



## Downton Parish Council

**Minutes of the DOWNTON PARISH COUNCIL  
ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on  
MONDAY 11 MAY 2026 7pm  
THE DOWNTON MEMORIAL CENTRE (BONVALOT ROOM)**

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Councillors summoned and present: Jane Brentor (JB), 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: Cllr Richard Clewer

Police present: PC Marc Evans did not attend this meeting

Members of the public present: No members of the public present

### **501/26 Election of Chair**

- i) **RESOLVED:** Cllr Brentor was unanimously elected as Chair for the municipal year 2026/27
- ii) Cllr Brentor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

### **502/26 Election of Vice-chair**

- i) **RESOLVED:** Cllr Carter was unanimously elected as Vice-chair for the municipal year 2026/27

### **503/26 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.

No members of the public were present.

**504/26 To receive a report from PC Marc Evans:** PC Marc Evans did not attend this meeting

### **505/26 To receive a report from Cllr Richard Clewer (Wiltshire Council)**

- Local Plan: He is of mind to challenge the inspector's request for WC to withdraw the Local Plan - to withdraw it will result in modified housing targets
- Disabled Blue Badge Parking Space Barnaby Close: Discussions continue between Cllr Clewer, resident, and WC
- LHFIG: Funding has just been halved with the prospect of the contribution from TCs and PCs increasing from 25% to, say, 50%. He's displeased because the new leadership team made this decision after TCs and PCs had set their Budget/Precept for 2026/27 and the impact this will have on road safety initiatives across the County.
- Parking Charges: Awaiting decision following consultation.

**506/26 Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Gareth Watts (GW) and Cllr Matt Randall (MR). Reasons noted and accepted. Also noted that GW and MR have expressed their willingness to continue representing DPC on their current appointments to Committees, Working Groups, Trustee Appointments, and Outside Bodies (Agendas 511/26, 512/26, 513/26)

**507/26 Declarations of interest**

- i) To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. DM Agenda 525/26
- 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

**508/26 Minutes**

- i) **RESOLVED:** the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on **13 April 2026** were approved. SC abstained from voting as he did not attend this meeting.

**509/26 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.

No members of the public were present

**510/26 Governance Part 1: Polices**

- i) **RESOLVED:** To re-adopt the following polices, unamended: -
  - Committees and Working Groups Terms of Reference
  - Communications Policy
  - Complaints Policy
  - Councillor Civility & Respect Pledge
  - Councillor Co-option Policy
  - Councillor Code of Conduct
  - Equality & Diversity Policy
  - Financial Regulations
  - General Reserves Policy
  - Info, Data Protection & Data Retention Policy
  - Investment Strategy
  - IT Resources & Information Security Policy
  - LGPS Discretions Policy
  - Memorial Bench Policy
  - Play Park Risk Management Policy
  - Policy on Filming, Photograph and Audio Recording of Meetings
  - Protocol for Meetings with Developers
  - Publication Scheme and FOI Requests
  - Risk Management Strategy
  - S137 Grant Policy and Application Form
  - Safeguarding Policy
  - Social Media Policy
  - Standing Orders
  - Unreasonable Behaviour Policy
- ii) To resolve to approve and adopt the following updated polices:
  - **RESOLVED:** to adopt the updated 3-year Strategic Plan
  - Burial Regulations *Deferred* to the 08 June 2026 meeting.

**511/26 Governance Part 2: Committees and Working Groups**

- i) To consider and approve Membership of the Council's Committees and Working Groups. In addition to JB and SC to all Committees and Working Groups (Ex Officio capacity):
- 3-Year Strategy Working Group: SJ, JS, GW
  - Amenities Committee: MR, PR, GW
  - BWSCA Working Group: GH, DM
  - Communications Working Group: SJ, GW
  - Complaints Committee: SJ, MR, PR, GW
  - Staffing Committee: MR, JS, GW
  - Water Meadows & Flood Defence Committee: MR, PR, GW
  - Wiltshire Towns Programme Working Group: GH, JS

**512/26 Governance Part 3: Trustee Appointments**

- i) The Carver Trust: As GW has been in position for more than the maximum 3 years set by the Trust, full council accepted DM's proposal that he be appointed for 2026/27. DM has previously served as the DPC representative for The Carver Trust
- ii) Stockman and Woodlands Charities: Whilst GW and MR have been in position for more than 2 years, they remain eligible to be re-appointed, as set by the Charity. Therefore, MR and GW are re-appointed for 2026/27.

