

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 7 JULY 2020 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Cllrs Weeks (Chairman); Fairhurst; Cheesman; Alden-Morris; Rajaratnam; Newton; Mrs Irving – Clerk; Cllr Cooke (KCC); Mr Everett & Ms Thompson (DCA & residents); 2 additional residents (Samantha Brooks & 1 other).

- 1 APOLOGIES:** Cllr Butler – Member of her family is shielding.

It was noted that Cllr Fincham was absent – no apology received.

- 2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS.** Cllr Weeks & the Clerk stated that they will be recording the meeting.

- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** None received.

- 4 REVIEW CANCELLATION OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:**

In accordance with Regulation 4, it is not required to hold an AGM this year. Councillors/committees confirmed they are happy to remain as appointed in 2019.

- 5 COUNCILLOR VACANCY:** Ms Brooks had been in touch by email to register her interest. Following due consideration, it was unanimously agreed to co-opt Ms Brooks. An Acceptance of Office was completed and, as requested, DPI and Co-Option paperwork to be emailed & returned within 28 days.
Cllr Brooks to assist with Social, Open Spaces and Planning Committees.

SB/TI

- 6 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** No questions were raised.

The meeting reconvened.

- 7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 3 MARCH 2020:**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Councillor Weeks.

- 8 CRIME REPORT:**

PCSO Kirsty Greaves provided written reports for April to June as follows.
April & May: No crimes. Few reports of breach and nuisance youths at Mallards Way. Continuing to patrol the areas regularly.

June. 1 Crime. Burglary to dwelling – Longham Copse.

Unreported incident at the end of June regarding cars being keyed.

Speed checks have been carried out in Willington Street after reports from residents of speeding in the area.

- 9 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** (Written report received & circulated in advance of the meeting)*
- 10 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** (Written report received and circulated in advance of the meeting)
- 11 REVIEW DPC COVID 19 RESPONSE & ONGOING COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE POLICY:** DPC was a little slower responding than they would have liked. However, another member of the community reacted and subsequently contacted DPC.

DPC adopted a '5 either side' approach with information via social media and noticeboards asking the community if they were available to offer support. A dedicated telephone line was made available. Quite a few people received help from neighbours making contact with them.

As far as the Council is aware, everyone in Downswood that needed help did receive it.

The large signs installed by MBC at Mallards advising of the play equipment closure were ignored by some. Reports that children were being lifted over the fence to use the equipment was reported to PCSO Greaves.

The Council is aware that a second spike is a possibility. Whilst they hope it does not happen, it was agreed to republish the help your neighbour program if it does recur.

Cllr Butler's written comment to direct those in need to the MBC hub where they can find immediate assistance was noted.

- 12 SPIRES PHARMACY:** The Council is passionate that the pharmacy should be retained. Whilst aware that complaints have been made about the service, an incident regarding a guide dog was blown out of proportion on social media.

Cllr Weeks had a socially distanced meeting with Atul and his wife to discuss the problems. He was informed that the member of staff who had been rude and abrupt to customers has been reprimanded. However, this had been caused as she was frightened by the situation. A long-term locum pharmacist is now being employed, which it is hoped will help.

Many councillors commented – this was also endorsed in a note by Cllr Butler – that they have received good service in the past.

- 13 REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE.** A written report was received from Mr Everett and circulated prior to the meeting.

The Community Centre is “sort of back up and running, although no rigorous keep fit or physical groups are allowed”.

14 FINANCE:

i. Items for Payment:

Cheques sent:	Details	Amount
T. Ellis	Expenses –	51.00
SLCC	Clerk’s Annual Membership (2/3 of cost)	120.00
KCC Re. Kent Pension Fund	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - March	282.08
J. Noyce	Litter Picker’s Salary - March	295.56
Mrs T Irving	Clerk’s Salary/Expenses - March	962.01
HMRC	PAYE	200.64
Mrs T Irving	Clerk’s Salary/Expenses - April	963.37
J. Noyce	Litter Picker’s Salary - April	379.87
KCC Re. Kent Pension Fund	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - April	339.84
Auditing Solutions	Annual Audit	234.00
EDF	Festive Lighting	69.31
Mrs T Irving	Clerk’s Salary/Expenses – May	942.41
J. Noyce	Litter Picker’s Salary - May	313.92
KCC Re. Kent Pension Fund	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - May	339.84
KALC	Training – M. Weeks	72.00
HMRC	PAYE	79.87
J. Noyce	Litter Picker’s Salary - June	380.80
T. Irving	Clerk’s Salary/Expenses – June	996.15
KCC Re Kent Pension Fund	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - June	339.84
Cheques received:		
From Whom Rec’d		
MBC	Precept	34,000
MBC	PSS Grant	148.50

- ii **Annual Audit Report:** The report was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

Recommendations 1 to 3 were discussed.

R1 It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Alden-Morris will carry out a bank reconciliation twice a year; mid-year and just before an audit.

R2 The Chairman stated that the Financial Regulations were drawn up and agreed by members with good cause and he could see no reason to change the decision at this point in time. **RESOLVED**

R3 It was agreed that a certification stamp is not currently required.

- iii **Consider the Annual Governance Statement:** The Statement was duly considered.

KA-M

- iv **Approve the Annual Governance Statement:** Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve affirmative responses to questions 1 to 8 inclusive (question 9 being not applicable)
- v **Consider the Accounting Statement:** The Statement was duly considered.
- vi **Approve the Accounting Statement:** Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement as prepared and circulated by the RFO/Clerk.
The Chairman advised that he is happy for the Clerk to set the dates for the Notice of Public Rights. (Subsequently published as 20 July to 28 Aug).
- vii Consider Annual Insurance Policy 2020/21: Deferred pending Item 16. Subsequently **RESOLVED** to renew a policy with Zurich Insurance in the sum of £ 282.48 (exc bouncy castle cover as this can be added later, if required).
- viii Consider Annual Subscriptions: **KALC** – Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to renew membership @ £652.40. **CPRE** – It was **RESOLVED** to renew membership @ £36. **ACRK** - Membership declined for this year.
- ix **Donations Requests** – All donation requests to be considered at a future meeting.
- x **Addition of Vice Chair to list of bank signatories.** It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Fairhurst be added as a signatory. **TI**

12 **PLANNING (New Applications and updates on existing applications)**

- **Update re. Church Road Outline Planning Application**

The application has been refused twice by the Planning Committee and will now go before MBC's Policy and Resources Committee on Monday.

Cllr Newton has been notified that he is pre-determined and has therefore requested that his substitute takes part in the meeting.

Cllr Pearson expressed her personal thanks to Cllr Newton as 'he has always been very strongly on the side of the community and represented our views'.

Cllr Weeks to circulate to all the written representation and video that will be submitted to MBC. **MW**

Residents to be requested via social media to lobby P & R members. **AF/MW**

Newsletter to be formulated after P & R meeting to advise residents how to submit comments to the Planning Inspector, if they wish to do so. **AF/MW**

A Rule 6(6) status has been requested and granted by the Planning Inspector. Planning Committee to meet prior to 4 August meeting to discuss next approach.

- **Update re. FOI Request**

This has been served against Cllrs Weeks and Newton asking for information between 1 Aug '19 to 10 June '20.

It was noted that Cllr Newton was not active for a large part of the duration.

After taking advice from KALC and 'another legal person' Cllr Weeks responded that the request was too broad, they are fishing for information and they need to be more specific with their request. This was refuted by the requester.

Cllr Weeks advised that as DPC is a voluntary organisation, an extension is permitted to provide the information and he has advised that the information will be provided by end of August"

MW

New Applications:

20/502536 TPO – 40 Foxden Drive

Application to fell 1 x Sycamore

20/502450 TPO – 7 Bournewood Close

Reduce the height of Sycamore x 4 metres. Remove some of the overhanging branches to let light through. Some of the lower overhanging branches remove approx 2 metres of length. Remove ivy.

20/502827/FULL - - 12 Church Road

Demolition of existing conservatory. Erection of a part two storey and part first floor side extension over link detached garage. Enlarged driveway with a dropped kerb.

20/501309/FULL – 104 Longham Copse

Erection of a single storey front and two storey side extension.

The Chairman reminded members of the planning committee that when they receive a planning application, a response to the Clerk is required to allow DPC's view to be made.

AF/KAM
/RR/SB

- 16 OLYMPICNIC** – Proposed revised event – 12 Sept 2020. It was agreed to rename the event 'Community Picnic'. Some of the previous races and activities can still be included, but the tug of war and three legged race & perhaps others will not be possible.

Clerk to request guidelines from the bouncy castle provider to allow members to decide if it will be viable. If agreed, a stake and cone queuing system will have to be in place, with limited use time.

TI

To help the DCA out, it was suggested that some 'paid for stalls' could be included, i.e. a coconut shy, etc. Clerk to resubmit an application to MBC with the new proposals.

TI

ACTION

Social Committee to meet prior to 4 August to discuss suggestions further. Cllr Weeks to update Cllr Butler.

**AMB/RC/
KAM/PF/SB**

GARDEN COMPETITION: It was agreed to defer until next year as it is too late to hold the previously agreed 'Spring Competition'.

17 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:

- A formal complaint has been received and is being dealt with by the Vice-Chairman. More information will be provided in due course.
- The statutory re-declaration to the Pension Regulator has been made.

AF

18 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA & ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- Notice boards at both Mallards and Foxden Drive have been vandalised. Both boards are repairable with replacement glass required for Mallards and material and the cost of a carpenter to carry out repairs expected to be IRO £35 for Foxden.
- Wild flower verges to be included on September's agenda.

MW

*Councillor Cooke requested that the following item be added to his report. All will be aware that there will be elections next year. As a result of that there will be no carry over of grants. Community grants will therefore not be considered after November, as the money needs to be allocated by Christmas.

- 19 CONFIRMATION OF REQUIREMENT/DATE FOR AUGUST MEETING:** It was agreed to hold a meeting at 8 pm on Tuesday, 4 August 2020 to discuss Planning issues and the Community Picnic.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45 pm.