

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs G Newton; R Cheesman; K Alden-Morris; A-M Butler; J Cottis; J Tournay; B Cottis; A Pallant; P Fincham; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk; Cllr G Cooke (KCC); Mr Duncan Edwards and 2 further members of the public.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Non received.
2. **NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO RECORD ANY ITEMS:** The Clerk for the purpose of minuting
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. **APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 5 JULY 2022:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Newton.

A request from a member of public that draft minutes be published before they are formally agreed was considered but declined.

6. **CRIME REPORT:** Crime reports issued on e-watch.co.uk.
 - Between 19:00 on Friday 15th of July and 11:19 on Saturday 16th of July in Ravens Dane Close. Somebody stole a grey Skoda Octavia, GK70***, from the road.
 - On Saturday 16th of July around 12:00 in The Beams. Somebody tried to damage the front door of a residential property.

Cllr Alden-Morris commented that there have been incidents of young people knocking on doors in the middle of the night.

Cllr Cheesman mentioned that a report on social media was circulating that an incident of a girl being attacked at Mallards was filmed and subsequently reported to the police.

7. **REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**
 - 7.1 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**
 - Cllr Cooke expressed his disappointment that Arriva chose to strike on the first day back to school. A number of bus services are being reinstated in the Kent area.
 - KCC still needs to find 50 to 60 million pounds of savings.
 - Kent continues to be challenged by the number of refugee 'children' claiming to be under 18.

- The roads in Kent are ‘horrendous’. Operation Brook has proved to be a disaster by forcing all the traffic from the motorway onto local roads.

7.2 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR’S REPORT: Cllr Newton has expressed his deep concerns regarding the removal of beech trees in front of St Nicholas. (A comment by a member of the public that the mounting block at the church has been removed was subsequently found to be incorrect.).

7.3 REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE: Not available.

8 FINANCE:

8.1. Approve Statement of Account

Items for Payment

Zurich Municipal	Annual Insurance Premium	448.48
Smart Events	Toilet Hire *	300.00
Stageline	Bouncy Castle Hire *	300.00
A Pallant	Expenses *	17.24
Staffing Costs	Payroll & Expenses (July)	1,774.92
The Flagpole Specialists	Flagpole for Comm Centre	1,068.00
Paul Waring	Maintenance of Roundabout	132.66
Aylesford Rugby Club	White Lining *	60.00
St John Ambulance	First Aid *	115.20
R Cheesman	Expenses *	12.00
DCA	Overpayment re Flagpole	92.00
Staffing Costs	Payroll and Expenses (Aug)	1,814.89
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Fee	240.00

*Olympicnic

Cheques received:

DCA	Flagpole Contribution	537.00
DCA	Litter Picking Contribution	144.38
Caxtons	Litter Picking Contribution	525.00

Balance of Current Account: £37,814.42 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,605.44 credit

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

8.2. Conclusion of 2021/22 Annual Audit: PKF Littlejohn has confirmed that the audit is complete. Notices are displayed on the boards & website.

8.3. External Audit 2022/23 – SAAA Opt Out Option: Following discussion whether to use the opt out option, it was agreed to opt in and remain part of the SAAA arrangement for the next 5 years.

8.4. Other Matters to Report: No further matters.

9 PLANNING: New Applications and Existing Applications Update:

22/503632/FULL 12 Kings Acre

Erection of a part single storey, part two storey rear extension with Juliet balcony, single storey front link to garage conversion (granted under 21/500933/FULL) including insertion of roof and changes to fenestration

Comments required prior to 21 Sept.

The Clerk is pursuing the removal of the hedgerow at St Nicholas Church with Enforcement. With regard to a replacement, Members confirmed that they would like a ragstone wall.

10 REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR COMMITTEES/RESPONSIBILITIES/APPOINT FLOOD WARDEN: Cllrs D & B Cottis and Cllr Tournay to join the Open Spaces and Social Committees. Cllr Tournay will be Cllr Fincham's deputy for DCA.

Cllr Newton agreed to take on the role of Flood Warden and display the road closure signs at Mallards, as appropriate. **Highways to be informed as soon as the notices are displayed.** Environment Agency to be requested to clear the River Len from pedestrianised Old Spot Lane to Mallard Park. **ACTION: Clerk**

11 REVIEW OF OLYMPICNIC 2022: Cllr Cheesman was thanked for her notes which were circulated to all.

It was noted that the gazebos will need checking (at least one will need straightening /replacing).

