

DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 9th August 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr Brentor (Chair) and Cllrs Hudson-Baillie, Cornell, Hall, Jalland, Jones, Mace, Roberts and Watts.

In attendance: Mrs Bev Cornish, Parish Clerk

Also present: Three members of the public.

118.21 Co-option

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the co-option of Ms Katherine Hudson-Baillie to fill a vacancy in Downton Ward. She signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Brentor welcomed her to the Council

119.21 Public Question Time

The Chair of the Memorial Centre Committee asked whether there was an update on the actions to be taken to address the 2018 survey recommendations brought to the attention of the Council by a member of the Committee in June 2021.

A member of the public asked that the Council support the quote listed on the Agenda for the repairs to the Borough Cross lights which were long overdue.

120.21 Apologies

Cllr Brentor proposed from the Chair and it was RESOLVED that an apology received from Cllr Randall due to a holiday commitment be accepted.

121.21 Minutes

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED, with 1 abstention from Cllr Hudson-Baillie, to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 12th July 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

122.21 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 Roberts declared a personal and pecuniary interest in planning application PL/2021/06376 and did not speak or vote on it.

Cllr Brentor declared a personal and non-pecuniary interest in planning application PL/2021/05550 and did vote on it.

Cllr Mace declared a personal and non-pecuniary interest in Minute 145.21 and did not vote on it.

Cllrs Brentor, Mace, Cornell and Hall declared personal and non-pecuniary interesting in Minute 156.21 and did not vote.

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.

123.21 Business Raised During Public Question Time

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

- The Clerk advised that due to other priority work she had not yet obtained quotes for works to the Memorial Centre's flat rooves, guttering and windows.
- Councillors would take account of the comments made when considering the quote for the lights at the Borough Cross.

124.21 Planning and Tree Works Applications

PL/2021/06443 Outline planning permission: Some matters reserved

Land West of Breamore Road, Downton - Residential development of up to 100 dwellings (Use Class C3) , associated landscaping, utilities and drainage infrastructure (Outline application relating to access - to be taken from Breamore Road): Downton: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to delegate the response to this application to the New Housing Development Committee.

PL/2021/06524 132 The Borough, Downton - Extension to existing attic room to incorporate attic to south-west and associated works including 'link': 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/2021/06063 Fishermen's Car Park off Avondyke, Downton - To erect a shipping style storage container from flat pack in a corner of the grassed car park: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to object to this application on the grounds that the location for the shipping container and chemical toilet was inappropriate as they were unsightly structures at the entrance to the Millennium Green which would not blend into the semi-rural setting. Furthermore, the permanent siting of the chemical toilet will impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring property and visitors to the Green during the summer months due to its unpleasant odour.

PL/2021/06376 Consent to display an advertisement 66 The Borough, Downton - 1 no. externally illuminated (logos only) fascia sign; 1 no. externally illuminated projecting sign; 1 no. externally illuminated logo and 1 no. non-illuminated 'car park' lettering and arrow: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to support this application on the grounds that it was compliant with Clause x (roman numeral 10) of Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

PL/2021/07197 10 Avon Meadow Downton - Demolition of conservatory and construction of two storey extension to rear of property: 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/2021/07443 31 The Borough, Downton - T1- Eucalyptus- remove southerly limb at bifurcation point to weight reduce entire tree (lessen impact), reduce excessive shading to the property's garden, as well as the same effect on the easterly neighbouring property. Then a reduction of the remaining canopy by 50%:
Downton Parish Council RESOLVED, with 1 objection from Cllr Jones, to support this application.

PL/2021/07487 Fairfield House, 60 The Borough, Downton - T1 Ash tree fell T2 Holme Oak pollard back to old cuts T3 Laurel trees pollard to 2 metres: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to object to this application and asked that the Tree Officer inspect the ash tree to be removed as no information was provided in the application.

PL/2021/07612 28 High Street, Downton - Crab Apple tree – fell: Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to support this application.

