

DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 12th July 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr Brentor (Chair) and Cllrs Cornell, Hall, Jalland, Jones, Mace, Randall (from 8.25 pm) and Watts.

In attendance: Unitary Councillor Richard Clewer
Mrs Bev Cornish, Parish Clerk

Also present: Ten members of the public.

86.21 Public Question Time

The Chair of the Downton Society spoke in support of the proposed risk assessment and letter of agreement regarding the Topiary Cuckoo drafted by the Clerk. She said a member of the Downton Society had devised a means of installing the planter with Access Engineering and he subsequently gave a brief presentation to the Council. She also said that a member of the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' assessment team would be looking at The Borough and new planters on Tuesday 20th July.

A resident living next to the Memorial Gardens sought permission for temporary access over part of the Memorial Gardens to ferry materials for some work to be completed in his garden for a period of two weeks. He said he was happy to adopt the same arrangements with the Council as was agreed when his loft extension was completed in 2016.

87.21 Unitary Cllr Richard Clewer:

Cllr Clewer gave a brief report on Wiltshire Council matters and said that a huge amount of work was currently being undertaken. He also said that he had asked for a Council policy to be prepared for grass cutting across the county with a view to enabling more wildflower verges to be created as this was a 'hot topic' raised by residents.

In response to a question on how the cost of the re-running of the Police and Crime Commissioner election was to be met, he said it was to be met by the Cabinet Office and not by Wiltshire and Swindon councils.

88.21 Apologies

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that an apology received from Cllr Roberts due to a holiday commitment and an advisory email from Cllr Randall that due to work commitments he would arrive at the meeting at around 8.30 pm be accepted.

89.21 Minutes

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 28th June 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

90.21 Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Requests

- 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 Brentor declared a personal and non-pecuniary interest in planning application PL/2021/05550 and did not speak or vote on it.

Cllr Mace declared a personal and non-pecuniary interest in planning application PL/2021/05214 and did not speak or vote on it.

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

The Clerk confirmed that no dispensation requests had been received.

91.21 Business Raised During Public Question Time

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED the matters raised by members of the public as follows:

- Councillors would take account of the comments made on the topiary cuckoo when considering it as an item on the agenda.
- Although Councillors were not able to take a decision because the item was not on the agenda, they raised no objection in principle to giving temporary access to the Memorial Gardens for the work to the garden. This was subject to the conditions of a risk assessment, public liability insurance, a plan being put in place and any damage to the surfacing or equipment being made good.

92.21 Planning and Tree Works Applications

PL/2021/04784 &

PL/2021/06017 Belle Vue, Lower Road, Charlton All Saints - New front entrance canopy, repointing of North gable, demolish and rebuild 1 defective chimney, replace windows and doors to rear extension, replace conservatory doors and windows and replace existing conservatory lean to roof with traditional flat roof: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to support this application on the grounds that it was compliant with Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

PL/2021/05214 Station House, The Sidings, Downton - Extension and conversion of an existing garage to a dwelling and associated landscaping:

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to object strongly to this application on the following grounds:

- It constitutes back fill development ie a dwelling in the back garden.
- It is contrary to Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- There is still a very limited and cramped rear garden/amenity space.
- The dwelling itself still has a cramped layout.

- The very close proximity of the new dwelling to the car parking spaces of the main dwelling would result in a poor standard of amenity for the future occupants of the new dwelling.
- Given that the rear of the new dwelling faces east and coupled with the overshadowing from the new dwelling itself together with shadowing from the existing house and proposed surrounding hedge, sunlight to the rear of the new dwelling will be very limited.

PL/2021/05550 4 Avondyke, Downton - Side and rear extension with internal alterations and hard landscaping: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED, with an abstention from Cllr Jones, to support this application on the grounds that it was compliant with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

PL/2021/05987 &

PL/2021/04906 Radnor House, The Headlands, Downton - Internal alterations to extend kitchen and raise roof of mono-pitch attached building to form enlarged kitchen, replacement of existing kitchen window, alterations to bathroom/WC and provision of en-suite facility to adjacent bedroom: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED not to comment on this complex listed building application and to accept the expertise of the Conservation Officer and Planning Officer.

