

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2022 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs G Newton; R Cheesman; K Alden-Morris; J Cottis; J Tournay; B Cottis; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk; 1 member of the public.

1. **APOLOGIES:** A-M Butler – conflicting appointment; A Pallant – work commitment. The above reasons for absence were noted and accepted.
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 6 SEPTEMBER 2022:** Following an amendment to item 22* 'Mr Edwards **said he had**'. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Newton.

*Cllr Cooke was not present at the time of the discussion and has since said that he has no such recollection of the discussion.

6. **CRIME REPORT:** Crime reports issued on e-watch.co.uk.
Rhodewood Close. Tuesday 23rd of August between 00:01 and 23:59. Somebody damaged a vehicle parked in the road.

Gorham Drive. Tuesday 20th of September around 13:35. Somebody stole a recently delivered parcel from a doorstep.

Cllr Newton advised the meeting that he had some issues with 4 or 5 youths who were being aggressive at Mallards Park. The police were called and spoke to Cllr Newton over the phone, but did not attend the scene. It is believed that these are the same youths that were responsible for killing birds at the park.

The amount of dog mess on the pavement seems to be increasing*. To be monitored.

*See also item 12.

7. **REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**

7.1 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Not available

7.2 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

- Pleased to note that wildflowers are regrowing on the bee corridors.
- Asphalt is almost complete up to the church on Church Road.
- It seems likely that two trees on Church Road that were originally marked for removal will now be saved.

7.3 REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE: Not available.

8 FINANCE:

8.1. Approve Statement of Account

Items for Payment

Staffing Costs	Payroll & Expenses	1,966.22
KCC	Permit for Illuminated Motifs	32.00

Cheques received:

Nil

Balance of Current Account: £35,816.20 credit, after all cheques sent

Balance of Investment Account: £10,605.44 credit

Acceptance of the previously circulated financial report was proposed by Cllr Alden-Morris, seconded by Cllr Newton and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

8.2. Agree date for the Finance Committee to meet/discuss 2023/24 budget: Clerk circulate a couple of dates for agreement by the committee

8.4. Other Matters to Report: Open Spaces to meet & present ideas for the 2023/24 budget.

9 PLANNING: New Applications and Existing Applications Update:

22/503632/FULL 12 Kings Acre

No comment.

10 GOVERNANCE & POLICY REVIEW:

ACTION: Cllr Butler

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

During a meeting between the Clerk and the Highways Road Safety Engineering Project Manager, the latter offered to investigate the cost for a survey/what information is available to assist with the project (will possibility be required for a 7 week period).

ACTION: Clerk

The above manager advised that speed humps/cushions can be noisy and cause delays/road rage.

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

- Hedge removal – St Nicholas Church, Church Rd. Road Safety Eng Proj Manager to establish ownership via the Land Registry.
- A resident wishes to thank those on the council that spend time improving our community. The project that she is currently carrying out was noted, with thanks.
- River Len clearance - MBC rep has walked the length of the river in the nature reserve and has arranged for the first phase of the work to be carried out.
- Three kerb stones in Church Rd have been damaged by construction traffic (reported to KHS).
- *A request for an additional dog waste bin at the Orchard Spot steps (leading to KM80) was considered but agreed as unnecessary due to the amount of bins in close proximity. People need to be encouraged to use the existing bins.

- Report sent to Highways that 4 x new street columns on Deringwood Drive/Church Rd junction have never worked.
 - Defibrillator does not require servicing (batteries/pads need regular checking).
- 13 REVIEW TIME OF DOWNSWOOD PC MEETINGS:** Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the time of full council meetings will remain at 8 pm.
- 14 CONSIDER REQUEST FROM MPE RE JOHN LEAF:** Clerk to write to MBC in support of the request from MPE for a bench & plaque to be sited in Mallard Park and dedicated to John Leaf. (This could be a new or an existing bench, but preferably a new one). The suggested location will be for the person(s) seated to be able to watch football.
Clerk to establish the cost of a bench from MBC for future discussion.
ACTION: Clerk
- 15 DOWNSWOOD DIGGERS. PROJECTS TO BE CONSIDERED:** Open Spaces to meet on Monday, 11 Oct at 10.30 am to discuss native woodland species for planting.
- Bat boxes need to be put up.
- It was noted that one of the bat boxes has turned upside down and needs to be turned whilst empty.
ACTION: Cllrs B & J Cottis & J Tournay
- Collection of leaves to be discussed by the group at their next meeting.
- 16 CCTV REPORT:** No response from company – Clerk to chase again. **ACTION: Clerk**
- 17 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:**
- Cllr Pallant – Road Closure and Congestion Meeting hosted by Broomfield and Kingswood PC on 03.10.22.
Cllr Pallant’s notes were discussed and his suggestions for the joint presentation to the Highway Parish Meeting were agreed:
 - i. Diversions to be better planned (for example, when Spot Lane was closed, the diversion for the Church Road closure was still sending traffic up Spot Lane)
 - ii Better communication between KCC and utilities etc on closures and ensure the PC is involved.

The use of DPC’s logo to be used on the presentation was also agreed.
- 18 KALC AGM:** Update re ‘Proliferation of advertising on roundabouts’ motion.
It was noted that the deadline has been extended. **ACTION: Cllr Cheesman**
- 19 DPC BANNER:** Subject to confirmation that the banner can be displayed on the fence at the Community Centre, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation as obtained by Cllr Pallant in the sum of approx. £35. **ACTION: Cllr Pallant**

- 20 CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND LIGHTS:** Clerk to ask Cllr Butler to source the refreshments, as previously. Clerk to confirm arrangements with Maidstone Rock Choir. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Tournay to ask a relative if he will be prepared to be Santa?

ACTION: Cllr Tournay

- 21 HALLOWEEN TRAIL:** A budget of £50 was **RESOLVED** for the event. Cllr Alden-Morris to purchase 10 pumpkins, sweets and battery tea lights. Help will be required to carve the word 'Witchcraft' in the pumpkins. **ACTION: Cllr Alden-Morris**

Clerk to establish if a table can be set up at the front of the Community Centre on Monday, 31 Oct for a 5 pm start. **ACTION: Clerk**

- 22 CONSIDER VEXATIOUS POLICY:** It was agreed that the Clerk will draft a policy for consideration. **ACTION: Clerk**

- 23 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

- 24 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 10.00 pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 8pm on Tuesday, 1 November 2022.