

DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Virtual¹ Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 13th July 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr Brentor (Chair) and Cllrs Cornell, Hall, Mace, Pearce, Randall and Watts.

In attendance: Unitary Cllr Richard Clewer
Mrs Bev Cornish, Parish Clerk
PCSO Matt Smith, Wiltshire Police
PCSO John Taylor, Wiltshire Police

Also present: Fourteen members of the public.

Part 1

59.20 To elect a Chair: Cllr Cornell proposed, Cllr Pearce seconded and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Brentor be elected as Chair.

60.20 To elect a Vice-Chair: Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Pearce seconded and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Cornell be elected Vice-Chair.

61.20 Public Question Time:

Cllr Brentor welcomed PCSOs Matt Smith and John Taylor. PCSO John Taylor gave a detailed report on the 113 crimes recorded in Downton and Redlynch since 13th April 2020 and the work to reduce the prevalence of anti-social behaviour. He responded to numerous questions from councillors, parishioners and members of the public and acknowledged the strong concern raised about the use of catapults and ball bearings together with the recent arrests and the raid carried out by specialist operations officers on two properties in Downton.

PCSO Smith emphasised the importance of reporting every incident to the Wiltshire Police Reporting phone line 101 so that all the evidence could be gathered to enable him and his colleagues to take the appropriate action. He said that the team were operating a no-tolerance approach to the anti-social behaviour so the more they were made aware of it, the more action they could take.

PCSO Smith also gave a brief report on the changes to the team for 'Salisbury South Rural' which meant that the new team would be covering 25 parishes. He said he had been re-assigned to Downton along with Pc James Barrett and PCSO Simon Ward and advised that Pc Matt Holland was moving to work in Bemerton after very many years serving Downton.

¹ In accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

A parishioner asked why Wiltshire Police could not use the Memorial Centre in Downton as a hub. PCSO Smith said that he would be very interested in making an arrangement to use it.

A parishioner asked whether CCTV could be installed along the High Street.

Cllr Brentor asked about speeding cars on the A338 but she said she appreciated that this may not as great a priority as other matters. PCSO Smith said that work had been done to reduce speeding in Homington so if she emailed him about the A338 he would take the matter up with Pc James Barrett.

Cllr Brentor thanked the PCSOs for attending the meeting and asked them to pass on the Council's thanks to Pc Matt Holland for his many years of service to the parish.

Three parishioners expressed concerned and asked for more information about the proposed Bridge over the Avon project in light of the anti-social behaviour in the Moot Lane area.

The Chair of the Royal British Legion advised the Council of a small socially distanced event to lay two wreaths at the Downton Memorial on VJ Day on 15th August 2020 at 11 am to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. As a parishioner he expressed concern about the proposed £10,000 to be used for independent advice and support on employment matters and asked why this could not be achieved through the Council's £1,000 per year of the Local Council Association. He said he will be watching very closely how that money will be spent. He also asked that the Council consider the impact on neighbours of the use of the Memorial Gardens for use by other organisations which could lead to an increase in noise and disturbance.

The Chair of the Downton Society asked that there be greater transparency on the Bridge over the Avon project and consultation with residents. She also commented on an email she had asked to be sent to councillors ahead of the item to consider a meeting with Persimmon Homes South Coast Ltd and asked whether councillors should consider a review of the Downton Neighbourhood Plan which was more than 2 years old.

62.20 Unitary Cllr Richard Clewer: Cllr Clewer reported that he had spoken in very strong terms to the Chief Constable and to Wiltshire Council's Child Services Department about concerns raised with him by residents. He also advised that post lockdown the magistrates courts were starting to work through their backlog of cases.

On the matters of the Salisbury pedestrianisation and a consultation on the opening of library services, he encouraged everyone present to submit their views. He also quashed the report that Wiltshire Council was in financial difficulty. He said the Council was hoping for more funding from HM Government to support its work for the rest of the year.

63.20 To receive apologies from Councillors: The Clerk advised that apologies had been received from Cllr Roberts due to work commitments. Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the apology and the reason for it be noted.

