYMPICNIC – Saturday 15 July 2023:** Cllr Newton's offer for his van to be loaded up with equipment the night before the Olympicnic was accepted.

A sub committee meeting to be held at Cllr Cheesman's home on Tuesday, 13 June at 7.30 pm to finalise arrangements.

Prizes leftover from the DCA Fete to be taken to the Olympicnic.

- 18 HONOURS BOARD UPDATE:** Clerk to check access to the hall with the Booking Secretary and take the board to Hallmark Signs for update: '2022/2023 GORDON NEWTON'
ACTON: Clerk
- 19 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:**
- Bellway Homes 17.05.23 attended by Cllr Cheesman and the Clerk. Notes circulated.
 - Maidstone Borough Design & Sustainability DPD - Reg 18 Preferred Approaches. Online workshop attended by Cllrs Butler and Alden-Morris
- 20 GARDEN COMPETITION:** Shortlist of gardens has been submitted by councillors (Judging to take place on 28 June).
- 21 CCTV –** It was noted that the existing system has been problematic since being installed and will cost in the region of £600 to repair, with no guarantee the repairs will be successful. In addition, the tree branches have quite possibly rubbed against the cables which may need replacing.
- The CCTV was originally installed following a spate of burglaries in the area & anti-social behaviour at the shops. However, footage from the existing camera is not likely to be clear enough to read vehicle number plates and the anti-social behaviour has now calmed down.
- One of the criteria given for having CCTV is that it should be located where it has identified there is a need and other solutions are ineffective.
- Cllr Wingett to seek expert advice and discuss the merits of the camera/the location with the Police/his contacts.
ACTION: Cllr Wingett
- Serious thought will then be given to the way forward, including discussion with the DCA to ensure immediate access to the equipment as and when required.
- 22 CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDRESSED:** Various correspondence previously circulated by email.
- 23 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 9.35 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8pm on **Tuesday, 4 July 2023.**