PL/2021/05642 4 The Sidings, Downton - Erection of office/gym for home use and small extension to rear of house: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to support this application on the grounds that it was compliant with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

PL/2021/05965 Stonehurst, Long Close West, Downton - Remove existing timber conservatory, construct rear kitchen and dining room extension with internal alterations: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to support this application on the grounds that it was compliant with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

PL/2021/06591 20 Green Lane, Downton - T1 Cherry SP - fell T2 Cherry SP - prune all over by 1.5m to form a more balanced crown throughout & Ivy removal: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to raise no objection to this application.

PL/2021/06570 Yew Tree Cottage, 81 The Borough, Downton - T1 - Eucalyptus tree - fell T2 - Box Elder tree - crown raise and thin: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to leave the decision on this application to the Tree Officer.

93.21 Planning Application Decisions

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the following decisions:

PL2021/03568 Radnor House, The Headlands, Downton Various tree works	No objection
PL2021/03913 2 Eastman Close, Downton Single Storey Extension to side of property	Approve with conditions

PL2021/03921 The Goat, The Borough, Downton Construction of wooden bar in rear garden	Approve with conditions
PL/2021/04002 The Moot House, Moot Lane, Downton Sycamore Tree – Fell	No objection
PL/2021/04017 47 The Borough, Downton Box Elder – Fell	No objection
PL/2021/04166 South Lane Cottage, Downton Pollard apple tree	No objection
PL2021/04260 66 The Borough, Downton Removal of plant room and installation of new plant Enclosure with external freezer and chiller units and replacement canopy	Approve with conditions
PL/2021/05249 27 Saxonhurst, Downton Various tree works	No objection

94.21 New & Revised Policies

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the revised Risk Management Policy and Risk Register 1 - Corporate with the agreed changes.

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to defer the Business Continuity Plan to await comments from Cllr Mace.

95.21 3 Year Plan

Following a discussion, Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve that Cllr Brentor, in consultation with the Clerk, updates the Council’s 3 year strategy to incorporate the amendments agreed by the Amenities Committee, and the list provided to all Parish Councillors in advance of the meeting, ahead of the public consultation and a meeting of the Finance & Strategy Committee to be held on 27th September.

96.21 3 Year Plan Consultation

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to undertake a public consultation with residents of Downton parish in early September on the revised 3 year strategy. This will be combined with the consultation on the playground refurbishment project in order to inform the next meeting of the Finance and Strategy Committee and the Annual Budget meeting. Members of the Communications working group were asked to prepare a plan for consideration at the next meeting.

97.21 Planning Committee

Following a discussion, Downton Parish Council RESOLVED, with objections from Cllrs Watts and Randall, not to set up a Planning Committee and further RESOLVED that:

- Individual planning applications will be allocated to Cllrs Brentor, Hall, Jones and Mace, as members of the New Housing Development Committee, to investigate ahead of the meeting and present their findings to the Council;

- All councillors will continue to look at the planning applications listed on agendas ahead of meetings in order that their views can contribute to the debate.

98.21 Places Called Home Grant Scheme

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the submission of a grant application for two public access defibrillators for sites at Downton Leisure Centre and the former phone box at Charlton All Saints together with training for volunteers which meet the following set criteria:

- Build on the relationships created during the COVID-19 pandemic to increase community activity and the number of people taking part.
- Encourage people to work together, creating opportunities for communities to live in a sustainable and healthy way.
- Raise awareness amongst the public of the importance of connected households, neighbourhoods and resilient communities

99.21 Heritage signs

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to work with the Downton Society to install 'heritage' signs on some paths and tracks which are known by historical names eg Snail Creep, Doctors Alley, School Rails, in order to ensure the names are not lost, subject to a programme of work being drafted and costs and any permissions being attained. The Chair thanked the member of the public who had obtained the historical information on the names from a former resident.

100.21 Permission for a Student Short Film

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve a request from a local student completing a final project for their Masters Degree in Film Directing at Bournemouth University to shoot a small scene in the Memorial Gardens subject to several conditions being met.

