



**Minutes of the Virtual<sup>1</sup> Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.30 pm.**

**Present:** Cllr Brentor (Chair) and Cllrs Cornell, Mace and Watts.  
Bev Cornish, Parish Clerk.

Two members of the public were present.

**Public Question Time:**

The Chair of the Downton Society hoped that the Committee would support the suggestion received from a member about looking at the possibility of erecting signs on paths and tracks within the Downton with historic names such as Snail Creep, Doctors Alley, School Rails etc but which have no sign, so that in time the names are not lost.

She also advised that the Society was not looking for sponsorship of the In Bloom tubs this year and would be participating in the 'In Your Neighbourhood' initiative as judging again for In Bloom had been cancelled.

With regard to the signs, a brief discussion was held and Cllr Brentor suggested that it should go onto a future Parish Council agenda with the aim of having a 'heritage sign' rather than a highway sign with an explanation if known of the name underneath.

An offer from a member of the public was accepted that she speak to a local historian who previously was a parish councillor before he moved away as he may know about the history of those paths and tracks and may be able to provide some information.

**62.20 Apologies:**

No apologies were received.

**63.20 Minutes**

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 be approved and corrected as agreed and that they be signed by the Chair.

**64.20 Declarations of Interest:**

No declarations of interest were received.

**65.20 Dispensation Requests**

No dispensation requests were received.

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<sup>1</sup> 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

**66.20 Matters arising:**

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that matters arising and actions taken from the Minutes be noted:

**48.18 Emergency Plan:** *Revised following comments. It will go to the June meeting of the council.*

**58.18 Defibrillator in Charlton:** *Alison the chasing contractor again that he has tested the box and the defibrillator can be ordered.*

**23.19 Memorial Gardens restoration:** *This is delayed and won't be able to be completed until spring 2021. Quotes for landscaping accepted.*

**55.19 Painting of Iron Bridge and to make recommendations on how it should proceed to the Parish Council:** *Underway by Wiltshire Council.*

**42.19: Play Inspection Memorial Gardens:** *Redlynch Leisure carried out the repairs in December.*

**35.20: Bollards around the Borough Cross:** *This has been accepted by Julie Watts of Wiltshire Council. Costs have been agreed and bollards and cycle stands ordered.*

**38.20: Street Names Signs:** *5 signs have been installed through Wiltshire Council. One minor error for the Warrens Lane sign which says 'Warren Lane'. Proofs which went to manufacturer were correct and so this is being rectified but will take time to reproduce and be replaced.*

**40.20 Noticeboard at Cemetery:** *Installed in December.*

**52.20 Various maintenance works identified at Downton Cemetery and for the relocation and installation of benches in The Borough and Moot Lane:** *Completed in December.*

**54.30 Refurbishment of cremated remains at Downton Cemetery:** *Awaiting specification and once that's received a spreadsheet showing the tasks to be carried out at the Cemetery in priority order can be drawn up. Cllr Watts committed to providing a specification to all parties once it was finalised so that officers could seek quotes from potential contractors.*

**67.20 To consider requests from 3 residents and a report from the Clerk to:**

- i. **Install a dog waste bin at the end of Doctors Alley between the Sidings and Barford Lane;**
- ii. **Install a dog waste bin at the entrance to the field behind the pinch point in The Borough and adjacent to the bridge crossing the Avon to Church Leat;**
- iii. **Install another dog waste bin in Gravel Close due to the volume of dog litter which has led to the existing bin being frequently overflowing; and**
- iv. **To purchase additional 'Clean Up After Your Dog' and 'Keep Dogs on Leads' signs for various sites around the parish.**

Following a discussion, Cllr Cornell proposed, Cllr Watts seconded and it was RESOLVED that recommendations be made to the Parish Council as suggested by the Clerk except that a larger dog bin be sourced to replace the bin in Gravel Close and that the bin from Gravel Close be relocated to the field beside the pinch point as follows:

- i. The existing dog waste bin installed in the alleyway in Hamilton Park be relocated to the lamp post opposite the entrance to Doctors Alley in The Sidings.
- ii. The quote of £185.12 for emptying of the bin in the field beside the pinch point with the additional cost of approximately £50 for separate round wooden post at the site.
- iii. That 8 'Clean Up After Your Dog' signs and 2 'Keep Dogs on Leads' signs in rigid plastic are purchased for a total cost of £44.20.

**68.20 To consider a request from a resident to carry out some work to the trees on the Beacon green area on the corner of Moot Lane:**

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that several councilors carry out an inspection of the area to investigate what can be done in time for the next meeting so that the submission of a tree works application could be considered.

**69.20 To consider proposals from the Moot Lane Working Group following its review of the equipment required in that play area and also items for the other play areas which will inform the long term plan for the renewal of play equipment in the parish:**

Following a discussion, Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that members of the Amenities Committee and Cllr Mace, if he wishes, organise a visit to the Council's play areas and play areas located in other parishes before 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to look at pieces of popular modern play equipment to see what is possible and with the potential for similar pieces to be considered for installation in Downton.

**70.20 Taking account of the ideas put forward on new play equipment, to consider and agree on the actions required to consult members of the public and users of the play areas on any proposed new equipment:**

Following a discussion, Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Cornell create a poster seeking residents' and users' views of the play areas, ie what to put in and what to take out, which can be posted onto social media and sent to the schools and pre-schools for internal circulation.

**71.20 To consider and resolve to agree on the actions required to advertise for a list of handypersons:** Following a statement made by the Chair in relation to the appointment of handypersons which is attached to these minutes, Cllr Brentor proposed, Cllr Watts seconded and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Cornell create a poster seeking handypersons for various tasks in the parish. Any applicants would then be considered by members of the Committee and officers with a view to taking up references and looking at examples of their work before they are placed on the Council's preferred contractors list for quotes.

**72.20 To consider and resolve to agree on whether to replace the noticeboard in Moot Lane:**

Cllr Watts proposed, Cllr Cornell seconded and it was RESOLVED that it be replaced and that Cllr Watts should research suggestions with costings by

email so that a recommendation can be made to the Annual Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

**73.20 To consider whether the Downton in Bloom planters should display plaques/markers:**

Following a discussion, Cllr Cornell proposed, Cllr Watts seconded and it was RESOLVED that the Clerk should investigate the cost and design of single signs with the words 'Provided by Downton Parish Council, planted and maintained by the Downton Society' to be affixed to one side of the planters leaving the space on the front of the planter for the sign of a sponsor.

**74.20 To consider and resolve to agree on the potential uses for the telephone box in the High Street:** This item was not considered because the telephone box is now in use as a telephone box with a new telephone operated by BT.

**75.20 To consider how the Street Name Refurbishment Project Plan can be progressed:** Following a discussion, Cllr Cornell proposed, Cllr Watts seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation be made that £500 be allocated to the project and that Cllr Brentor will write to Cllr Hall with the project plan for him to be able to progress the project.

**76.20 To review the actions allocated to the Amenities Committee in the 3 year Strategy for progression in the coming year:**

Councillors reviewed the actions for progression in 2021/22. Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the changes be approved.

**77.20 Next Meeting:**

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that the next meeting be held on as Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 at 7.30 pm.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

## Statement from Cllr Brentor

Before considering this item I would like to make a statement from the Chair. On the 25<sup>th</sup> January this year the Parish Council considered an item to contract one or more 'handypersons' to provide maintenance services on Parish Council properties. At that meeting I referred to an email from the Clerk from which I understood her to have stated that she was concerned that if we go out and ask publicly for people to come forward to offer this sort of role, the idea of competition might put up rates.

*What she actually wrote in her email was 'my view is that the Council shouldn't advertise because it may not be able to demonstrate compliance with its own financial regulations in sourcing quotes for work above a defined amount and also to demonstrate best value. I think if the Council were to go out to the actual market, that might be more difficult to demonstrate month in month out and be open to challenge and auditor query.'*

I want to publicly say that I now understand that Bev intended a different meaning and that her advice was misunderstood by me. I accidentally misrepresented her advice without any intention of insulting or disparaging her. Bev has since made it clear that her advice was with reference to advertising for a single handyperson but, in the event, the Council resolved to authorise the Amenities Committee to develop a roster of skilled, insured tradespersons from whom competitive quotes could be obtained for ad hoc maintenance works required on Parish Council properties. It is that which we are considering today.