125.21 Planning Application Decisions

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the following decisions:

PL2021/03484 and PL2021/02036
Cobwebs, 7 Gravel Close, Downton
Erection of single storey rear extension and internal
Alterations to create utility room Approve with conditions

PL2021/05134 109 The Borough, Downton
Proposed conversion of 2 existing flats into a single storey
extension into a single family dwelling, loft conversion,
rear single storey extension, reconfiguration of parking
area and garage entrance Approve with conditions

PL2021/05987/04905/04906
Randor House, The Headlands, Downton
Internal & External alterations Approve with conditions

PL/2021/05550 4 Avondyke, Downton
Side & Rear extensions with internal alterations and
Hard landscaping Approve with conditions

PL/2021/05651 Gardeners Cottage, Long Close, Downton
Yew Tree – Remove to ground level No objection

41.21 Outline Planning Application for Formula Land

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED not to approve the allocation of funds at this stage for the commissioning of any professional or technical advice in relation to the Council's response to the Formula Land outline planning application.

126.21 New & Revised Policies

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the Business Continuity Plan subject to minor amendments being made, confirmation on the retrieval of corrupted documents from Dropbox and duplicate keys being made.

127.21 Virtual Meetings

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to cease virtual meeting arrangements with immediate effect.

128.21 3 Year Plan

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the changes to the Council's 3 year Plan.

129.21 3 Year Plan Consultation Date & Communication Plan

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the date of 4th September 2021 for the public consultation of the 3 Year Plan and to approve a communications plan devised by the Communications Working Group. It also agreed to set aside the sum of £50 for the printing and purchase of presentation materials.

130.21 Handyperson Service Provision

Following a discussion, Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to revise the poster previously issued and to advertise for the service more widely using the noticeboards, the InDownton magazine and social media.

131.21 Tree Works on the Beacon Green

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the quote from Ridleaves tree surgeons, as approved by Wiltshire, for £1,300 plus £500 for rotovating and re-seeding the areas after removal of the identified trees on the Beacon Green.

132.21 Playground Inspection Training

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the recommendations contained in a report from the Administrative Officer on playground inspection training and to approve the costs for 3 councillors and an officer to attend the training at £68.75 per councillor/officer.

133.21 Bollard Replacements & Cycle Stands at Borough Cross

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the ordering of plastic bollards rather than wrought iron bollards for the area around the Borough Cross as advised by Wiltshire Highways. It was agreed that an additional spare bollard be ordered to the number required which is to be kept in the Council's store should any of the bollards need to be replaced in the future.

134.21 Public Toilets Electrical Survey

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to refuse a quote for £200 from Ben Rhind-Tutt to carry out an electrical installation condition report on the Public Toilets.

135.21 Defibrillator at Charlton All Saints

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to refuse a quote for £360 from Ben Rhind-Tutt to install an earth rod, earth the telephone box and install and RCD Spur unit to control it in readiness for the installation of a defibrillator.

136.21 Surface Lighting at the Borough Cross

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to refuse a quote for £2,070 from Ben Rhind-Tutt to replace the light fittings at the Borough Cross.

137.21 Speed Indicator Device

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the allocation of a further £400 towards the purchase of a solar panel for the Speed Indicator Device in order to extend the battery life of the device.

138.21 Millennium Green Funding for Finger Posts

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the request from Downton Millennium Green Trust for the purchase of finger posts for signage to the Millennium Green at the cost of £300 which forms part of the s106 monies retained by the Council.

139.21 Funding for monthly employment meetings

Following concerns raised by Cllr Hall and an explanation from Cllrs Brentor and Mace that the meetings were a requirement of the Terms of Reference of the Staffing Committee, Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve a proposal from Cllr Brentor to approve the sum of £120 as the annual cost of hire for the use of the office room in the Memorial Centre for her to meet with the Clerk for monthly one to one meetings.

140.21 Removal of Roundabout in Moot Lane Recreation Ground

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to ratify the expenditure of £850 associated with the removal by Redlynch Leisure of the roundabout from the Moot Lane Recreation Ground as approved by the Chair under Clause 4.5 of the Council’s Financial Regulations.

141.21 Benchmarking request for the role of Downton Parish Council Clerk

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve a recommendation from the Staffing Committee to submit a benchmarking request form to South West Councils to establish the comparative grade of work undertaken currently in the role of Downton Parish Council Clerk and to authorise the Chair of the Council to submit this on behalf of the Council.

The Clerk advised the Council that the reason for asking for an evaluation of her job was that despite it being a requirement of the Terms of Reference of the Staffing Committee, her salary had still not been reviewed nor her job description revised to reflect the additional responsibilities she had been given in April 2020.

