

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 2 APRIL 2024 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

In accordance with Item 10 of Standing Orders, it was agreed to delay the start of the meeting by 10 minutes to allow the Annual Parish meeting to conclude.

Present: Cllrs R. Cheesman - Chairman; J Cottis; A-M Butler; J Tournay; B Cottis; P Fincham; R. Wingett; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk/RFO; 2 Members of the Public (Malcolm McKay and Lee Garrett)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Newton – conflicting appointment; PC James Phillips. The apologies for absence were noted and accepted.
2. **NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO FILM/PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD THE MEETING:** The Clerk for the purpose of minuting.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** No declarations received.
4. **APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 05.03.24:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Cheesman.
5. **ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

A query was raised regarding publicity for the forthcoming election. It was confirmed that the procedure has been advertised on the website and the Borough notices are displayed on the parish boards. The council will be notified if there will be an election when all Nomination Papers have been received by the Borough.

The meeting was reconvened.
6. **REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**
 - 6.1 **County Councillor**)
 - 6.2 **Borough Councillor:**) Not available.
 - 6.3 **DCA Representative**)
7. **CRIME REPORT:** (obtained from e-watch.co)
 - Gorham Drive. 22 March around 09.43. Somebody attempted to damage a vehicle parked in the road.
8. **PLANNING:** New Applications and Existing Applications Update.

Application Granted
23/505211 - 69 Longham Copse

Awaiting a Decision.

23/502544/full – 32 Reinden Grove

- 9 TRAFFIC RELATED ISSUES:** A response has not been received from Cllr Cooke re the bollards enquiry. No updates are available from Highways or CPTG.
- 10 OLYMPICNIC 13.07.24:** Toilets, bouncy castles and St John are confirmed. Cllr Wingett to be the Four Jays contact. D of E has advised that they are unable to assist with volunteers as they ‘...rarely have direct contact with D of E participants.....’ All to consider who might be available to help. **ACTION: ALL**

It was agreed to purchase 200 x medals with a green ribbon **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: Clerk

11 FINANCE:

Monthly Financial Statement - March 2024

Opening Balances:	£
Balance of Current Acct:	32,731.70
Balance of Investment Acct:	10,615.31

Less cheques sent:	Details	£
Staffing Costs (March)	Payroll & Expenses	2,616.35
St John (for info only)	Chq raised & subsequently cancelled (to be reissued at a later date) £137.28	
Paul Waring	Kings Orchard Planting/Foxden Hedge	1,070.52
Four Jays Group	Toilets - Olympicnic	372.00
Cobtree Men's Shed	Installation of BioTotem	95.00
	Total:	£4,153.87

Cheques Rec'd:		
Caxtons Commercial	Litter Picking Contribution	£540.80

Closing Balances:

	£
Balance of Current Account:	29,118.63
N S & I Interest:	82.13
Balance of Investment Acct:	10,697.44

11.1 Approve Statement of Account:

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

- 11.2 Review of Bank Accounts/Banking Arrangements:** Following confirmation from NatWest that Bankline is not available to the PC, it was **RESOLVED** to open a current account with Unity Bank. This will initially be a £25K deposit, whilst keeping the NatWest account open short-term. Subject to confirmation at May's meeting, signatories will be: Cllrs Cheesman, Butler, Newton, Wingett & Clerk. Consideration to

be given whether to continue with NS & I savings account. Cllr Butler to update re possible investment account options. **ACTION: Cllr Butler**

11.3 Review Financial Risk Assessment: Following a review, it was agreed that amendments are not required.

11.4 Annual Membership Subscriptions: CPRE – It was **RESOLVED** to renew the subscription at £45. **KALC** – Subscription fee not yet available. **SLCC** – It was **RESOLVED** to pay 50% of the renewal with OPC @ £114.50.

11.5 Donation Request: Heart of Kent Hospice: In accordance with Local Government Act S137 a donation of £100 was **RESOLVED**.

11.6 Other Matters to Report: As from 1 April 2024, Otham PC will be sharing the Clerk's expenses on a 50:50 basis with DPC.

Auditing Solutions is carrying out the Annual Internal Audit for 2023/24 – report available soon.

12 COMMEMORATION OF D-DAY (6 JUNE 1944) 80th ANNIVERSARY: A gazebo was suggested for the locality of the QEII stone with the Tommies arranged around it. A flag (to be provide by Cllr Fincham) and bunting to be used to decorate the gazebo. Cllr Fincham to prepare a draft invitation asking residents to share memorable D-Day stories. **ACTION: Cllr Fincham**

13 CHRISTMAS EVENT 07.12.24. Update from previous actions & review entertainment: Cllr Cheesman to chase Valley Park School as she is still waiting for a callback.

ACTION: Cllr Cheesman

Due to Maidstone Rock Choir being unable to confirm attendance until later in the year, an alternative source of musical entertainment to be found. Cllr Wingate to check availability with a ukulele band and Kent Police. **ACTION: Cllr Wingate**

14 CLERK'S REPORT: Receive reports & updates on previous actions: Following a request from a resident, a review of the lighting at Foxden Drive Park has been carried out by Maidstone Borough Council. They have subsequently agreed to replace the globe path lighting head with an LED downlighter.

CCTV. No further contact from Openview – Clerk to chase.

ACTION: Clerk

15 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:

- Carbon literacy training attended by Cllr Cheesman on 19 & 26 March. Consideration to be given to asking Maidstone Borough Council/DCA to install solar panels.

It was noted that the recent tree planting is a positive step towards lowering the carbon footprint.

- Bellway Homes meeting 25.03.24. Attended by Cllr Cheesman and Clerk – notes circulated and displayed on the website.

16 CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDRESSED:

Various correspondence circulated by email for consideration.

- Letter received from Mr Everett (delivered by hand on 02.04.24) to be addressed at May's meeting to allow Members time to read the letter.

17 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 9.50 pm

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8pm on ~~Tuesday, 7 May 2024~~.
The date was subsequently amended to Wednesday, 22 May 2024.