101.21 Emergency Plan, Flood Plan and Snow Plan

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the revised formats and content of the Emergency Plan, Flood Plan and the new Snow Plan. The Clerk agreed to add the additional information required to complete the Emergency and Snow Plans and with the support of the Administrative Officer to complete the Flood Plan once a meeting of the Water meadows and Flood Defence Committee had been held.

102.21 Topiary Cuckoo Sculpture

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the following documents relating to the installation of the Topiary Cuckoo Sculpture on the Borough Green

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Letter of Agreement with the Downton Society.

103.21 Memorial Gardens Grass Cutting

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the recommendations from the Amenities Committee regarding the grass cutting of the Memorial Gardens as follows:

- i. For the Council's contractor to complete a one-off first cut and to take on the cutting of the area to the rear of the Memorial Gardens previously cut by Downton Primary School for the remainder of its contract term;

- ii. For the £500 cost to be shared equally between the Parish Council and Downton Primary School; and
- iii. For the Council to meet the cost of cutting the whole of the Memorial Gardens as part of its new contract when it is re-tendered in September 2021 for commencement in April 2022.

104.21 BBQ Waste Bin

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the purchase of a replacement bin liner at the cost of £96 if required.

105.21 Outsourcing of Parish Council Website & IT Maintenance

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note a verbal update from Cllr Mace on his investigations into the outsourcing of the Parish Council's Website & IT Maintenance.

106.21 Committees and Working Groups

Amenities Committee: Cllr Watts gave a brief report on a recent meeting at which an update on various works had been provided and a detailed discussion on the playground consultation and proposed actions had been held. He said the Clerk would be putting together a 3 year plan for the updating of the playgrounds with the potential for the Council to either spend the monies already available or to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan to enable a larger sum to be made available to complete a larger replacement and refurbishment project.

Staffing Committee: Cllr Cornell gave a brief report on a recent meeting at which the Committee had:

- Considered the Officer/Councillor Protocol;
- Appointed the Staffing Committee representative to liaise with the Clerk day to day which will be the Chair of the Council;
- Discussed a date for the Clerk's appraisal; and
- Identified the Clerk's work priorities which may need to be changed in view of the decisions taken at the Parish Council meeting.

107.21 Committee Minutes

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the Minutes of the following Committee meetings:

Staffing Committee meeting held on Monday 15th February 2021

Amenities Committee meeting held on Monday 26th April 2021

108.21 Representative Reports

Downton Preservation Trust: Cllr Hall gave a brief report on a recent meeting at which it had been reported that the new bridge railings, designed and made by Access Engineering, was to be installed shortly and that a number of areas of the Moot had been left uncut to allow for wild flowers to grow.

109.21 Payments

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the following payments for July:

£875.00 Maranji Commercial & Domestic Cleaning

£903.83 Bawden Managed Landscapes

£222.76 Idverde

£28.79 Ionos

£18.66 West Mercia Energy

£43.19 BT Group

£60.00 Downton Memorial Centre

£165.00 Fair Account Internal Audit

£28.78 Zoom

110.21 Accounts for Payment

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED resolve to approve the sum of £6,701.59 as the Accounts for payment for July and to record the bank balances:

Payee	Detail and payment made by bank transfer	£
	Maranji Commercial & Domestic Cleaning (Toilets)	875.00
	Bawden Managed Landscapes (Grasscutting)	903.83
	Idverde (Bin emptying)	222.76
	Ionos (website hosting)	28.79
	West Mercia Energy (Toilets)	18.66
	BT Group (Staff mobile)	43.19
	Downton Memorial Hall (room hire)	60.00
	Fair Account Internal Audit	165.00
	Zoom	28.78
	Staff Salaries, HMRC and Pensions	4355.58
	Total	6701.59

Balances to be Approved and Noted as at 12.07.2021

Current A/c: £1671.40 A/c: £121,009.68

Memorial Hall Extension A/c: £3,920.01

111.21 Budget to Actual Report

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED, with 3 abstentions from Cllrs Cornell, Randall & Watts, to approve the Budget to Actual Report as at 30th June 2021.