142.21 Purchase of a Gazebo

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the purchase of a pop up gazebo for Council use. Following a proposed variation to the motion from Cllr Jones, the Council RESOLVED to increase the cost limit to £300 and for the monies to be allocated from the ‘In Bloom’ budget line.

143.21 Area Board meeting with Parish Council Representatives

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED that matters to be considered would be submitted by Cllr Hall by the deadline of 24th August. These would include the issues of dementia and activities for young people.

144.21 Neighbour Access to the Memorial Gardens

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to ratify the request from neighbouring residents to the Memorial Gardens to have permitted access on an agreed basis across the Memorial Gardens to enable materials for landscaping to be delivered to and removed from their garden for a period of 3 weeks.

145.21 Change of Flooring in Downton Memorial Pre-School Room

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the change of flooring from carpet tiles to a hard, easy to clean, grey surface in accordance with the conditions of the sub-lease with the Downton Memorial Centre Committee.

146.21 Committees and Working Groups

Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Group: Cllr Brentor gave a brief report on a recent meeting which included an update on the response to the Parish Council's application for a Housing Needs Assessment which is proposed to take place 4th October and close on 1st November. The group also intends to complete an outline plan to be presented to the Parish Council to undertake a consultation meeting to consider interest in setting up a new Neighbourhood Plan Strategy group.

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 further 30 minutes to complete the remaining items on the Agenda.

147.21 Representative Reports

Wiltshire Council meeting on 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans: Cllr Brentor gave a brief report on a recent meeting attended by 2 members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group at which no new information was provided on the longer term validity of 'made' neighbourhood plans. She reported that the slides from the meeting would be circulated when they were received.

Brian Whitehead Sports Centre Association: Cllr Cornell gave a brief report on a recent meeting at which the new structure of the organisation had been reported and the annual rents for the clubs and the work to the clubhouse had been discussed.

Community Area Transport Group: The Clerk gave a brief report on a recent long meeting at which the Council's request to use the pole on the Maypole Green to erect the speed indicator device was selected as one of the five work priorities for the Group to be progressed.

148.21 Payments

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the following payments for August:
£875.00 Maranji Commercial & Domestic Cleaning
£798.53 Bawden Managed Landscapes
£222.76 Idverde
£28.79 Ionos
£17.62 West Mercia Energy
£43.19 BT Group

£36.00 CPRE
£102.00 HCI Data Ltd
£159.62 Water2Business

149.21 Accounts for Payment

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the sum of £5,183.94 as the Accounts for payment for August 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)	798.53
Idverde (Bin emptying)	222.76
Ionos (website hosting)	28.79
West Mercia Energy(Toilets)	17.62
BT Group (Staff mobile)	43.19
CPRE	36.00
HCI Data Ltd (web.gov.uk domain name renewal)	102.00
Water2Business	159.62
Staff Salaries and Pensions	2900.43
Total	<u>5,183.94</u>

Balances to be Approved and Noted as at 09.08.2021

Current A/c: £1,487.46 A/c: £116,010.71
Memorial Hall Extension A/c: £3,920.01

150.21 Budget to Actual Report

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to approve the Budget to Actual Report as at 31st July 2021.

151.21 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.
 - Briefing Note 21-13 Management of Council business and publicity during the pre-election period.
 - Briefing Note 21-14 Bus Back Better update – about the government's national bus strategy and the work being done in Wiltshire to improve local bus services including an informal bus survey.
 - Briefing Note 21-12 - Substantive Highways Scheme Fund Bid Application Process for Funding.
 - Gambling Statement of licensing Principles – Review and consultation.
 - Community Area Transport Group – Email with papers for meeting being held on 4th August 2021 at 6 pm.
 - Southern Wiltshire Area Board – Notification of a Youth Survey of young people being carried out between Monday 27th September and Friday 22nd October 2021.
 - Southern Wiltshire Area Board – Notification of new government funding opportunities.

