



**Full Council Minutes Downswood Parish Council Meeting  
held at 8pm on Tuesday, 4 November 2025 in the Community Centre**

**Present:** Cllrs R. Wingett - Chairman; R. Cheesman; J Tournay; P Fincham; G Newton; J Cottis; A-M Butler; L. Rustem; Mrs T Irving – Clerk/RFO; MB Cllrs Val Springett & Ciaran Oliver; Sally Williams (Community Warden) & Adam McKinley (KCC) - part, five members of the public.

Introductions were made to those present.

Councillor Wingett delivered a fire safety address prior to the meeting commencing.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received and accepted from: Councillor Anne Fincham – unwell, Denis Spooner (MBC) & Cllr Linden Kemkaran (KCC).
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO FILM/PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD THE MEETING:** Councillor Wingett.
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** None received.
- 4 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 7 October 2025:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were duly signed by Cllr Wingett.
- 5 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.** No questions were raised.

The meeting was reconvened.

- 6 WELCOME KCC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER – Emily Rogers.** Unfortunately, Emily was not present.
- 7 WELCOME SALLY WILLIAMS & ADAM MCKINLEY:** Reconsider the need for a Part Time Community Warden. Sally explained her role, which has previously included attending various anti-social incidents at Mallards Park.

It was decided to discuss the role further, and make a decision during the closed session at the end of the meeting.

- 8 REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:**
  - 8.1 Kent County Councillor** – Not available.
  - 8.2 Maidstone Borough Councillors.** Reports were submitted by Cllr Springett –see Appendix 1, Cllr Spooner – see Appendix 2 & Cllr Oliver – see Appendix 3.

- 9 **CRIME REPORT:** The following crimes have been reported on e-watch.co
- Chiltern Close. On Tuesday 7 October between 08.00 and 20.00. Somebody stole a recently delivered parcel from a doorstep.
  - Cotswold Gardens. On Friday 31 October around 20.51. Somebody damaged the front door of a residential property.

10 **PLANNING:** New Applications and Existing Applications Update.  
 To consider and resolve the council’s response to planning applications listed below and any additional applications advised by Maidstone Borough Council and are available on their website between the circulation of the agenda and the meeting to which it pertains.

**New Applications:** None received.

11 **FINANCE:**

		<b>UNITY BANK</b>	<b>UNITY</b>	<b>NS &amp; I</b>
		Current Acct	Instant Access	Saving Acct
Balance b/f		<b>2,640.58</b>	<b>61,940.54</b>	<b>10,911.98</b>
<b><u>Transfer of funds</u></b>		5,000.00	-5,000.00	
<b><u>Expenses: Name</u></b>				
Staffing Costs - Sept	Payroll and Expenses	2216.55		
TP & JA Tournay	Oak for Notice Board Repair	101.22		
KCC	Street Lighting Permit	139.00		
W & K Armstrong	Garden Competition	50.00		
Royal British Legion	Wreath & Donation	50.00		
D Jayaraj	Garden Competition	50.00		
The Orchard Spot	Christmas Event	450.00		
Staffing Costs - Oct	Payroll and Expenses	1956.41		
Paul Waring	Maintenance of Roundabout	105.84		
KALC - Chairman Conference	R Wingett/R Cheesman	168.00		
CPRE	Annual Conference	10.00		
Unity	Service Charge	6.00		
<b>Total expenditure:</b>		<b>5,303.02</b>		
<b>Receipts:</b>				
Maidstone Borough Council	PSS Grant		65.13	
<b>Balance c/f</b>		<b>2,402.69</b>	<b>56,940.54</b>	<b>10,911.98</b>

11.1 **Approve Statement of Account:** (Report previously circulated to Cllrs for consideration).

Acceptance was proposed by Cllr Butler, seconded by Cllr Tournay & unanimously agreed

**RESOLVED**

**11.2 Consider Draft Standing Orders.** Item deferred.

**11.3 Confirm Date for Finance Committee 2026/27 Draft Budget Meeting.** Clerk to email dates for confirmation by councillors.

**11.4 Other Matters to Report.** No further matters.

**12 CHRISTMAS EVENT – 30/11/25.**

- Report by the Social Committee:
  - A time change from 4-6 pm to 5-7 pm has been agreed as this will allow children to attend both the Downswood & Madginford switch-on, if they wish.
  - Energise Choir has confirmed their attendance.
  - Cllr Fincham visited The Orchard and was advised their theme this year is Narnia. He has arranged for members of the Social Committee to visit on 18 November.
  - Donated toys as presents for children to be explored further.
  - Cllr Butler confirmed that Manon has again kindly volunteered to appear as Santa's elf.
- Update regarding Lights etc. 30 DPC garlands are currently available. 30 Columns have been approved for use.
- Quotation for Christmas Tree Pit(s)/Additional Garlands. Two quotes have been obtained by Cllr Fincham. An additional quote to be obtained by Cllr Wingett. This will allow the item to be considered in the 2026 budget. Confirmation of site locations to be provided to Cllr Butler **ACTION: Cllrs Wingett/Butler**

**13 CONSIDER QUOTATION FOR BENCH BASE:** Three separate quotes are in the process of being obtained. **ACTION: Open Spaces**

**14 CLERK'S REPORT:** Receive reports & updates on previous actions.

- The Community Centre confirmed that a joint meeting to organise the shed is not necessary. DPC to dispose of three plastic tables to create more room. Mr Tournay has kindly volunteered to dispose of the tables.

**15 REVIEW DECISION REGARDING THE LOCATION OF PARISH MEETINGS 2026:** In accordance with Standing Orders, a request from (more than) three members was made to review the decision taken at the parish meeting on 7 October 2025 to support both the DCA & the Church by splitting meetings between both organisations.

Following that decision, personal attacks were made which questioned the integrity of the Council. After discussion, it was proposed, seconded and agreed (with one abstention) that all future meetings be held at St Nicholas Church.

The decision will be reviewed annually.

**16 CONSIDER OLYMPICNIC 2026:** Consideration to be given if the event has a future.

The Social Committee will meet in January to come up with ideas on whether to hold the event/rename or rebrand. **ACTION: Social Committee**

**17 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS/SEMINARS ATTENDED:**

- Citizens Advice AGM 15.10.25 – Attended by Cllr Cheesman (notes provided).
- Planning Training: Heritage – Teams meeting attended by Wingett on 03/11/25
- Meeting held with a resident, 2 MBC Officers, Cllr Wingett and the Clerk in response to concerns that were raised regarding Old Spot Lane and the bike track.

**18 CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDRESSED:** Various correspondence circulated by email.

- It was confirmed that Cllrs Wingett & P Fincham will display the Tommies/Remembrance tribute. **ACTION: Cllrs Wingett/P Fincham**

**19 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:** 2026/27 Draft Budget, Olympicnic 2026, Community Warden, Mallards Park Sign.

Please contact the Clerk if you have additional items that you would like considered.

To be discussed in closed session: In accordance with Schedule 12 of LGA 1972 and Standing Orders Clause 3D, the meeting will be closed to members of the public and press.

- 7 Reconsider the need for a Part Time Community Warden (Cont'd).** Clerk to make enquiries with KCC regarding the cost of DPC funding Sally for 8 hours per week, potentially split across two days. If the response is favourable, Sally could possibly commence in April 2026.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**20 CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF LITTER PICKER/REVIEW OF THE ROLE:** Following discussion it was RESOLVED to offer the position to Ms Karen Berry.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Date of next full council meeting: **To be held at 8.00 pm on Tuesday, 2 December 2025 in St Nicholas Church.**