

**MINUTES - DOWNSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY 6 APRIL 2021 AT 8.00 PM**

Present: Cllrs Weeks (Chairman); Butler; Cheesman; Alden-Morris; Fairhurst; Newton; Rajalingam; Brooks; Mrs Irving – Clerk; 1 member of the public.

- 1 APOLOGIES:** No apologies received.
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO RECORD ANY ITEMS.** The Clerk
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS:** No declarations.
- 4 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** None received.
- 5 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETINGS 2 MARCH 2021:**  
Following amendment to item 10 ii when ‘...paid...’ was replaced with ‘...leave..’ the minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and will be signed by Councillor Weeks at his earliest opportunity.

The Clerk confirmed the email provided by KALC’s legal advisor\* to minute the following:

‘\*No individual councillor can EVER (including the chairman!) **make decisions on behalf of the PC**’

The Chairman declined KALC’S and the Clerk’s request to provide Zoom login details for the agenda as this permits residents to directly access meetings.

- 6 CRIME REPORT:**
  - **Anti-Social Behaviour.**

The following crimes have been reported on e-watch.co

- 12.03.21 around 8.06 pm in Pennine Way. Somebody smashed a window of a residential property.
- 17.03.21 around 12.00 am in Willow Rise. Somebody smashed a window of a residential property.
- 22.03.21 between 12.01 am and 1.00pm in Willow Rise. Somebody broke into a residential property. Items missing include a passport. The police are continuing their enquiries.
- 02.04.21 between 12.30pm and 6.00pm in Longham Copse. Somebody threw a rock through a shed window.

- 09.04.21 between 6.15am and 3.45pm in Pennine Way. Somebody destroyed plants and trees in the garden of a residential property. The police are continuing their enquiries.

Cllr Alden-Morris personally experienced one of the above incidents and a further incident which took place outside the parish.

**PCSO Kirsty Greaves** confirmed that she is 'still working with the youths issues and building up information from the houses closest to Mallards Way in order to see what is not always being reported and in case the issues continue and we have to ramp up the heat. I am still getting calls relating the youths but still also lacking in evidence in order to deal with them by means of prosecution. We cannot go on the basis of just a description unfortunately which I know upsets a lot of people but we are doing our best with what we have and just need people to continue reporting.

I am hopeful that when normality starts to come back the youths will no longer be at the park causing issues but I am still going to continue my patrols in the meantime.'

In addition to the above reports, the Clerk received a report direct from a resident (they have also reported to the police).

*'Yesterday we were walking around Mallards lake with our dog. There was a group (about 5) of youths wandering around, one on a Piaggio scooter FJ58 AXA. He walked the scooter alongside the lake until he got to the farmer's field by the diagonal bridge over the river Len. There he rode it up the field. Meanwhile the others walking were throwing stones at the geese on the lake. When I shouted at them to stop, one of them said he would throw stones at our dog. About 15 minutes later I saw the scooter*

Cllr Newton reported that as a youth was removed from Mallard Play Area he had threatened to stab him. It was also noted that a duck has been killed by a ball bearing.

Advice to be provided on social media that 999 should be called and immediate assistance requested if there is a threat to safety/life, or that of wildlife. If a photo can be taken safely that is also recommended.

It was reported that the NHW group are still seeking road co-ordinators.

Cllr Newton has attended a meeting with the police and Maidstone Borough Council. One of the youths that has been involved in the incidents has been visited and warned of the consequences if his behaviour continues. Cllr Newton has been provided with police contact details for future use.

As the replacement CCTV camera is understood to be a newer model, it is hoped that it will have higher definition and provide more detail.

It was noted that graffiti along the river on Old Spot Lane from Mallards has been on a fence for some time.

Residents to be encouraged to report all incidents to the police.

7 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: - Not available.

8 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

Cllr Newton has spent the last few weeks dealing with ASB – see item 6 above.