112.21 Correspondence

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the Correspondence received:

1. Wiltshire Council - Emails regarding:

- A number of updates on Covid-19 and Wiltshire Council's work.
- Electoral Register Monthly Changes - July 2021
- Briefing Note 21-11 - Council mowing policy
- Briefing Note 21-10 - Democratic Meetings during the pandemic
- COVID-19 Events Guide for planning events
- TTRN for Temporary closure of: Wick Lane (Part), Downton (03/08/21)
- Minutes for Southern Wiltshire Area Board held on Thursday 27 May 2021
- Wiltshire s106 Officer update on Scotts House development known as 'Meadow Grange'

2. Wiltshire Police – Email from Inspector Pete Sparrow regarding a crime prevention project he has been working on to reduce offences of burglary and theft within the community.
3. Wiltshire Association of Local Councils – July Newsletter.
4. Persimmon Homes – An email thanking the Council for the recent meeting and seeking dates of future parish council meetings.
5. CPRE – Email seeking trustees of the organisation for Wiltshire.
6. CPRE – Email Invitation to a CPRE fundraising event - On Sunday, 8th August Colin and Penny Little are opening up their famous 'Chinese Garden' to CPRE Wiltshire with exclusive access to the garden rooms they have been developing for over twenty years. Tickets are £6.
7. Wiltshire Citizens Advice - A letter seeking funding support from parish councils.
8. The Bull Hotel – Email advising that, Covid allowing, The Bull is planning on hosting a "Bull Festival" for August 2021 bank holiday.
9. Downton Primary School Association – Further emails regarding the event they are holding on 10th July.
10. Ringwood Society – Emails seeking information on the Downton Heritage Trail.
11. Community Midwife – Email seeking information on a room in the parish to hold a weekly clinic.
12. Parishioners – Emails regarding an overflowing bin in Church Hatch.
13. Parishioner – Email regarding the cutting of the verges on the A338 at Charlton which have been cut and also the cycle path.
14. Parishioner – Email regarding the removal of No Through Road sign in Charlton.
15. Parishioner – Email seeking guidance on a plan for drains in Long Close East.
16. Parishioner – Email regarding overgrown brambles and weeds from the Moot Lane Recreation Ground.
17. Parishioner – Email regarding overgrown pavement from Downton to North Charford
18. Parishioners – Email regarding the work being carried out in the field south of Breamore Road.
19. Parishioner – Email regarding broken glass on the skatepark.

113.21 Clerk's Report

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the Clerk's report providing information on recent issues and work completed:

1. Parish Steward –visit 7th & 8th July

- a. Cleaned Iron Bridge railing.
- b. Strimmed and cleared overgrown footpath at the rear of the Memorial Gardens.
- c. Cleared vegetation from bus stops.

2. Finance - Audit

The papers approved at the last meeting were sent to PKF Littlejohn, the Council's External Auditors, by the deadline of 30th June. The notice advertising the Exercise of Public Rights for electors has been posted on the parish noticeboard and the statements and notice have been posted on the Council's website.

114.21 Date of next meeting

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the date of the next meeting as Monday 9th August 2021 at 7.30 pm to be held in the Bonvalot Room at the Downton Memorial Centre.

Part 2 – CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – EXEMPT MATTERS - STAFFING

115.21 Cllr Brentor proposed the following resolution – ‘That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted on personal employee matters, it is advisable in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they be instructed to withdraw’, seconded by Cllr Cornel and RESOLVED by the meeting.

At this point in the meeting, and as it was 10 pm, the Chair proposed and Downton Parish Council then RESOLVED to extend the meeting for a maximum of another 20 minutes to complete the remaining items on the Agenda.

116.21 Salary Award

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the annual salary award for the Administrative Officer from April 2021 in accordance with her contract.

117.21 Council reserve held for pensions backdating

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to instruct Cllr Brentor, as Chair of the Council, to write to the Clerk advising her that the £5,000 held for adjudication would only be available until the 2nd August and, if not taken up by that date, to ask her to agenda consideration of the release of both the £25,000 in Earmarked Reserves for pensions backdating as recommended by the Council’s Internal Auditor and the release of the £5,000 held for pension adjudication for decision at the next meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10.25 pm.

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.