



Downton Parish Council

**Minutes of the DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING held on
MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026 7pm
THE DOWNTON MEMORIAL CENTRE (BONVALOT ROOM)**

Councillors summoned and present: Jane Brentor (Chair) (JB), Gareth Watts (GW), Matt Randall (MR), Stuart Carter (SC), Paul Roberts (PR), Stephanie Jalland (SJ), Dave Mace (DM), Gary Hawke (GH), and Judith Snares (JS)

Officers present: Melanie Camilleri (Clerk/RFO) (MC) and Susan Parsons (Administrative Officer) (SP)

WC Councillor present: Apologies received

Police present: PC Marc Evans

Members of the public present: Five

MINUTES

304/26 Public Question Time

The Chair will invite members of the public to make representations in respect of the business on the Agenda, ask their questions, or make their statements. The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless otherwise directed by the Chair. A member of the public shall not speak for more than five minutes.

Criminal damage to vehicles 28 Dec: Will DPC consider installing CCTV?

Highways Improvements: What is the latest position regarding 20mph? Plus, the black cables across pavements are creating an obstruction for pushchairs and wheelchair users. Wooden Spoon road safety improvement timescales? Pinch Point road safety improvement timescales?

Vegetation Tannery Bridge: Vegetation causing an obstruction. Happy to be part of a working party to remove.

Lamppost Hyde Lane: Isn't working and is leaning precariously.

305/26 To receive a report from PC Marc Evans

Speed Survey: Subject to the availability and analysis of data, the police may deploy a mobile speed enforcement unit to identify speeding motorists. The locations of these units will be determined following appropriate risk assessments.

Covert Operations: Towards the end of last year, he was involved in a large-scale operation comprising approximately 40 police officers and 20 covert deployments, including firearms and dog units. The operation effectively placed a 'protective ring' around Downton during hours of darkness and was successful in identifying and apprehending offenders for offences including burglary, drink driving, and speeding.

Moot Lane cars set alight: It was confirmed that this incident is linked to an ongoing feud and is not connected to the recent incidents of smashed vehicle windows. The matter is being referred to and investigated by CID.

Smashed car windows: Caused by a catapult. Investigations underway accessing private and business CCTV.

Members of the public reporting: Reports of criminal activity are treated confidentially.

306/26 To receive a report from Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council): Apologies sent

307/26 Apologies for Absence: None

308/26 Declarations of Interest

- i) To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda:
GW: Public Toilets invoice for cleaning services (Dec) 318/26 i)
DM: Room Hire invoices (Nov & Dec) 318/26 i)
- ii) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any):
None
- iii) To consider and grant requests for dispensation in accordance with relevant circumstances under Standing Order 13(h), as appropriate: None

309/26 Minutes

- i) **RESOLVED**: the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on **08 December 2025** were approved

310/26 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.

Criminal damage to vehicles 28 Dec: This will be addressed under Agenda 311/26 i)

Highways Improvements:

- 20mph: Traffic Surveys monitoring vehicle speed, type of vehicle, and time of day taking place in a phased approach (four batches). Locations Barford Lane, Moot Lane, Lode Hill, Lode Hill (bottom of Slab Lane). This will be accompanied by pedestrian surveys to assess pedestrian safety. This data will inform the feasibility of implementing 20mph limits and is dependent upon WC Highways support.
SP will contact WC Highways in relation to concern raised that black cables across pavements are creating an obstruction for pushchairs and wheelchair users.
- Wooden Spoon and Pinch Point road safety improvement timescales: SP will check timescales with WC Highways

Vegetation Tannery Bridge: SP will coordinate a working party to remove the vegetation

Lamppost Hyde Lane: Property and responsibility of WC – report online using MyWilts

Downton Cuckoo Fair: At the discretion of the Chair, it was proposed and unanimously agreed to bring forward Agenda 324/26 i) in proceedings (to immediately after 312/26).

311/26 Village Matters

- i) Following the criminal damage to vehicles on 28 December, MC reported residents' request to 1) install CCTV and 2) renew the Downton and Redlynch PSPO for catapults.

CCTV: PC Marc Evans discussed what is required for CCTV to be considered effective from a policing and evidential perspective. He explained that cameras must be capable of capturing the burden of proof necessary to demonstrate criminality and support a successful prosecution. As an example, Salisbury City has installed multiple CCTV cameras across several central locations. These cameras are actively monitored by an external monitoring company.

It was agreed by Councillors that Cost V Frequency of criminal activity on Downton, together with the likelihood of a successful outcome, is a material consideration, particularly as any associated costs would be borne by the local taxpayer.

PSPO: PC Marc Evans advised that the initial PSPO was intended as a one-off measure, and that alternative policing approaches are now being used to address this type of criminality.

- ii) MC reported that it has come to light a dog poo bin installed in Charlton All Saints in Nov 2017 has never been added to the Idverde bin collection round nor added to DPC's Asset Register. The existence of this bin only came to light when the resident, who had been emptying the bin for the past 8 years, moved away. And the bin began to overspill. MC will contact Idverde to add this bin to the collection round and add the bin to the Asset Register.

312/26 Highways

- i) MC delivered a report on concerns raised by a resident regarding pedestrian safety on Slab Lane (near junction with Lode Hill where there are pavements and the road is very narrow) due to speeding drivers.

PC Marc Evans noted that a recent head-on collision occurred on Slab Lane, requiring attendance by ambulances. He advised that this location is unsuitable for deployment of a mobile speed enforcement unit. He suggested that consideration be given to altering the road layout, for example implementing a single-vehicle 'priority' system, which could potentially allow for the introduction of pedestrian safety areas.

SP to contact Rhianne WC Highways Senior Engineer.

PC Marc Evans agreed that subject to the availability and analysis of data (following the Traffic Surveys currently underway), the police may deploy a mobile speed enforcement unit to identify speeding motorists.

313/26 Planning & Housing

- i) The applications received were considered and recommendations made to Wiltshire Council Planning Authority (see Planning Schedule)
- ii) Planning decisions were noted (see Planning Schedule)

314/26 Oaks at 80

- i) Noted that DPC's application to plant one oak tree as part of the 'Oaks at 80' scheme has been accepted (and £80 from Swindon BC received)
- ii) **RESOLVED**: to match fund enabling an Oak tree sapling to be purchased for up to £160 and to plant it in the location of the Beech Tree (Memorial Gardens) to be felled due to disease. Felling decision notice has been received by the WC Tree Officer

315/26 Cemetery

- i) MC delivered a report on a complaint received about the outstanding grave levelling works:
 - a. **RESOLVED**: the purchase of a Christmas wreath for one grave yet without a headstone was ratified
 - b. Noted that Idverde has indicated they'll conduct groundworks on 21 Jan 2026, subject to weather. SP will monitor.

316/26 Governance

- i) **RESOLVED**: To renew the Source for Business contract wef 12 Feb 2026 for a 3-year term
- ii) **RESOLVED**: To ratify the update to DPC's Publication Scheme: to clarify wording that may previously have been open to interpretation and to ensure it accurately reflects

the Council's operational practices for the 2024–25 financial year, including practices that go beyond the statutory minimum requirements

- iii) **RESOLVED:** To approve the updated Complaints Policy: to clarify wording on how to submit a complaint
- iv) Agreed that the review of the Council's Burial Regulations will be undertaken by JB, MC, and SP. This will involve seeking feedback from one Funeral Director and benchmarking against other Burial Authority Regulations.

317/26 BWSCA

- i) Noted that BWSCA Trustees have instructed a H&S professional to inspect the site and will be reverting to DPC on 23 Jan 2026.
RESOLVED: DPC's letter of response to BWSCA Trustees was approved.

318/26 Finance

- i) **RESOLVED:** The Cash Flow Report and payments were approved.
GW abstained from voting, forfeiting his vote on the Downton Cleaning Services invoice.
DM abstained from voting, forfeiting his vote on the Downton Memorial invoices.