9 REPORT FROM DCA REPRESENTATIVE: Not available.

10 FINANCE:

i. Items for payment

UK Table Tennis	Table Tennis Table (part payment)	1834.80
SLCC	Clerk's Annual Membership (2/3 contribution)	123.32
J. Noyce	Litter Picker's Salary - March	392.40
Mrs T Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses - March	965.82
KCC Re. Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Pension Contribution - March	349.25
HMRC	PAYE	89.07

**Balance of Current Account: £15,817.29 credit, after all cheques sent**

**Balance of Investment Account: £10,604.38 credit**

Approval of the financial report was proposed by Cllr Butler, seconded by Cllr Newton **RESOLVED**.

ii Donation Request:

**KSS Air Ambulance** – The council regrets that due to lack of fiancé they are unable to assist this year.

**Otham with Langley PCC.** Cllrs Cheesman, Newton, Alden-Morris and Fairhurst abstained from discussions re the amount of a donation. Remaining members proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** a donation of £150 in accordance with LGA S137.

iii Membership Renewals:

**CPRE** - Membership at £36 was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED**

**KALC** - Membership at £651.08 exc VAT was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED**

iv **ANNUAL AUDIT:** Auditing Solutions will be carrying out a remote audit as per last year. The Clerk will provide everything electronically, they will then request sample invoices & any further information that's required. It is hoped that next year things will be back to normal.

Cllr Alden-Morris confirmed that she will be carrying out a bank reconciliation in the next couple of days.

**K A-M**

**ACTION**

**v. Banking Procedures Update:** The Chairman confirmed that the electronic application currently rests with him and it will be actioned in the next couple of days. The Clerk reminded all that the request to add the Vice Chairman as a signatory goes back to August and it may need to be started again if delayed much longer.

**MW**

**Vii Other Matters to Report.** None.

**11 PLANNING: New Applications and Existing Applications Update:**

**Comments submitted for the following applications:**

**21/500828 - 57 Murrain Drive** - No comment

**21/500933 – 12 Kings Acre** – No comment

**21/501010 - 32 Horton Downs** – No comment

Cllr Weeks advised that he has received some information from Mr Edwards which seemingly suggests the developer has reduced the facility for cycle routes through the site and the position for the church car park has been moved. (Email shared with Cllr Newton and the Clerk during the course of the meeting.)

Mr Edwards will be taking the matters up with MBC. Cllr Weeks to ask that the PC is updated with any news.

**MW**

A Landscape Strategy Plan amendment was subsequently found on MBC's portal. Cllr Weeks to ask Mr Ellis if he's able to re-join the planning committee and assist with a review of the plans. Concerns will need to be submitted to MBC.

**MW/  
PLANNING  
COMM**

If there are significant changes which could have a detrimental impact on Downswood, it is believed it may be possible to refer these back to the Planning Inspector.

**12 OLYMPICNIC:**

Following discussion it was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that the toilets will be collected on Saturday afternoon at an additional cost of £100 Clerk to request that delivery is also made early in the morning of the event.

**RESOLVED.**

**TI**

Cllr Weeks confirmed that he now holds a key for the Mallards gate which can be held indefinitely.

Mr Tanswell has agreed to be pencilled in for the event on the assumption that everything is satisfactory from a Covid point of view.

The inflatables and ice cream van are booked and the event application has been agreed by MBC. Insurance cover will be provided on the new policy but DPC will be required to provide a risk assessment for this.

**ALL**

White lining to be addressed after June's meeting.

- 13 DATE AND FORMAT FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** It was agreed that the AGM will be held by Zoom on 4 May at 8.00 pm and will be immediately followed by the monthly DPC meeting.

The regulations permitting Zoom meetings end on 6 May. However, the Community Centre has advised that they are unable to accommodate DPC until 21 June. A decision will therefore need to be made at 4 May meeting regarding details of June's meeting

- 14 REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE AND POLICIES:** It was agreed that a committee is formed to review policies/dates. This will consist of: Cllrs Fairhurst, Newton, Butler, Alden-Morris and the Clerk. Cllr Fairhurst to circulate a date/time for the meeting which is expected to be via Zoom.

**AF**

A contract of employment for the litter picker will also be discussed by the committee. Members were reminded that the National Minimum Wage increased on 1 April and now stands at £8.91 per hour.

- 15 URGENT CORRESPONDENCE:** No urgent correspondence to discuss. (Various correspondence previously circulated by email.)

- 16 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS & ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you wish to be considered for future agendas.

**The AGM will be held by Zoom on 4 May at 8.00 pm and will be immediately followed by the monthly DPC meeting.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.50 pm