

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Cllrs Weeks (Chairman); Alden-Morris; Rajaratnam; Newton; Butler; Fairhurst; Fincham; Mrs Irving – Clerk; Mr Everett & Ms Thompson – DCA.

Present for part of the meeting: PCSO Zoe Turner; Cllr Gary Cooke – KCC; Mr J. Noyce – Litter Picker; Mr John Leaf – MPE; 1 member of the public.

Prior to the meeting commencing, the Clerk was congratulated on the birth of her second grandchild and was presented with flowers from the chairman.

Mr Noyce was congratulated on his forthcoming 80th birthday and was presented with a potted rose bush. He was thanked for all his hard work when litter picking in the parish.

1 APOLOGIES: Cllr Cheesman – holiday; Cllr Greenhead – work commitment; Mr Richard Young.

The apologies and reasons for absence were noted and accepted.

2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS – None received.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None received.

It was agreed to bring Item 8 forward to allow Cllr Cooke to leave for another meeting.

8 The pothole blitz has been successful. Please report any issues with these online.

The April 2019 budget is already being worked on with another £68M savings to be found. A consultation will take place, but hard decisions will need to be made.

The meeting at Mallards established that nothing can be done & “when it floods, it floods”.

4 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:
Questions were raised regarding the forthcoming developments in Otham.

5 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING 3 JULY 2018:
The minutes were signed by Cllr Weeks as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

6 Monkdown. Around 4.00 pm on 16.08.18 an outbuilding was broken into and fishing equipment was stolen. The resident has now installed CCTV.
Crime Ref. YY/029724.18

Deringwood Drive. Between 4.00pm on Tues 07.08.18 and 6.00pm on 08.08 a pushbike was stolen from a communal lobby.
Crime Ref. YY/02836/18

It was noted that officers armed with Tasers were recently seeking an outstanding suspect for a criminal offence. PCSO Turner reported that Tasers are used if officers feel they are necessary and form part of everyday policing.

A councillor reported that his black bin was stolen from the front of his property.

7 REVIEW OF LITTER PICKING: Mr Noyce reported that things are improving, with less litter dropped.

The problem with bins not regularly being emptied has been addressed and they should now be emptied on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

The rear of The Spires Shops is again suffering with discarded cigarette butts which are being dropped from the balcony, onto the floor below. In addition, several 25L oil drums have reappeared. Clerk to report the issues to Caxtons

Fox proof bins may need to be considered for the future as the number of foxes in the area has increased.

The following item was brought forward to allow Mr Leaf to submit his report for MPE.

25) CORRESPONDENCE: Email received from a member of the public regarding the quality of the football pitches at Mallards. (The resident and Mr Leaf were invited to attend the meeting).

The enquiry was passed to MBC as the landowner. A response was quickly received which stated that the grounds manager would visit the site to assess the pitches.

Mr Leaf stated that MPE has a good relationship with MBC.

Due to the exceptionally hot and dry summer some of the scorched in line markings have developed some wide and fairly deep cracks. The club were aware of this and were planning to purchase some topsoil to fill the cracks before the first games this weekend. This has been put on hold until MBC has had a chance to act.

It was noted that the grass was cut last Thursday but it is growing incredibly quickly.

Mr Leaf was thanked for all the help that MPE provides and was asked to keep DPC informed.

8 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Following up on vehicles being parked in Downwood, MBC can issue a Section 3, 15 day notice to remove Nuisance/Abandoned Vehicles. (This was previously applied to a vehicle that was parked in Bournewood Close.)

10 URGENT MATTERS:

The Social Media Policy has been signed by all and will be retained by the Clerk for safe keeping.

11 NOTICE BOARD(S) /DISPLAY BOARD: Cllr Weeks advised the meeting that the notice boards have arrived and are currently stored in the shed. The Foxden board

will be installed next week, with the Mallards board installed the following week. The cost of installation is £25, per board.

Weed killer has been applied to the area around The Spires notice board and it has been mulched, ready to return and plant up in November.

A map has been commissioned by Cllr Weeks which will cost in the region of £30 to £40. **ACTION: Cllr Weeks**

Cllr Rajaratnam was thanked for his excellent research on the history of Downswood. When the map is complete the wording will be fitted around it.

12 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES: None

13 CCTV: The camera has been installed and is working fine, but it was necessary to postpone the demonstration/training meeting. This is now expected to take place during early September.

CCTV signage for the fence will be provided by NT Security.

A policy to be drafted to confirm that only trusted officers of DPC will be able to view the footage and this will not be used for self-gratification. Live footage will never be broadcast.

In the case of an incident, footage will only be provided with a CAD reference number and a request direct from the police.

14 FINANCE:

i. Items for Payment.

Balance of Current Account £19,360.54 credit, after all cheques sent
Balance of Investment Account £10,369.82 credit

Cheques sent:

To Whom Payable	Details	Amount
Lauren Eady	Donation (LGA 137)	250.00
Smart Events	Portable Toilet Hire	180.00
Paul Waring	Trimming Foxden Hedge/Landscaping of Roundabout	539.64
NT Security	CCTV	2,923.20
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Exp (July)	943.24
J. Noyce	Litter Picking (July)	281.88
KCC Re. Kent Pension Fund	Clerk's Pension (Employer/Employee Contributions July)	275.75
M. Weeks	Expenses	198.80
Antrix	Face Painting	125.00
L. Greenhead	Olympicnic Flyer Delivery	100.00
Greenbarnes	2 x Notice Boards	1,572.61
EDF	Electricity for Festive Lighting 2017	63.33

T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Exp (Aug)	950.39
J. Noyce	Litter Picking (Aug)	352.35
KCC Re Kent Pension Fund	Clerk's Pension (Employer/Employee Contributions July)	275.75

Cheques received:

DCA	Litter Picking Contribution (April to Oct)	137.50
Caxtons	“ “ “ “	500.00

Approval of the above payments was proposed by Cllr Fincham, seconded by Cllr Alden-Morris **RESOLVED.**

ii. **Standing Orders/Financial Regulations Update:** Work is in hand - the Clerk will circulate a draft copy when complete. **ACTION: The Clerk**

iii **Other matters to report:** There were no further matters to report.

**15 PLANNING:
New Applications.**

18/503601/FULL 13 Monkdown

No objection. However a note was added that the application form statement that the existing parking arrangements will not be affected is incorrect.

One parking space will be removed by taking away the garage. The argument based on the current owner not parking in the garage is irrelevant; parking provision is for the lifetime of the property and its future owners, not just the current owners.

Applications Granted

18/502748/FULL 15 Monkdown

Despite objections from DPC, the above was approved by MBC at the Planning Committee meeting of 23 August.

503244/FULL – 13 Cheviot Gardens

18/502378/FULL - 63 Murrain Drive

Applications Refused:

18/502521 – 28 Bournewood Close

'The proposal would appear incongruous and of a poor quality design and layout contrary to the objectives of policies DM1 and DM9 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017) and the guidance set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document - Residential Extensions (2009).'

16 GARDEN COMPETITION: The judge from the Potted Garden (Coolings Nursery) used a points based system recommended by the London Garden Society which takes into account not only the current appearance of the garden, but makes allowances for

difficult conditions, sustainability, all year round colour and ecological /environmental benefits.

His decision was as follows.

1st Place 32 Horton Downs, 2nd Place 19 Reinden Grove, 3rd Place 20 Church Road.

Runners up: 27 Reinden Grove, 20 Reinden Grove & 8 Pennine Way.

Highly commended for superb basket displays: 9 Rhodewood & 22 Gorham Drive.

17 MALLARDS WAY: Youth Huddle/Roundabout. Cllr Newton stated that MBC has concerns with youth huddles and will normally only install them if the area has proven issues with youths.

It was noted that a huddle was first raised in June 2008 but the idea was dropped due to the concerns of Mallards residents.

Clerk to ask MBC if they would grant permission for a huddle at the bottom of the zig-zag slope, at the opposite side to the basketball hoop. **ACTION: Clerk**

PCSO Turner intimated to Cllr Weeks that she would be in favour of a huddle.

It is disappointing to see that KCC has still not repaired the damaged tarmac at the roundabout. Clerk to chase this up and establish when Steven Waring will next be maintaining the vegetation. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Alden-Morris gave apologies and left the meeting at this point.

18 OLYMPICNIC: The event was very successful and seemed to be enjoyed by all. The zimmer frame races were particular popular – Mr Everett & Ms Thompson were thanked for organising these.

Whilst the face painting was £25 more than originally budgeted for, as approximately 100 faces were painted it was considered to be good value at £125.

It was agreed that not having a burger stall did not detract from the event.

19 NEWSLETTER: Due to pressure of work and personal issues, Cllr Weeks has not been able to edit the NL. Clerk & Cllr Weeks to review prior to October's meeting **ACTION: Cllr Weeks/Clerk**

Following discussion, it was agreed to discontinue with paid advertisements and only accept these from non-profit making organisations.

20 HIGHWAYS: White Lining of Church Road, Otham. The proposal to share the cost of white lining on Church Road from just before the bend adjacent to Little Squerries, up to the 30 mph sign was discussed.

It was agreed that the scheme will benefit Downswood residents and therefore a contribution of £447.50 towards the work was **RESOLVED** in accordance with LGA a274A.

21 CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND LIGHTS CEREMONY: Clerk to check if the Choir and bells have been booked? **ACTION: Clerk**

Members are requested to give some thought as to how more impact can be made at the event? Ideas to be discussed at October's meeting. **ACTION: All**

22 RECEIVE DCA UPDATES: Future events: The AGM will be held next Tuesday. A Quiz Night on 15 September and a children's Halloween Party on 27 October.

23 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED: Cllr Weeks attend a meeting with Cllrs Newton, Cooke and Mr Spencer Smith from the Environment Agency to discuss the flooding problem at Mallards.

Unfortunately it was confirmed that the flooding is considered a very low priority as there is no risk to property. Despite Cllr Weeks pointing out that it causes some problems with access to Downswood and there are concerns that an Ambulance/Fire engine may not be able to reach Downswood, we have to accept that the risk is low.

The possibility of a working party to help clear the river was also discussed. The EA would welcome volunteers under their guidance and will be happy to offer advice on the best time to carry this out. MBC hope to be able to assist with the rubbish disposal. To be followed up at the next Downswood Diggers meeting.

It was noted that resident of Lenside Drive has built a fishing platform which will be dealt with by Enforcement.

Progress with Mallards fencing has been slow due to unexpected, underground electrical cables. It is expected to be finished in approx. 6 weeks.

24 COMMITTEE REPORTS: None received.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.05 pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 2 October 2018