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Staff, HMRC, Wiltshire Pensions	Salaries, Back pay, Tax & NI, Pensions (Nov)	8,478.66	BACS
IONOS	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
IONOS	Email Microsoft 2019	9.60	DD
EE	Mobile SIM (Admin Officer)	12.00	DD
PWLB	Loan Repayment	2,971.83	DD
Lloyds	Service Charge	8.50	PAY
IONOS	Premium Package	12.08	DD
Pennon Water	Water Charges Cemetery (2 nd payment)	192.87	DD
T A Terry	Xmas Tree 2025	700.00	BACS
Idverde	Bin emptying (Dec)	312.74	BACS
Idverde	Grounds Maintenance (Dec)	1,091.35	BACS
West Mercia Energy	Public Toilets Electricity (Nov)	43.31	BACS
BWP Creative Ltd	Website Hosting 01/01/2026-31/01/2026	30.00	BACS
Downton Cleaning Services	Public Toilets Cleaning (Nov)	985.00	BACS
Downton Memorial Centre	Room Hire (Nov & Dec)	103.51	BACS
BT Payphones	Addition of K6 Heritage Phonebox	1.00	BACS
M Camilleri	Reimbursements: Postage	5.54	BACS
M Camilleri	Expenses: fuel	35.28	BACS

- ii) **RESOLVED:** the Bank Reconciliation prepared by the RFO was signed-off as correct by Members of the Council.

Account Balances

Lloyds Business Account 02 Jan 2026: £14,497.91

Lloyds Commercial Instant Access Account: 02 Jan 2026: £127,275.56

Lloyds 95-Day Saver: 31 December 2025: £84,898.12

319/26 Budget 2026/27: Part 1

- i) The updated draft budget (non-exempt matters) was considered and agreed.
- ii) Noted that exempt matters (under Sections 40(2): Personal Information and 43(2): Commercial Interests) will be considered under Agenda 321/26

320/26 **RESOLVED:** that Agenda item 321/26 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.

321/26 Budget 2026/27: Part 2 (exempt matters)

- i) All exempt matters (under Sections 40(2): Personal Information and 43(2): Commercial Interests) were discussed and agreed.

- ii) **RESOLVED:** the meeting was declared re-opened to members of the public.
- 322/26 Public Toilets Refurbishment**
- i) Having reviewed the scope of refurbishment for the quotes received, it was agreed to seek amended quotes for a modified scope i.e. keeping the disabled toilet (not convert it into a family toilet) and instal baby changing facilities in the ladies and gents. Quotes to be considered at the February meeting.
- 323/26 Budget/Precept 2026/27**
- i) **RESOLVED:** the 2026/27 budget was approved with a resulting Precept of **£227,370**.
- 324/26 Trustee Appointments, Outside Bodies, Committees, Working Groups**
- i) Downton Cuckoo Fair (Outside Body)
- License to Occupy 2026 Event: MC reported that changes have been made to accommodate DCF's need for clarity on certain paragraphs. GW and MC will meet with DCF Director Adrian Hamilton w/c 19 Jan to discuss further.
- Timeline: DM pointed out that as DCF require access to the land as soon as 18 April, the License to Occupy must be reported as having been agreed at DPC's 09 March meeting (latest) and DCF's Risk Assessment and insurance documents received in readiness for the 13 April meeting which is the last opportunity for the Licence to Occupy to be signed by both parties.
- License Fee: Unanimously agreed that DPC will waive the License Fee for the 2026 Event in recognition of the Event's community and charitable benefit.
- RESOLVED:** In consideration of the above, DPC confirms its intention, subject to contract, to enter into a mutually agreed Licence to Occupy with DCF for the 2026 Event, conditional upon DPC's prior receipt and written approval of satisfactory event insurance documentation and a full Risk Assessment.
- ii) To receive any other reports in relation to Trustee Appointments, Outside Bodies, Committees, Working Groups: None
- 325/26 Councillors' Reports**
- i) To receive reports from Councillors
- SJ
- Attended Downton Primary School to present three DPC-backed project options for the children to choose from: a mural, a family park run, or a nature walk trail. The School Council and School Eco Council will be leading on making the selection and will attend a future DPC meeting of full council to make their presentation. It was agreed to invite them to the 09 March meeting setting an earlier start time of 6:30pm.
- DM
- Following the storm, a neighbour approached him to discuss a dead tree from which a large branch had been brought down onto Long Close and has since been moved to the adjacent bank. It was established that the tree and land is under Wiltshire Council. The tree has been reported online under MyWilts.
- 326/26 Correspondence, AOB, urgent matters:** None
- 327/26 Date of Next Meeting**
- The date of the next Meeting for **Downton Parish Council** will be held on **Monday 09 February 2026** at **7:00pm** in **The Downton Memorial Centre (Bonvalot Room)**.

Being no further business, JB closed the meeting at 9:40pm.

DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING