



Downton Parish Council

Minutes of the DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting held on
Monday 08 January 2024. 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), Stu Carter (SC), and Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council) (RC)

Plus: Melanie Camilleri (MC) – Clerk/RFO, Susan Barnhurst-Davies (SBD) - Admin Officer, and 4 members of the public.

MINUTES

01/24 Public Question Time

Xmas Tree

Feedback and thanks were received from three members of the public – that the tree was “absolutely brilliant” and brought “cheer mid-winter”.

No Cuckoo Fair 2024

As this event isn't taking place in 2024, various charities are planning to re-coup their losses by holding their own fund-raising activities. A Group has been set-up to co-ordinate the various events e.g. calendar and PR which will be using a 'Downton River Festival' theme. This Group is holding a public meeting on **01 Feb 7:30pm** in the Memorial Centre (Bonvalot Room). The Parish Council are invited to send a rep to attend. They are not asking for PC support at this stage.

Water Wheel

Has stopped working. It will be seen by a specialist on Tues.

Memorial Gardens New Play Park

Feedback of thanks on behalf of the children of the Primary School – equipment is very special, different, and they're very proud of it.

Installation of footpath providing access to the school

On behalf of Downton Primary School, Headteacher Paul Carlton presented the case for the installation of a woodchip footpath providing access to the school from the Memorial Gardens (route over the bund). This covered child safety and reports of 'near misses' with vehicles. Number of Children attending the school about to increase to 315. Cost of installation and maintenance to be met by the school.

Adoption of Flood Plan

Is there an opportunity for the Flood Wardens to contribute to the Flood Plan?

02/24

To receive a report from PC Harry Murphy: Apologies with written report received: -

- 13th December on the A338 there was a report of a careless driver. The suspect was identified, and they have been reported for the offence.
- 14th December on Langford Lane there was a suspicious incident reported of a vehicle driving very slowly with two males inside and 4 dogs, about to begin hare coursing. However, they left the area and the persons in the vehicle were not identified.
- 15th December on the Borough there was a road traffic collision whereby a vehicle hit a telegraph pole. There were no serious injuries, and it is believed that the driver has now been identified because they did not remain at the scene, however enquiries are still ongoing to confirm this.
- On 15th, 16th, and 22nd December there were more shoplifting incidents at the co-op – the suspect has been identified and further action will be taken on this.
- Sometime between 25th – 29th December on Batchelor Way there was an attempted vehicle theft whereby a van was broken into, and the steering wheel lock/ignition barrel was damaged. Nothing was stolen from inside the vehicle. Unfortunately, due to a lack of witnesses and/or CCTV no suspect has been identified.
- On 31st December at the Service Station there was a making off without payment for fuel, whereby the suspects and vehicle registration plates were covered up. Enquiries are ongoing as there was CCTV footage.
- On 1st January there was a male being drunk and disorderly on The Headlands – he was identified and arrested.
- On 2nd January there was a shoplifting incident at the Service Station, enquiries are ongoing to review the CCTV footage.
- On 4th January on Breamore Road there was damage-only minor RTC and public order incident – the suspect has been identified.

03/24

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

- Flooding: situation has dominated the last week or two. Worst in living memory. Pleased that Downton's defences worked. There will now be wash-up and learnings i.e. is there a Flood Plan in place? Where in place, what early action was taken which worked? Water levels have now significantly fallen; however, ground saturation remain high.
- WC Budget: almost complete. Will be published in next week or two
- BWSCA funding: Meeting between WC, BWSCA, and the Parish Council on 23 January.

04/24

Apologies for Absence: Stephanie Jalland (SJ) - reason noted and accepted.

05/24

Declarations of interest: AN: Agenda 12/24 i) (Tech B invoice), GW: Agenda 12/24 i) (reimbursement of expenses).

06/24

Minutes

i) RESOLVED the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on **11 December 2023** were approved. SC abstained from voting (as he did not attend this meeting).

07/24 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.

Xmas Tree

Full response Agenda 08/24 v)

No Cuckoo Fair 2024

Noted.

Water Wheel

Noted.

Memorial Gardens New Play Park

Feedback noted with thanks.

