



Downton Parish Council

Minutes of the DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting held on
Monday 13 November 2023. Start time 7:00 pm
MEMORIAL HALL, DOWNTON (BONVALOT ROOM)

Councillors present: Jane Brentor (Chair) (JB), Dave Mace (DM), Andy North (AN), Paul Roberts (PR), Gareth Watts (GW), Matt Randall (MR), and Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council) (RC)

Plus: Melanie Camilleri (MC) – Clerk/RFO and 6 members of the public.

MINUTES

214/23 Public Question Time

Flooding

- What is the Parish Council doing about reminding landowners of their riparian responsibilities? This includes the Parish Council's responsibilities in that respect. She thought from a previous meeting that the Clerk was supposed to be sending out letters.
- The Flood Plan on the website is out of date (names and contacts). Who do they contact?

Remembrance Sunday Parade & service

- Two policewomen attended to lay a wreath but didn't know where to go and were 20mins late.
- Expressed thanks to all those who arranged the event and asked that the Parish Council express their thanks.

215/23 To receive a report from PC Harry Murphy

PC Murphy sent his apologies and the following report: -

- On 14th October there was a report of suspected poaching/hare coursing on LANGFORD LANE. A vehicle registration was recorded, and this has been sent to the rural crime team for their awareness.
- On 18th October there was a report of a suspicious incident on WITHERINGTON ROAD whereby a stable was trespassed and two ponies were believed to have been marked for 'theft in the future'. Officers from Salisbury attended the report, provided safeguarding advice, and targeted patrols were requested for 7 days afterwards. No theft has occurred.
- On 19th October on WICK LANE there was a non-dwelling burglary whereby power tools and an advent mini loader was stolen. Enquiries have been ongoing expeditiously and the investigation is still open where enquiries are still ongoing to hopefully identify the suspect(s).

- On 20th October there was a report of a theft on GRAVEL CLOSE whereby 3 aluminium windows were stolen that had been left on a driveway overnight. Enquiries are ongoing with the victim at this time.
- On 1st November officers attended CASTLE MEADOWS and recovered a small quantity of controlled drugs and drug paraphernalia. Enquiries are ongoing to identify the suspect.
- On 6th November there was a theft reported at the CO-OP store. The suspect has been identified and will be dealt with accordingly, enquiries are currently still ongoing before the suspect can be formally dealt with.
- On 9th November there was an attempted theft reported at the CO-OP store. The suspect has not been formally identified however was challenged in the store and threatened to cause harm to the staff member – therefore the suspect if they are identified will be dealt with for a Section 4a Public Order offence. Enquiries are ongoing.
- On 7th November at TRAFALGAR SCHOOL there was a report of careless driving and failing to stop/report a road traffic collision. A vehicle reversed into another parked vehicle, however the driver got out to inspect the damage and then drove off without leaving any details. CCTV footage and registered keeper checks are ongoing to identify the offending driver.
- On 11th November there was an incident of anti-social behaviour at AVONDYKE whereby eggs were thrown at a property window for an unknown reason. Unfortunately, there were no witnesses at the time and no CCTV covering the incident.
- Other incidents - more private in nature and so can't be shared.
- Things are starting to settle down now we are well away from the summer months, however we will be trying to be out visible in Downton a bit more as we get closer towards the festive period and school holidays at Christmas time etc.

216/23 To receive a report from Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council)

- BWSCA: His officers are still engaged in discussions seeking a long-term solution. He's keeping a close eye on developments.
- Planning PL/2023/08233: Revised plans submitted. JB confirmed this is on the Agenda.
- Wick Lane (flooding): Primarily a Wessex Water issue. He'll now ask Public Health to get involved.
- Mesh Pond (resurfacing section of unadopted road): He's asked for potholes to be filled once; however, he's also asked WC Highways to propose how this can be resolved longer term. This is on his list to follow-up. Ditches are the responsibility of Longford Estate and WC Highways.
- Flooding: Concerned about water levels (higher than this time last year) plus quantity of rain. Urges all Parish Councils to get everything in place. JB confirmed WC Highways drain and gullies team are attending a date in Nov to clear both sides of the road from The Bull Public House up to the Iron Bridge. MC will produce the usual letter for residents in that stretch of road.

217/23 Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Stu Carter (SC) and Stephanie Jalland (SJ). Reason noted and accepted.

218/23 Declarations of interest: AN: Agenda 224 iv) (Tech B invoices), DM: Agenda 224/23 i) and iv) (Memorial Centre invoice), and MR 222/23 (reimbursement of expenses)

219/23 Minutes

- i) RESOLVED: the Minutes of the Meeting held on **09 October 2023** were approved.

220/23 Business raised during Public Question Time

To resolve to refer any business raised by the public or items of information from councillors either to the appropriate committee or for any other action.