Items to be purchased: sacks x 16 for sack race/bunting (to be costed by Cllr Butler), 30m tape measure (Clerk/Cllr Pallant).

A date for next year's event was agreed as Saturday, 15 July.

12 GOVERNANCE & POLICY REVIEW: Cllr Butler apologised for the delay and will provide report at October's meeting. **ACTION: Cllr Butler**

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

- A large (HGV type) battery was found dumped at the rear of the shops. Caxtons have been requested to collect.
- A request to determine if the defibrillator requires servicing has been received. (The battery and the paediatric pads were recently replaced.) Clerk to establish if a service of the actual machine is required? **ACTION: Clerk**
- Items reported to MBC for checking at Mallard Way: gym equipment, table tennis matting, toddler swing and anti-slip matting on the wooden bridge.

14 SPEEDWATCH/TRAFFIC RELATED ISSUES INC 20 MPH POLL UPDATE :

Cllr Alden-Morris advised that the general consensus is that 20 would be the preferred speed but if no one is going to police it, what's the point?

It was noted that the previous survey showed that very few vehicles were being driven at more than 30 mph.

Cllr Cooke advised that a proper census will need to be carried out, otherwise KCC will not support the results. It will need to be an approved scheme which DPC will need to fund. It will basically need to demonstrate that there is community support for a 20 mph. A simple 'Yes' or 'No' response will be sufficient. It is hoped that perhaps the convenience store could be used as a drop off point, once completed.

Cost of speed survey from ATR to be investigated for Deringwood Road/Church Road.
ACTION: Clerk

- 15 DOWNSWOOD DIGGERS UPDATE:** Members carried out an excellent job on the steps by the OS roundabout. In addition, Cllr J Cottis cleared a tree that was obstructing the PROW.
Wild flowers seeds to be scattered by the Jubilee stone and consideration given to what spring plants could be purchased for next year.
Everyone was requested to give consideration for future projects and feedback ideas at the next meeting. **ACTION: All**

The following item was brought forward at the Chairman's request

22 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:

• **Duncan Edwards.**

Mr Edwards stated that there is too much traffic travelling through Downswood which is causing noise and pollution.

Various suggestions he would like to be considered include: 20 mph zone(s), raised tables at junctions, a toucan crossing which goes straight across the Deringwood Drive/Willington Street junction (removing the pen in the middle), noise barriers. £100,000 is available from the Parsonage Place development for a cycle route between Deringwood Drive and the Church. This could possibly include a raised table?

Mr Edwards said he had already discussed some of the above with Cllr Cooke – Clerk to ask what is considered to be viable and will be supported by Highways?

ACTION: Clerk

Mr Edwards believes that some sort of enforcement should be available for the Deringwood Drive/Willington Street junction.

- 16 CCTV REPORT:** The Clerk has written to the CCTV installer on several occasions to request a visit. The customer service is considered to be very poor. Unless a response is received soon, consideration will be given to using another company.
- 17 KALC AGM: Consider motion 'Proliferation of advertising on roundabouts'.** It was agreed that the motion will be put forward for consideration. If the motion is agreed by KALC, Cllr Cheesman hopes to attend the AGM **ACTION: Cllr Cheesman**
- 18 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:** No reports received.

- 19 DPC BANNER:** Cllr Fincham is unable to source a banner due to a change in his work circumstances. Cllr Pallant to determine the cost (Clerk to forward requirements).
- 20 CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND LIGHTS:** The Licence and full operating information for Sparkx has been submitted to KHS. Sparkx has provided an installation date of Thursday, 17 November.
- 21 GARDEN COMPETITION 2023:** Following discussion, it was agreed to revert back to holding a summer competition, rather than during the spring.
- 22 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE (Continued)**
- **Formal Order Consultation Public Right of Way Diversion (KM94) Bicknor Farm, Sutton Road, Otham (19/503912/FULL).** No objections to the proposal.
 - **Netomnia – Fibre broadband.** Concerns that were raised with regard to poles being used by the provider seem to be unfounded. Cables are being laid underground.
 - **Request for Dog Bin – Orchard Spot Steps.** Not considered appropriate at this point in time.
- 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 10.07 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at on Tuesday, 1 November 2022 (time TBC).