Installation of footpath providing access to the school

Will be addressed under Agenda 16/24 i)

Adoption of Flood Plan

Will be addressed under Agenda 08/24 i)

08/24 Village Matters

- i) To resolve to approve and adopt the updated Flood Plan: the Flood Plan isn't quite ready to be published. Action: SC and SBD to co-ordinate a meeting with a Flood Resilience Working Group (comprising PC reps and Flood Wardens). Aim to finalise the Plan in the next week or two.
RESOLVED: approval and adoption of the Plan may be carried out by email.
JB asked that the Working Group respond to WC's request for details of properties flooded and feedback on any particular concerns.
- ii) Noted that WC Highways has agreed to the Parish Council's request for their Gullies Team to return to clear the two drains on the South side of The Borough (date to be confirmed).
- iii) SBD delivered a report on jobs identified for the Parish Steward's scheduled visits 11/15 Jan. Additional items captured e.g. potholes. Outstanding jobs from last list (steps by Charlton All Saints defib) to be chased. JB expressed her thanks to SBD for her successful engagement with the Parish Steward.
- iv) RESOLVED: submit an application to Woodland Trust for their free 'Wild Harvest' Hedging pack 105 (for the Cemetery).
- v) Christmas Tree Maypole Green:-
 - Noted the positive feedback on the Parish Council led Christmas Tree erection/switching on lights event 2023 e.g size and shape of healthy-looking tree, refreshments, Santa + his Elf, the Grinch making an appearance (boo!), and the hope that the Parish Council would hold a similar event in 2024.
JB expressed her formal thanks to Jeremy Parsons for his invaluable support to the Parish Council in holding this event. JB also wished to express her thanks to Cllr Roberts for his generous contribution (on behalf of the Co-op) for the mince pies and chocolates.
 - RESOLVED: that MC will liaise with The Cuckoo Fair over reporting electricity usage and settlement on the SSE Account.
 - RESOLVED: the Parish Council (as landowner) will be the named Account holder for the SSE contract in relation to the supply of electricity to Maypole Green. MC will liaise with The Cuckoo Fair.

- RESOLVED: the Christmas Tree erection/switching on lights event in 2024 will be led by the Parish Council
- vi) Ratified that Cllr Carter will undertake future visual safety check inspections of Charlton All Saints Play Park.

09/24 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)

10/24 Moot Lane Play Park Refurbishment

- i) Noted that the Secretary of State for Culture, Media, and Sport has granted Schedule Monument Consent for the Moot Lane Play Park refurbishment
- ii) Noted that Historic England has granted permission for Vita Play to commence works on 08 January 2024 (except for the Goal Posts - see iv) below)
- iii) Noted Vita Play will be onsite for 4-5 weeks. RESOLVED:
 - MR, DM, JB, and MC will attend onsite Wed 10 Jan 9:30am to sign-off precise locations of each item of equipment
 - MC will be the point of contact for Vita Play.
 - Delegated responsibility to GW, MR, and MC for decision making on non-material matters
- iv) Noted that Wessex Archaeology will prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation for the Goal Posts (which is subject to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media, and Sport's approval) prior to their installation. Exact location of goal posts to be explored with Vita Play given this WSI requirement.
- v) Noted the 2nd tranche of PWLB Loan (£55,000) has been secured, 4.6% interest rate applied, and interest payments for 2024/25 (factored into the budget)
- vi) Grand Opening RESOLVED: whilst the Park will be open once Vita Play has finished (anticipated mid Feb), the Grand Opening will be held before the Easter holidays due to better weather and lighter evenings. MC to check availability of the Teqball Team and WC's Youth Workers before setting the exact date. RESOLVED: budget up to max £900.

11/24 Wiltshire Towns Programme

- i) RESOLVED: In accordance with Standing Order 22a, the Wiltshire Towns Programme Final Grant Agreement 2023/24 was executed in accordance with Standing Order 22b.

12/24 Finance

- i) RESOLVED: the Cash Flow Report and payments were approved.

Account Balances

Lloyds Treasurers Account 05 Jan 2024: £28,457.64

Lloyds Business Bank Instant 05 Jan 2024: £205,035.32

Lloyds Treasurers Account (Heritage Fund) 05 Jan 2024: £0

MC reported that the Bank Reconciliation had been carried out ad all correct.

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Staff Salaries	Net Salaries (Dec) + office allowances	4,123.14	BACS
Wiltshire Pension	Mth 9	1,433.44	BACS
HMRC	Tax & NI Q3	6,257.20	BACS
1&1	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
1&1	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
1&1	Website Hosting	12.00	DD
TechB	IT Managed Services	40.20	S/O

BT	Monthly business bill	160.08	DD
BWP Creative Ltd	Web hosting 1/1/23-31/1/23	30.00	BACS
Merangi	Public Toilets Cleaning (Nov)	910.00	BACS
West Mercia Energy	Public Toilets Memorial Grd – electricity Nov	37.99	BACS
Idverde	Bin emptying (Dec)	241.28	BACS
Idverde	Grounds Maintenance Dec (30%)	695.60	BACS
Vita Play Ltd	Goal Posts Memorial Gardens	2,211.46	BACS
Andrew Whitelock	Fix faulty flush	105.00	BACS
Gareth Watts	Reimbursement expenses (Xmas Tree Event)	49.98	BACS
M Camilleri	Expenses (fuel)	18.27	BACS
Susan Barnhurst-Davies	Office allowance (Dec)	26.00	BACS
Total debit		£16,402.48	

- ii) **RESOLVED:** consolidate water and wastewater (public toilets) on a dual tariff with Source for Business. Estimated saving £47.94 p.a

13/24 Committee & Working Group Reports

i) Comms Group

Website project: AN reported there had been a hand-over from DM

FB: AN will work with SBD to set-p

NDP

MC has created and formatted the updated plan. It will now be checked with members of the working group before sending to WC.

AN to seek agreement from John Glen to his updated foreword to the document

Once WC has checked and agreed the updated plan, it will be put to Downton Parish Council for approval and adoption.

14/24 Councillors Reports

To receive reports from the Councillors

SC

- Reported the awful condition on Warrens Lane (flooding) signage deployed and warnings to members of the public put out through FB
- Area Board meeting 22 Feb – will take opportunity to put questions to them about accidents on A338

JB

- Thanked all those who helped take down the Christmas Tree – now taken away for shredding

AN

- SID training ‘stuck’ with WC to organise. Cllr Clewer agreed to help move forward.

15/24 Clerk’s Report

- i) No separate report from the Chair and Clerk on this occasion.

16/24 Correspondence, AOB, urgent matters

- i) Councillors discussed at length Downton Primary School’s request to instal a footpath. An alternative route offering safe access (between the Memorial Centre and the school car park) was suggested by PR. JB and PR to liaise with the school in this respect. Should that alternate route not be suitable, the Parish Council wish to see a plan from the school with proposal on how they will meet costs to instal and maintain. Also note that the Environment Agency would need to grant consent as the route would be over the flood defence bund. Further update at the Feb Meeting.
- ii) **RESOLVED:** to dispose of the A3 printer and industrial sized shredder

- 17/24 Budget/Precept 2024/25: Part 1**
i) Multiple options for the 3rd draft Budget 2024/25 were considered.
- 18/24 RESOLVED: that Agenda items 19/24 and 20/24 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 discussed**
- 19/24 Budget/Precept 2024/25: Part 2**
i) Multiple options for the 3rd draft Budget (including all confidential items) were discussed at great length (incl grass cutting quote 19/24 ii).
ii) Noted an indicative quote for grass cutting at Barford Lane Cemetery wef 01 April 2024
iii) **RESOLVED:** by majority decision, the 2024/25 budget and resulting Precept of **£206,450.00** was approved.
- 20/24 BWSCA**
No resolutions were passed under this Confidential Agenda item.
- 21/24 Date of next meeting**
The date of the next Meeting for **Downton Parish Council** will be held on **12 February 2024** at **7:00pm** in the **Memorial Hall, Downton (Bonvalot Room)**.

Being no further business, JB closed the meeting at 11:14pm.

DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING