

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 5 MAY 2015 AT 8.00 PM  
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs Cheesman (Chairman); Greenhead; Roberts; Butler; Weeks; Mrs T. Irving (Clerk); Cllr G. Newton – MBC; Cllr Cooke (KCC). Rajen Kantaria; Mr Richard Young.

- 1 APOLOGIES:** Cllr Carmichael; PCSO Timmon Gurr.
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS –** Not applicable.
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None.
- 4 POLICE REPORT: 03/03/15 to 07/04/15** (PCSO Gurr attended the APM which preceded the meeting).

Crime reported

07/04/2015 – 05/05/15.

Criminal damage to 'Halt the Housing' banner located on Deringwood Drive

Anti-social behaviour calls

Nuisance vehicle, off road bike, Ravens Dane Close. A patrol attended this call however there was no trace of the bike after an area search.

Nuisance youths, at park, Mallards Way. I attended this call with two colleagues; we spoke with the informant and looked for the youths however there was no trace in the area.

PCSO Gurr was informed that suspicious looking persons had been seen examining the lock on the gates to the park. If there is cause for concern in the future, please call 101 to report.

PCSO Gurr was made aware that a tent had been erected in a field in White Horse Lane.

Further to Cllr Cheesman's enquiry regarding nuisance calls, PCSO Gurr suggested blocking the caller, or making contact with Action Fraud, if appropriate.

- 5 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** None.

The meeting was reconvened

**6 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 APRIL 2015:** The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

**7 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** (Written Report)

**Primary School Admissions.** Nearly 96% of children across Kent will start their formal education in 2015 at a primary school named by their parents on their application. That figure – 16,691 children in all – includes 14,943 who were offered their first preference, up by 427 compared with last year. This takes the percentage of first-choice placements up to nearly 86%, while the number of second-choices is up to 7.3%. Offers were sent out to parents on 16th April.

I have provided a detailed note separately on the primary school admissions process and what to do if a parent is unhappy with their offer.

**The Care Act.** The biggest reform in social care for 60 years has now come into force and means a change to the way people can plan and pay for their care. The new act will make care and support more consistent across the country and put people more in control of the decisions surrounding their care. The act takes a different approach to care and support to cope with an ageing population, living longer with a better quality of life and aims to support people to stay healthy and independent for longer.

**Post 16 Transport policy 2015 / 2016.** This consultation closes on Thursday 21 May 2015 and seeks views on the transport offer to those who are 16 - 19 years old and in the pursuit of, or receiving education or training at schools, academies and other institutions within the further education sector. The consultation covers the 16+ Travel Card at the subsidised rate of £400 per annum which can be used 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It also includes the Home to School Transport appeals procedure.

**Verbal Report.** Cllr Cooke reported that nothing can currently be done about the condition of the road surface at Mallards Way.

The recent meeting held at Kingswood to discuss a by-pass is gathering momentum. Further meaningful consultation is expected to take place to discuss a route.

The recent repairs to Willington Street have been successfully carried out. Cllr Cooke to speak with Allan Casson to suggest HGV's are turned back at the Park & Ride on Willington Street during the next phase of resurfacing, as it's believed it will be easier for drivers than the current practice of turning in Deringwood Drive. Caution is also required as part of Deringwood Drive is collapsing.

Cllr Cooke was thanked for the work undertaken during the recent Spring Clean. It was reported that the alleyways have been cleared, with the steps at Cotswold Gardens noted as particularly clean.

## 8 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT.

Cllr Newton expressed surprise that contact has been made with the council in respect of H1(10), as this site has been taken out of the Local Plan. Serious constraints in respect of sewage need to be undertaken.

## 9 URGENT MATTERS.

- Conflicting information was received from KCC in respect of lighting the steps in the alleyway between Deringwood Drive and Ravensdane Close. KCC has now agreed responsibility and is currently undertaking repairs.
- Cllr Weeks reported a chance meeting with members of LVPAS. He was informed there has been a complete change of committee and current members are keen to work with the PC.
- Cllr Butler informed the meeting that she has submitted a personal complaint to MBC in respect of the work undertaken at the Jubilee tablet. No response has been received as yet.
- It was requested that a maintenance program be established for Old Church Lane as it often becomes impassable with nettles, etc during summer months. Cllr Cooke requested the Clerk to email details to him.

## 10 FINANCE

### i) Items for payment:

**Balance of Current Account      £25,990.77 credit, after all cheques sent**  
**Balance of Investment Account   £10,183.17 credit**

The council confirmed approval of the following payments:

### To Whom Payable

KALC	Membership 2015/16	657.00
Gala Lights	Hire of Motifs/Repairs	616.80
DCA	Hall Hire (Christmas Ceremony)	63.00
J. Noyce	Litter Picker's Wages (April)	243.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary & Expenses (April)	921.21
KCC	Clerk's Pension (Employer + Employee Contributions)	201.67

### Cheques Received:

MBC	Precept	27,824.00
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ii) **Approval of Annual Return:** (Circulated to members in advance of the meeting with supporting documentation.) The Annual Return was agreed by members and subsequently signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

iii) **Other Matters to report:** £50 cheque from the 2014 Garden Competition has not been cashed as the winner had mislaid it. It has now been found and is expected to be presented to the bank.

Insurance quotations have been received and will be considered at June's meeting.

## 11 PLANNING: Roxhill Developments – proposal for J8 M20

Cllr Greenhead's response that DPC will not support the development was submitted to Roxhill.

Contact has been made by a representative of Countryside - developers looking to build to the south of the Sutton Road – requesting a meeting to discuss their proposal (see Item 8). Whilst a meeting is not considered appropriate at this point in time, it will be considered in the future, as more information becomes available.

#### **15/502651/TPO - 38 Foxden Drive Downswood Kent ME15 8TQ**

##### **TPO application to prune to about six feet one Ash and one Horse Chestnut tree.**

Cllr Greenhead to seek clarification from MBC officer prior to a response being submitted.

**12 SPRING CLEAN REPORT:** Thanks were given to those that participated. It was reported that there was not as much litter as there used to be, due to the bins being used and unsung heroes carrying out voluntary litter picking.

Clerk to repeat request to MBC for a replacement litter bin for the lamp post at the bottom of the steps, close to the SSSI.

**13 OLYMPICNIC:** Cllr Cheesman to establish if the tug of war rope is still available for use.

Advertising of the event was discussed, but it was generally thought that a stand alone leaflet, possibly delivered with the impending newsletter, will be the best option. Cllr Weeks to make enquires with printer.

**14 SPOT LANE NATURE RESERVE (RIVER LEN):** Further to discussions with Cllr Newton, it was agreed not to seek intervention by the EA as it's considered best not to interfere with the ecological system. For example, if fallen trees are not causing a blockage, they provide an eco system for other things. Open Spaces agreed to try to arrange for a river clearance of foreign objects, such as bottles, etc.

At the meeting of 30 April held at the Jubilee Table & attended by Cllrs Cheesman, Greenhead, Joanna Joyce, Antony Morris and the Clerk, it was agreed that MBC will relocate the Nature Reserve sign to the opposite side of the footpath. MBC are extremely apologetic in respect of the recent strimming and have agreed to replant the area.

**15 GARDEN COMPETITION:** Rumwood's are considering a request by Cllr Cheesman for a representative to judge the competition. The suggestion to replace cash prizes with gift vouchers purchased from the nursery was generally considered a good idea. Cllr Cheesman to check the situation and clarify expiry dates etc.

#### **16 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:**

Cllrs Butler & Brooks attended KALC meeting of 29 April to discuss the Parish Charter. Cllr Butler subsequently agreed to give feedback to MBC on behalf of DPC.

Cllr Roberts attended DCA General Committee meeting when it was reported that work on the flooring is being carried out during 17-23 August. A change to the

Standing Orders was agreed. This will allow the management committee to make decisions, but any such decisions will subsequently have to be justified to the committee.

**17 DEFIBRILLATOR PROPOSALS:** Clerk to contact KALC to establish if a site visit can be arranged by their supplier. Running costs/power connection to be checked. Cllr Cheesman to request information from Cllr Steve Munford.

**18 DCA FETE:** Cllr Cheesman to check prizes and place an order for any additional items. Cllr Greenhead offered to draw caricatures again this year at a slightly increased cost of £5.

**19 TRAFFIC CALMING PROPOSALS:** Following a meeting attended by the Clerk, Cllr Bottle (OPC) & representatives from KCC - Cllr Cooke, Richard Emmett, Elaine Hendren & Charlotte Owen, it was suggested that a traffic survey be carried out as a first step to establish what traffic calming measures are required. Cllr Cooke agreed to fund 50% of the cost through his Members' Fund; the remaining finance will need to be paid by the parishes. The cost is yet to be confirmed, but figures of £800 to £900 were mentioned.

DPC agreed to finance a maximum £600 (proposed ratio of 1/3 OPC to 2/3 DPC), providing surveys take place on; Deringwood Drive, Mallards Way & Church Road. June has been proposed for the survey as there are no school holidays.

**20 CLERK'S REPORT:** No further items to report.

**21 COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None received.

**22 CORRESPONDENCE:**

Various correspondence circulated by email as received.

The council was extremely sad to hear of the untimely death of David Nuttall whilst on holiday in France. A memorial service is expected to be held – details to be circulated in due course.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.15 pm

**DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: 2 JUNE AT 8.00 PM**