Flooding

- Culvert by the Memorial Gardens: Environment Agency are due to clear in November. JB will chase.
- Wick Lane (flooding): Primarily a Wessex Water issue.
- Road from The Bull Public House up to the Iron Bridge: WC Highways drain and gullies team are attending a date in Nov to clear both sides of the road.
- Riparian letters: discussed at the meeting 13 March 2023 (Agenda 48/23 - JB will get hold of the riparian responsibilities template letter in the event the Parish Council wish to contact a landowner). JB thought this task was with the Admin Officer at the time. JB and MC to discuss
- The Flood Plan on the website: DM will take down from the website. The points of contact are JB and MC.

Remembrance Sunday Parade & service

- JB advised that PC Harry Murphy was called away at the last minute – he was given the honour of being the Wiltshire Police representative at the guild hall ceremony in the market square. The message regarding times etc must not have got through.
- JB confirmed she'd already expressed her thanks on behalf of the Parish Council.

221/23 Village Matters

- i) Hedge planting Moot Lane: JB reported that she'd ordered 120 2-year-old whips. Currently being held by Landford Trees until date of planting agreed. GW indicated that he'd plant the whips. He'll liaise with JB on a date.
- ii) Annual Christmas Tree on the Maypole Green. MC delivered the following report:-
 - She'd written to the DCF Chair, Tony Pike, on two occasions and called him 08 Nov - enquiring as to whether DCF wished to seek permission to erect the Xmas Tree on the Green (to place on the Nov Agenda).
 - Tony expressed DCF's concerns (below) and that DCF would be meeting to decide if they'd hold the event this year:-
 - DCF's financial position
 - Loss of volunteers
 - Rising costs of insurance for the event
 - Health & Safety considerations (wet ground and potential high winds)
 - MC advised that the Parish Council are unable to cover insurance under its policy because it's a DCF run event (verified by the insurers), however, invited DCF to write to the Parish Council seeking a financial contribution.
 - Tony sent MC an Email 13 Nov (pm):-
 - No request for a financial contribution was made
 - With disappointment, DCF has concluded that they're unable to provide the Christmas Tree this year due to costs and the potential risks and associated costs given the state of the greens and forecast weather.

A brief discussion followed as to what actions the Parish Council could take to provide a Christmas Tree at such short notice with no allocated budget. Agreed by majority decision, research to be conducted and Agenda item for the EGM 27 Nov.

- iii) The Parish Council's Wiltshire Council Towns Programme 2023/24 grant application: proposal and application being progressed. Will be presented at the EGM 27 Nov. Noted the deadline for submission is 30 Nov (extension agreed by Wiltshire Council).

222/23 Planning

- i) The applications received were considered and recommendations made to Wiltshire Council Planning Authority (see Planning Schedule)
- ii) Noted planning decisions (see Planning Schedule)
- iii) PL/2023/01796 Treeworks application by residents of Poplar Cottage to reduce overall height of 2x Silver Birch: Noted receipt of insurance, Risk Assessments, and Method Statements being in place.
- iv) RESOLVED: AN's proposed response (with contributions from JB and DM) to Wiltshire Council's Local Plan consultation (from the perspective of Downton) was approved.

223/23 Play Park Refurbishment

- i) Moot Lane: MC reported that following a site visit on 17 Oct between by Cllrs, Historic England (HE) inspector, and Vita Play Ltd (with direct reference to the desk-based assessment report produced by Wessex Archaeology), three items of equipment moved. MC had now submitted the application for Scheduled Monument Consent. HE had acknowledged and forward for the Secretary of State's decision. JB expressed her thanks to Vita Play for changing the design at no additional cost to the Parish Council.
- ii) Moot Lane Grand Opening Event Feb 2024: noted MC has submitted the Youth Grant application to SWAB. RESOLVED: JB and MR will attend the SWAB meeting on 07 Dec 2023 to make representation on behalf of Downton Parish Council.

- iii) Play Park Refurbishment budget: MC delivered an update. Summary as follows:-

£264,468.78	Income (PWLB Loan, S106, CIL). 1 st tranche PWLB Loan £125K
£250,000.00	Play Park Budget (net of VAT)

£14,468.78	Contingency
-£6,770.00	Scheduled Monument Consent costs (estimate net of VAT)
- £7,320.56	Additional items (e.g. refurb benches, new goal posts, grand opening, loan fees)

£ 378.22	Balance

PWLB Loan interest rates @today pm = 5.22%. Compared to 5.33% 1st tranche loan July 2023.

RESOLVED: MC to apply for 2nd tranche PWLB Loan (£55,000) November 2023.

- iv) Moot Lane: Wessex Archaeology's quote for the provision of an archaeological management plan (budget provision 2024/25). After a short discussion about the 'value add' this Plan will provide (given the Parish Council holds the desk-based assessment and the close working relationship developed with Historic England with regards to the site) RESOLVED: do not progress provision for such a Plan.

224/23 Finance

- i) Payment of Paul Fox's invoice for maintenance works carried out on the Memorial Centre (in line with quotes approved by full council 137/23 ii) and 176/23 v)) was ratified. DM abstained from voting, forfeiting his vote.
- ii) Noted IONOS's new pricing structure wef 01 Dec 2023.
- iii) Noted National Joint Council rates of pay applicable from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, and that Payroll will make the necessary back-dated payments with the November 2023 pay run.
- iv) RESOLVED: the Cash Flow Report and payments were approved.