- Southern Wiltshire Area Board – Promotion of the Year of Reading – Email regarding an initiative to promote reading amongst young people.
 - Atkins – Email regarding Road Carriageway Works in Moot Lane beyond the railway bridge which will start from Sunday 15th August 2021 from 07.00 to 19.00 hrs. These works involve surface dressing over patches that were completed earlier this year.
2. Formula Land on the Proposals for land off Breamore Road, Downton – Planning Ref: PL/2021/06443 – An email requesting a meeting with the Parish Council.
 3. Downton Allotments and Leisure Gardeners Association - Email regarding the AGM on Saturday 18th September 2021 AGM at 12pm in the Orchard Area of the Allotments.
 4. Longford Estates – Email confirming Lord Radnor’s approval for the Topiary Cuckoo to be installed on the Borough Green opposite the Memorial Centre.
 5. Wiltshire Association of Local Councils – July Newsletter.
 6. Came & Company – Email regarding Insurance Renewal from 1st October 2021.
 7. MySalisbury – An email regarding the MySalisbury community news project.
 8. Parishioner – Email regarding more broken glass at the Moot Lane Recreation Ground.
 9. Parishioner - Email regarding an issue with the roundabout at the Moot Lane Recreation Ground.
 10. Parishioners – Emails regarding the Formula Land planning application.
 11. Non-parishioner – Email regarding concerns about Downton Cemetery.
 12. Non-parishioner – Email regarding Neighbourhood Planning – Request for input into research into the effectiveness of plan policies.

152.21 Clerk’s Report

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

Amenities

1. Topiary Cuckoo

Longford Estates has given approval for the Cuckoo Topiary to be installed on the Green opposite the Memorial Centre.

2. Cemetery

Quotes from contractors have been sought for the repair of the steps, fencing and the cleaning of the memorial wall which should be able to be considered by the Amenities Committee on 23rd August.

3. Playground project

Two playground suppliers have met with officers on site and a third has been contacted. Each will be producing outline designs for the Amenities Committee meeting on 23rd August with the aim of the agreed outline plans potentially forming part of the public consultation in early September to obtain initial views from residents.

4. Parish Steward

The Steward has been in Downton on 3rd-4th August. He has:

- Cleared stone and debris on the road and pavement at the traffic lights on Lode Hill and at the bottom of Slab Lane.

Downton Parish Council – Ordinary Meeting on Monday 9th August 2021
 Minutes approved as a true and accurate record, and signed as so by the Chairman presiding

- Strimmed weeds/nettles along pedestrian walkway between Moot Lane and Avon Meadow, opposite conker tree.
- Strimmed weeds/nettles along pedestrian walkway near Hyde Lane near Mesh Pond.
- Cleared overgrowth on footpath from The Sidings/Hamilton Park towards the meadows.
- Cleared weeds/nettles on top part of Millennium Beacon Green.

153.21 Date of next meeting

Downton Parish Council RESOLVED to note the date of the next meeting as Monday 13th September 2021 at 7.30 pm to be held in the Bonvalot Room at the Downton Memorial Centre.

Part 2 – CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – EXEMPT MATTERS - STAFFING

154.21 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 Cornell and RESOLVED by the meeting.

155.21 Panel for Staffing Investigation

Cllrs Brentor, Mace, Cornell and Hall declared an interest and stated that they would not take part in the voting on this matter. All councillors confirmed that they had read and understood the description of the role required of a panel member for this purpose. After a short discussion, councillors agreed that the panel should consist of a mix of gender as well as recent and long appointed councillors. Cllr Roberts proposed, Cllr Jalland seconded, and it was resolved that Cllrs Jones, Watts and Jalland would form the panel with Cllrs Hudson-Baillie and Randall as substitutes should any panel member become unavailable.

At this point members of the Council agreed to continue the meeting until the end of the final agenda item.

156.21 Council Reserves held for pension backdating

Cllr Brentor proposed an amendment to the agenda item and it was resolved that the proposal to be considered would be ‘to receive an update regarding the release of 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 and to decide on consequent actions.’

She then updated members regarding the communication received on the 2nd August from the Clerk and of the communication received on the 3rd August from a solicitor acting on behalf of the Clerk, reading out the full contents of each. She confirmed that a response had been sent to each on the legal advice provided under the Council’s insurance policy. Cllr Watts proposed and Cllr Hall seconded and it was resolved that:

- The Council would appoint the adjudicator from MUSE

- The Council will continue to hold the £5,000 in Earmarked Reserves for this purpose.
- The Council will continue to hold the £25,000 in Earmarked Reserves for pension backdating until communication is received from the adjudicator.
- The Council will take no further action, apart from those agreed above, in response to the communications received from the Clerk and her solicitor regarding this matter unless requested by the adjudicator, the Ombudsman or legal advice.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10.50 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.