**513/26 Governance Part 4: Membership of Outside Bodies**

- i) The following Councillor representative(s) were appointed
- Allotments: GW
  - BWSCA: SC and DM
  - Chalk Pit Committee: MR and GW
  - Community Care (Link): GH
  - Community Policing: SC and PR
  - Downton Cuckoo Fair: GW
  - Downton Memorial Centre "Fire Officer": MR
  - Downton Moot Preservation: JB and GW
  - Downton Millennium Green: JB
  - School Liaison: SJ and PR
  - SWAB and LHFIG: SJ and JS (plus officers MC and SP)

**514/26 Governance Part 5: Dates of Meetings**

- i) Meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council will take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month in the Memorial Centre at 7pm. Dates: 08 June 2026, 13 July 2026, 10 Aug 2026, 14 Sept 2026, 12 Oct 2026, 09 Nov 2026, 14 Dec 2026, 11 Jan 2027, 08 Feb 2027, 08 March 2027, 12 April 2027

**515/26 Finance Part 1: Financial Controls**

- i) **RESOLVED**: the signatories on the Council's Bank Accounts for which two Councillors must sign any order for payment will be MC, JB, SC, DM, GW
- ii) **RESOLVED**: continuation of variable DD payments set-up: PWLB, IONOS, Pennon (Water and Sewage Public Toilets), Pennon (Water Cemetery), EE (SIM for Admin Officer's mobile phone)
- iii) **RESOLVED**: continuation of Standing Order etc payments set-up: NPPF, Lloyds Service Charges
- iv) **RESOLVED**: continuation of Annual Subscriptions/Memberships: NPPF, ICO, WALC/NALC, Visit Wiltshire, SW Councils
- v) **RESOLVED**: that the Council has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational, and risk management.

- 516/26 Finance Part 2: Objection to Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25**
- i) Noted that the external auditor has **not upheld** the objections made by a member of the public to the Council's 2024/25 accounts
  - ii) Noted that accordingly, **£2,484** held in earmarked funds for an external auditor investigation may be released and transferred into the Council's general reserves.
- 517/26 Finance Part 3: Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26**
- i) MC delivered the appointed competent and independent Internal Auditor's Report
    - a. Part 1: Information relating to legal professional privilege in relation to an identifiable member of the public will be discussed under Agenda 532/26
    - b. Part 2: **RESOLVED**: to approve the quote to increase the level of Fidelity cover under the remainder of the policy term
  - ii) Noted that insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks, as set out in the Asset Register (including land, buildings, and office equipment), meets requirements
  - iii) **RESOLVED**: Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement was approved
  - iv) **RESOLVED**: Section 2 – Accounting Statements was approved
  - v) **RESOLVED** the Explanation of Significant Variances Report was approved
  - vi) **RESOLVED**: the external auditor's Bank Reconciliation Pro Forma @ 31 March 2026 was approved
  - vii) **RESOLVED**: the dates for the period of the exercise of Public Rights and Publication of unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return were set as Wed 03 June 2026 to Tues 14 July 2026
- 518/26 Village Matters**
- i) Parish Steward:
    - a. MC delivered a report regarding concerns that WC has been re-deploying this much-valued service away from community delivery to fixing potholes and grass verge cutting for WC until June 2026. It has also been noted that this resource may be withdrawn altogether from community delivery due to WC budget pressures. No prior consultation has taken place with TCs and PCs before they'd set their Budget/Precept for 2026/27. Furthermore, a Parish Steward is an operative with specific Highway safety training / risk assessment.  
Agreed that DPC will write to WC expressing concern and emphasising importance of retaining this service to the parish.
    - b. Parish Steward community delivery returns June 2026. A list of jobs captured by SP
  - ii) Missing Waste Bins: Moot Lane Rec: SP to discuss use of a spare bin held by the Co-op with PR. Tannery Bridge is WC owned and has now been replaced.
- 519/26 Highways**
- i) LHFIFG: MC and SP attended the LHFIFG on 05 May. No. meetings for 2026/27 reduced from four to three. Per Cllr Clewer's report, MC expressed her concern that funding has just been halved with the prospect of the contribution from TCs and PCs increasing from 25% to, say, 50% without prior consultation. Budget/Precept for 2026/27 now set. This is a much-valued source of funding in support of DPC's 3-year Strategic Plan to deliver road safety initiatives across the parish. Agreed that DPC will include this aspect in its letter to WC on Parish Stewards (Minute 518/26).
  - ii) SP delivered an update on the status of all other road safety initiatives awaiting completion
- 520/26 Planning**
- 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)

- 521/26 Oaks at 80**
- i) Noted that DPC has secured permission to plant the Oak on non-DPC land provided that DPC enters into a tree maintenance agreement with the landowner
  - ii) A number of potential planting locations were identified. SP and MC to explore the viability of each and report back to full council to make a selection in consideration of all data and any landowner consent.
- 522/26 Play Park Annual Inspections**
- i) The four inspections were noted. Noted no High-Risk items. The Medium-Risk items were discussed. MC and SP to progress potential sources to quote for remedy for Medium / Low-Risk items.
- 523/26 Bus Shelters**
- i) MC reported that Wiltshire Council has recently announced a bus shelter cleaning programme. However, the launch of this initiative does not appear to have taken into account that responsibility for this service within Downton Parish has already been devolved to DPC under a formal agreement between WC and DPC. MC is currently liaising with WC to clarify the scope of the proposed programme (specifically whether it relates solely to cleaning services or also includes physical inspections and reporting) together with the proposed cleaning schedule.
  - ii) MC further reported that she is in ongoing discussions with GW Shelters, which has been awarded a 12-month cleaning and inspection contract by DPC as part of the devolved service arrangement. It is essential to ensure that the delivery of this contracted service is not adversely affected or duplicated by Wiltshire Council's newly announced bus shelter cleaning programme.
- 524/26 Defibs**
- i) **RESOLVED:** the Defib + Cabinet (outside the Surgery) and the Defib (outside the Memorial Centre) will be replaced using the **£2,484** earmarked funds freed up following the external auditor **not upholding** the objections made by a member of the public to the Council's 2024/25 accounts. Agenda 516/26. Total estimated cost £2,800 excl vat.
- 525/26 Downton Memorial Centre**
- i) **RESOLVED:** to grant consent (under Clause 20.1 and 24.4) for Downton Memorial Centre Trustees installing a new kitchen and installing solar panels on the roof (subject to planning consent). Having declared an interest, DM abstained from voting; forfeiting his vote.
- 526/26 Public Toilets Refurbishment**
- i) **RESOLVED:** To ratify the following payments:
    - a. Accessible Toilet: Cubicle Systems to supply and instal shelf, mirror, 2x hooks: £461.20
    - b. Baby changing: 3x hooks and c. Toilet Cubicle doors: 4x hooks: max budget allocation £100
  - ii) MC delivered a report on works completed for painting the ceilings - extra paint was necessary due to absorbency of current ceiling (which could not have reasonably been anticipated). Scope limited to men's and ladies' toilets because the ceiling of the disabled toilet is in a perfectly acceptable condition. **RESOLVED:** accepted with no adjustment to the contractor's payment £520 per quote.
  - iii) **RESOLVED:** the quote for an updated Sanitary bin emptying contract was approved: 3x nappy bins (weekly), 4x slimline bins (26 times p.a.), and 1x multi-purpose bin (26 times p.a.)

- iv) Cubicle Systems due to be completed 15 May. External doors installed 18 May. Re-opening date will be set once the Legionella sample test has been returned with an all-clear for public access.  
DM delivered a report on a pipework/sewage issue identified by the Cubicle Systems plumber in regard to a poor-quality connection made at the time of the Memorial Centre extension. As a result, sewage had been leaking behind the tiles. The Cubicle Systems plumber was remedying the connection, however, as a result of this historic situation, there remains a risk, albeit low, of an issue in the event of a blockage. He will ascertain a quote for a more permanent remedy for the Trustees of the Memorial Centre and full council to consider.
- v) **RESOLVED:** In consideration of historic anti-social behaviour and the associated risks of criminal damage during extended opening times, opening times modified to:
- October to March: 8am-5pm. Actual times are flexible and at the Contractor's discretion.
  - April to September: 8am-7pm. Actual times are flexible and at the Contractor's discretion.
  - Public and Bank Holidays: As above.
  - Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day: Closed.

**527/26 Finance Part 4: Cashflow Report and Bank Reconciliation**

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

Payee	Detail	Amount £ (incl vat)	Method
Staff, HMRC, Wiltshire Pensions	Salaries, Tax & NI, Pensions (April)	8,308.58	BACS
IONOS	Email Microsoft 2019	10.80	DD
IONOS	Email Microsoft 2019	10.80	DD
EE	Mobile SIM (Admin Officer)	17.11	DD
Lloyds	Service Charge	8.50	PAY
IONOS	Premium Package	12.08	DD
West Mercia Energy	Public Toilets Electricity (March)	44.75	BACS
BWP Creative Ltd	Website Hosting 01/05/2026-31/05/2026	30.00	BACS
Downton Cleaning Services	Public Toilets Cleaning (April)	985.00	BACS
Nigel Harries	Treeworks Memorial Gardens	2,515.00	BACS
AJGIBL	Cyber Insurance Premium 19/04/26-18/04/27	367.36	BACS
John K. Murray	Internal Audit Fee 2025/26	300.00	BACS
The Playground Inspection Co Ltd	Annual RoSPA inspections x4 Play Parks	408.00	BACS
M Camilleri	Expenses: Fuel	93.78	BACS

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

**Account Balances**

Lloyds Business Account 06 May 2026: £16,114.83  
Lloyds Commercial Instant Access Account: 06 May 2026: £181,177.65  
Lloyds 95-Day Saver: 06 May 2026: £85,640.02

**528/26 Committee & Working Group Reports**

- i) To receive an update  
SC and PR: Notes from the recent Community Policing meeting will be circulated.

**529/26 Councillors Reports**

- i) To receive reports from the Councillors: None

**530/26 Correspondence, AOB, urgent matters: None**

- 531/26** **RESOLVED**: that Agenda item 532/26 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.
- 532/26** **Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26: Internal Auditor Report**  
Matters discussed under this Agenda item is 'Confidential – Not for Publication' by means of Legal Professional Privilege (Section 42 Freedom of Information Act 2000).
- 533/26** **Date of next meeting**  
The date of the next meeting of **Downton Parish Council** will be held on **08 June 2026** at **7:00pm** in **The Downton Memorial Centre (Bonvalot Room)**.

Being no further business, JB closed the meeting at 9:37pm.

**DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**