64.20 To consider and resolve to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 8th June 2020: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

65.20 Declarations of Interest:

a. To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers:

Cllr Hall declared a personal and non-pecuniary interest and said he would not vote on the item to approve the Lease for the Downton Allotments as he was a member of the Downton Allotment Committee and an allotment holder.

b. To consider any Dispensation Requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered:

The Clerk advised that no dispensation requests had been received.

66.20 To resolve to refer any business raised by the public in public discussion, and any other matters or items of information from councillors, to the appropriate committee or to resolve to agree on any other action: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the following responses to questions from members of the public be noted:

- The concerns raised by parishioners about anti-social behaviour will be addressed through the actions taken by Wiltshire Police. The Clerk will liaise with PCSO Matt Smith regarding the use of the Memorial Centre as a hub.
- The installation of CCTV in the High Street may be discussed by the Parish Council at a future meeting.
- With regard to the submission of the planning application for the Bridge over the Avon project, it was possible to consult residents but the question was about which should be done first.
- With regard to the concerns raised about the £10,000 to be allocated to support on employment matters, this involved some personnel issues and the ways in which it will be spent will be discussed in full by the Council.
- The Council had noted the comments from the Downton Society and would be taking them into account when the items on the Neighbourhood Plan were discussed.

67.20 Planning and Tree Works Applications:

20/03363/FUL

Thatched Cottage, 45 The Headlands, Downton - Alterations and lead flashings to the north chimney stack, fit new lead cover flashings to south chimney stack and installation of woodburner in sitting room: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to support this application subject to the comments from the Conservation Officer.

20/04133/FUL &

20/04851/LBC Barford Park Farm, Barford Lane, Downton - Conversion of existing Granary to Ancillary accommodation for use in conjunction with established wedding venue and independant holiday let: Downton Parish

Council RESOLVED to support this application subject to the comments from the Conservation Officer.

20/05426/TCA

The Bull Hotel, The Headlands, Downton - T1 - T5 Scots Pine - Reduce overhanging limbs by 10 - 15%: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to leave the decision on this application to the Tree Officer.

20/05468/TCA

Waterside Mill, High Street, Downton - Cherry Tree - Cut back to old cuts Sycamore Trees - Fell as too close to River: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to leave the decision on this application to the Tree Officer.

20/05515/TCA

134 The Borough, Downton - Crown Raise Ash Tree to 3 Metres from Ground Level (T1), Fell 1 Ash Tree (T2), 1 Metre Reduction to Yew (T3): Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to leave the decision on this application to the Tree Officer.

68.20 To resolve to note the decisions on recent applications: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the decisions on the following applications be noted:

20/03483/VAR 5 Avondyke, Downton - Removal of conditions 2 & 5 of application S2001/2086 (Erection of bungalow with studio within the roof space and provision of vehicular access) to allow for permitted development works to be undertaken at the property: Approve with conditions

20/02567/FUL 15 Green Lane, Downton – Single storey kitchen extension Approve with conditions

20/02890/FUL Tain Lodge, Lower Road Charlton All Saints Rear single storey extension to kitchen Approve with conditions

20/04357/TCA 114 The Borough Downton - T1 - Willow tree - crown reduce canopy by 2-3m: No Objection

69.20 To resolve to approve and sign the new Lease with Longford Estates for the Downton Allotments for a term of 10 years for the annual rent of £100: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Lease be approved and signed.

70.20 To resolve to approve the updated Risk Registers and Risk Assessments to take account of the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's assets, work, responsibilities and employees: Cllr Brentor proposed, Watts seconded and it was RESOLVED with 1 abstention from Cllr Cornell that the updated Risk Registers and Risk Assessments be approved.

71.20 To resolve to ratify the Clerk’s emergency spend under her delegated powers of £450 to obtain professional services and advice from What No Safety Ltd in the preparation of COVID-19 Risk Assessments for the Parish Council’s play areas, public toilets and employees: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the emergency spend be approved.

72.20 To receive a short verbal report from Cllr Hall on a meeting convened by Malmesbury Town Council and to consider his proposal that the Parish Council supports the draft letter to be sent to all Wiltshire MPs as drafted by Malmesbury Town Council: Following a brief report from Cllr Hall on the issue of the vulnerability of Neighbourhood Plans over 2 years old in the light of Wiltshire Council’s lack of a five year housing supply, he proposed, Cllr Watts seconded and it was RESOLVED that the draft letter be supported.

73.20 To consider a proposal from Cllr Hall that he be authorised to represent the Parish Council at further meetings called by Malmesbury Town Council and held to press Wiltshire Council and others to address the issues for Neighbourhood Plans over 2 years old: Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Pearce seconded and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Hall and any other councillor available in his place be approved.

74.20 To consider a proposal from Cllr Hall to resolve to update the Downton Neighbourhood Plan in view of the issues in law for plans over 2 years old: Following a discussion, Cllr Hall proposed, Cllr Pearce seconded and it was RESOLVED that the Council should start the process of reviewing the Downton Neighbourhood Plan and the task of devising a plan of how this will be done should be delegated to the Council’s New Housing Development Committee.

At this point in the meeting Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the meeting be opened to enable Cllr Clewer to comment.

75.20 To consider and resolve to agree on a response to an invitation from Persimmon Homes South Coast to discuss their very early proposal for additional homes in Downton parish: Following a brief discussion, Cllr Brentor proposed, Cllr Cornell seconded and it was RESOLVED to accept an invitation to meet with a representative of Persimmon Homes regarding land to the north of the Bishop Mead development. The meeting will be to receive information only and an independent person will be present as an observer.

Cllr Brentor closed the meeting to the public.

76.20 To consider and resolve to ratify a discipline and grievance policy for the Parish Council: Following a report from Cllr Cornell, Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

77.20 To consider a recommendation from the Amenities Committee to submit a planning application for the Bridge over the Avon project: Following a lengthy discussion, Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Hall seconded and it was RESOLVED that this item be deferred to the next meeting pending further information being made available to councillors.

78.20 To consider and resolve to agree on a response to the Local Government Association’s consultation on the new model member code of conduct: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Council should support the draft document.

79.20 To resolve to approve a donation of £36 to the Royal British Legion for a Poppy Wreath and to resolve to appoint a councillor to lay it on behalf of the parish to mark the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day on 15th August 2020: Cllr Hall proposed, Cllr Mace seconded and it was RESOLVED that the donation be approved and Cllr Cornell be appointed to lay the wreath on behalf of the Council.

80.20 To consider a request from Downton Band to use the Memorial Gardens between 6-8 pm on Mondays-Wednesdays for individual practice sessions for a maximum of six players at a time and compliant with HM Government COVID-19 guidance: A detailed discussion was held on the use of the Memorial Gardens following a report that the guidance for Downton Band had changed and permission was no longer required. Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Council’s in principle view on such a request was that the use of Memorial Gardens by organisations should be limited to play and recreation and to quiet contemplation which was the original intention for their donation to the parish.

81.20 To resolve to approve the following payments:

- £840.00 Maranji Commercial & Domestic Cleaning - June.
- £748.79 Bawden Contracting Services Ltd - For grasscutting in June.
- £257.04 Idverde - For bin emptying in June.
- £24.00 Mr R Moody - For playground signage work.
- £1051.13 Wiltshire Association of Local Councils - For annual subscription.
- £90.00 Salisbury Window Cleaning - For bus shelter quarterly cleaning.
- £71.00 Wiltshire Council - For staff and councillor DBS checks.
- £365.00 Longford Estates - For annual rental of parish store.
- £82.60 CPC, Caxtons, Woodgreen shop – For gloves/PPE, sanitiser, cable ties.
- £456.00 Southern Security Services Ltd - Memorial Centre Fire Alarm maintenance.
- £155.07 Bournemouth Water Business – For public toilets.

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the payments be approved.

82.20 To resolve to approve the sum of £8,036.96 as the Accounts for payment for July and to record the bank balances:

<i>Payee Detail and payment made by bank transfer</i>	<i>£</i>
Maranji Commercial & Domestic Cleaning	840.00
Bawden May & June	748.79
Idverde	257.04
R Moody	24.00
Wiltshire Association of Local Councils	1051.13
Salisbury Window Cleaning	90.00
Wiltshire Council	71.00
Longford Estates	365.00

CPC, Caxtons, Woodgreen Shop	82.60
Southern Security Services Ltd	456.00
Bournemouth Water Business	155.07
Staff Salaries, HMRC and pensions	3,896.33
Total	<u>8,036.96</u>

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Accounts for payment for July be approved.

Balances to be Approved and Noted as at 13.07.2020

Current A/c: £10,184.11 Deposit A/c: £109,983.73
 Memorial Hall Extension A/c: £17,251.67

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the balances be approved and noted.

83.20 To resolve to note the Clerk’s report providing information on recent issues and work completed: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Clerk’s report be noted:

World War II Memorial Bench on Green: Longford Estate has given approve for its installation on the corner of the green in front of the dentist. It will be delivered on Wednesday 15th July and Doccombe has kindly agreed to store it until it is installed ahead of the commemorative event being held on Saturday 15th August.

Tree Survey: The tree survey was conducted by Tree Menders on Wednesday 1st July and I am awaiting their written report

Drain Clearing: The drains from the Bull to Gravel Close were cleared partly on Tuesday 7th July and completed on 10th July. A letter was posted to residents and a notice posted on social media.

Work to Iron Bridge: The work to repair the pedestrian surfacing of Iron Bridge took 2 days.

84.20 To resolve to note the Correspondence received: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the following correspondence be noted:

1. Wiltshire Council - Emails regarding:
 - A number of updates on Covid-19 and Wiltshire Council’s work.
 - Briefing Note Resident Consultation on opening of libraries on 10th August.
2. Wiltshire Association of Local Councils - July Newsletter.
3. Malmesbury Town Council – An email from the Mayor regarding Neighbourhood Plans.
4. Salisbury Police - Monthly report from Inspector Pete Sparrow.
5. Parishioner – An email regarding dog bins overflowing.
6. Parishioner – An email regarding exercise class in Memorial Gardens.
7. Parishioner – Numerous emails on 7.5 tonne weight limit signs.
8. Parishioners – Several emails regarding anti-social behaviour together with numerous calls.

85.20 Date of next meeting: Cllr Brentor confirmed the date of the next meeting as Monday 10th August 2020 at 7.30 pm. This meeting was to be a virtual meeting to be held on Zoom.

Part 2 – EXEMPT MATTERS – EMPLOYMENT & STAFFING

86.20 The Chair to propose the following resolution – ‘That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they be instructed to withdraw in view of the confidential nature of the business on staffing about to be transacted’: Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the meeting be closed to members of the public and press.

At 21:59 Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Hall seconded and it was resolved that the meeting would continue beyond the standard maximum time of 2.5 hours in order for the remaining business on the agenda to be completed (in compliance with the Parish Council’s Standing Orders 3.w).

87.20 To consider a proposal from Cllr Brentor to allocate up to £10,000 from the Council’s reserves for independent advice and support on employment matters to enable the Council to fulfil its duties as an employer: After a lengthy discussion Cllr Mace proposed, Cllr Hall seconded and it was resolved:

- i. to allocate £5,000 from the Council’s unallocated reserves for independent advice and support on employment matters to enable the Council to fulfil its duties as an employer; and
- ii. to delegate to the Staffing Committee the authority to appoint, on behalf of the Parish Council, a supplier to provide such independent advice and support; and
- iii. to delegate to the Staffing Committee the authority to spend, on behalf of the Parish Council, up to £3,000, without further reference to the Parish Council, against the allocated budget of £5,000, on such independent advice and support.

88.20 To consider a request from Cllr Hall for an update on the legal advice sought on the payment of backdated employee pension contributions to qualifying staff: Cllr Cornell, as Chairman of the Staffing Committee, gave an update on the legal advice sought on the payment of backdated employee pension contributions to qualifying staff. Cllr Hall proposed, Cllr Randall seconded and it was resolved to note the contents of Cllr Cornell’s update.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 10:46pm.

Members of the Council considered the foregoing in the matters in consideration of their duties: Equal Opportunities, (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability); Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, and Human Rights.