Account Balances

Lloyds Treasurers Account 08 Nov 2023: £24,412.05

Lloyds Business Bank Instant 08 Nov 2023: £269,534.97

Lloyds Treasurers Account (Heritage Fund) 08 Nov 2023: £0

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Staff Salaries	Net Salaries (Oct) + office allowances	3,045.83	BACS
Wiltshire Pension	Mth 7	1,118.02	BACS
PWLB	Loan repayment	8,847.63	DD
1&1	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
1&1	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
1&1	Credit	-22.67	DD
1&1	Web site hosting + 2x officer email accounts	28.79	DD
TechB	IT Managed Services	40.20	S/O
BT	Monthly business bill	166.32	DD
Paul Fox	Memorial Centre painting	1,220.00	BACS
West Mercia Energy	Public Toilets Memorial Grd – electricity Sept	37.47	BACS
Vita Play Ltd	Balance (70%) Play Park Refurb CAS	8,400.00	BACS
Vita Play Ltd	Balance (70%) Play Park Refurb MG	66,561.60	BACS
Vita Play Ltd	Play Park Benches refurb MG	468.00	BACS
A Wells & Sons	Memorial Centre roof replacement	11,520.00	BACS
Downton Memorial Centre	Hire fees (various dates Sept)	112.75	BACS
Downton Memorial Centre	Hire fees (various dates Oct)	136.00	BACS
Idverde	Bin emptying (Oct)	241.28	BACS
Idverde	Grounds Maintenance Oct (30%)	695.60	BACS
BWP Creative Ltd	Web hosting 1/11/23-30/11/23	30.00	BACS
Matt Randall	Expenses MG Play Park Grand Opening	111.11	BACS
M Camilleri	Expenses (office + reimbursement MG Play Park Grand Opening)	52.33	BACS
Total debit		£102,829.46	

- v) **RESOLVED:** Vita Play's quote to refurbish the bench at Charlton All Saints Play Park was approved subject to details of refurbishment and confirmation wooden slats will be replaced.
- vi) **RESOLVED:** Vita Play's quote to refurbish the climbing arch at Charlton All Saints Play Park subject to details of refurbishment and confirmation flaking paint will be sandblasted before repainting.
- vii) On the basis the Parish Council is eligible to submit an application for any of the £1M CIL money NFDC has set aside for local projects **RESOLVED:** MC to submit for
- 1) Planting Memorial Gardens
 - 2) Planting Crematorium
 - 3) Refurb Public Toilets
- Indicative costs for applications to be agreed by email.

225/23 Committee & Working Group Reports

- i) Allotments Meeting: GW was unable to attend due to a family emergency
- ii) Comms Working Group: Andy reported that the Working Group wished to set-up platforms for comms e.g. Parish Council FB page, new website, Cllrs to move to their .gov.uk email addresses. Items to be progressed in consultation with DM and other members of the council.

226/23 Councillors Reports

- i) **AN**
SID: Three volunteers recruited who'll be trained before Xmas. AN will work with the new Admin Officer on rotation of the shard SID with Redlynch PC.

GW

Will set-up an Amenities Committee meeting to discuss the Idverde contract

JB

- WC Highways drain and gullies team are attending a date in Nov to clear both sides of the road from The Bull Public House up to the Iron Bridge. MC to produce letter to residents which JB will deliver.
- Lychgate repair: full funding being secured by SWAB Grant.

227/23 Clerk's Report

- i) A brief report from the Chair and Clerk was delivered.

228/23 Correspondence, AOB, urgent matters

- i) Noted invitation from Trafalgar School to attend their Annual Presentation of GCSE Certificates and Awards on Thursday 23rd November. GW will attend if he's available.
- ii) Noted Wiltshire Council's consultation to gather feedback on the proposals for potential changes to Wiltshire Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working-age people.
RESOLVED: Downton Parish Council will not make representation.

229/23 RESOLVED: Agenda items 230/23 and 231/23 would be closed to members of the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

230/23 BWSCA Lease

Resolutions passed under this Agenda item are 'Confidential – Not for Publication' due to commercial sensitivity.

231/23 Appointment of an Administrative Officer

RESOLVED: Susan Barnhurst-Davies has been appointed the Parish Council's Administrative Office with a starting of 01 December 2023. DM will set-up her IT equipment in her home workspace. MC will carry out her Induction.

All other resolutions passed under this Agenda item are 'Confidential – Not for Publication' under Sections 40 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

232/23 Date of next meeting

The dates of the next Meetings for **Downton Parish Council** will be held on

- **Extraordinary General Meeting** (to discuss the 2024/25 budget): **27 November 2023** at **7:00pm** in the **Memorial Hall, Downton (Bonvalot Room)**.
- **Ordinary Meeting:** **11 December 2023** at **7:00pm** in the **Memorial Hall, Downton (Bonvalot Room)**.

Being no further business, JB closed the meeting at 10:25pm.

DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING