

# Dunkirk Parish Council – Full Council Meeting

Minutes of Full Council meeting held at Dunkirk Village Hall 16 October 2023 at 7.00pm

## Present:

Parish Councillors: Cllr K. Kemp (Chair), Cllr N. Smith (Vice Chair), Cllr J. Tutt, Cllr D. Brice, Cllr G. Hewett and, Cllr P. Barkaway. Cllr J. Clifford attended from item 6. R Parr (Clerk).

There were seven members of the public.

1. **Declaration:** Any Declarations of Interest by members present to be made at the commencement of the meeting Cllr Brice declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of the cutting of the churchyard due to relationship with the contractor.
2. **Apologies for absence**  
Cllr R Lehmann (KCC & SBC) & Cllr A. Gould (SBC)
3. **Minutes of the full council meeting of the 18th September 2023.** A motion to approve the minutes by all present was approved with unanimous approval from those that attended.  
**Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.** A motion to approve the minutes by all present was proposed and seconded with approval from those that attended.
4. **PC Gary Morris – Quarterly Update**  
An update was provided that there had been 13 reports in the parish of which 6 related to the theft of fuel at Gates Services. Other crime of note was a tool theft and vehicle interference. A speed check on London Road for one hour identified one speeding vehicle. More speed checks will be undertaken in the area. A Councillor raised the issue of pavement parking in Courtney Road and PC Morris will investigate and advise residents accordingly, PC Morris also discussed the parking at Gate Service by lorries. He mentioned the signage should be clearer. **Action:** The Clerk is to contact National Highways to enquire on update on any Clearway works.
5. **Public Participation**  
The members of the public had attended in relation to the poor condition of the churchyard. There was one speaker for the attendees. This concerns weeds, overgrown vegetation, safety issues with a number of graves. The Chair pointed out that whilst the PC contribute to maintaining the churchyard, it is ultimately the PCC's responsibility to maintain the Churchyard. A previous meeting with the PCC informed us that the PCC were considering closing the churchyard, which would then fall to the responsibility of SBC. The Chair also mentioned that this was not due to the contractor as the contractor had only done what the council asked them to do.
6. **Church Yard Maintenance**  
In light of the comments raised by the public and site visits by the councillor, it was agreed that there was an issue. The current contract was based on trying to follow Kent Plan Bee and increase biodiversity and it was considered by some councillors that perhaps the balance was wrong. The councillor agreed to reengage with the church and PCC in light of there now being a new vicar in place. **Action:** Cllr Smith to arrange a meeting with the vicar. Councillors discussed with regards to reverting to the previous contract approach. **Action:** The Clerk is to provide a copy of the previous contract to all councillors for information along with the current contract. The current contract expires at the end of the year. The council decided to tender for the contract for a new contract to commence in March 2024. The current contractor, Ladybirds advised that given their approach as a conservation gardener they would not be compatible and stated that they would not look to requote. **Action:** The Councillors would review and create a new specification for approval at the next meeting ready for tender.
7. **Planning:**
  - A. **Received Applications:**  
None

**B. Consider Applications:**

23/503564/FULL Location: Manor House Orchard Gate Berkeley Close Dunkirk Faversham Proposal: Change of use of and conversion of existing shed into overnight holiday let (retrospective).

The applicant had resubmitted revised plans in relation to parking. There was a reduction in spaces and the remaining spaces now matched SBC regulated parking sizes. The council discussed raising continued concerns of overdevelopment and parking issues. They voted to continue to object to the application with the following comment:

Dunkirk Parish Council note the revised plans submitted for 4 parking spaces reduced from 5 that are now larger in size to meet the SBC supplementary parking standards. However, the council continue to object to the application on the grounds of overdevelopment. The Parish Council cannot see that 4 spaces will meet the requirements of the residential house and that of the business when they previously required 5 to make it viable. As a change of use application, there should also be a 10% biodiversity net gain as a requirement under policy E8 of the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan.

**8. Correspondence**

- i. A2 resurfacing – Ongoing between Brenley Corner and Bridge. Weeknights 8pm to 6am on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> November eastbound. Westbound 2<sup>nd</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November. The Councillors discussed concerns that KCC and National Highways do not appear to liaise with each other when undertaking works. Action: The Clerk is to write to National Highways and KCC (Cllr Lehmann) to raise concerns and encourage future coordination of works.
- ii. Road Closures
  - Staplestreet 15-17<sup>th</sup> November by Thatched Cottage
  - Scroggers Hill 17<sup>th</sup> October – 6<sup>th</sup> November various dates
- iii. KCC Scam Alerts

All above details added to the website and FB

**9. Matters for public concern:**

**A. Highways Issues**

- i) Highways signs - The Clerk confirmed that she had reported the existing poles in a poor condition and works were scheduled.
- ii) Boughton Hill – Footpath railings – The Clerk had reported KCC who have agreed to rectify
- iii) Triangle – Courtenay Road/Dawes Road – KCC agreed that the triangle area is unsightly but there was no cause for concern. No crashes had been reported. Bollards or kerbs would not be installed as these would become a maintenance burden. KCC would continue to monitor but suggested this should be added to the HIP for future review.
- iv) Boughton Hill – soft landscaping – The Clerk had chased with Cllr Lehmann also chasing.

**B. Footpaths, Verges & Hedges**

- i) A councillor had raised that Knotweed had been sighted. **Action:** Following receipt of a location map and photograph from the councillor, the Clerk is to report accordingly.
- ii) Footpath ZR531 – The Clerk had received a response from KCC in that vegetation were cleared in July and that any vegetation has occurred since from new growth. Another cutback in due in the next few weeks. **Action:** The council is to monitor the works.
- iii) It was reported by a councillor that the hedge on Staplestreet by the Manor House was bulbous and extending into the road. **Action:** The Clerk is to report to KCC Highways.

**C. TPOs**

None.

**D. Playing field (incl. benches)**

The Clerk is waiting to hear from HE regarding a rescheduled meeting

**E. Village Hall**

None

**F. Bus Shelters**

None.

**10. Speed Limits/TRO**

- i) The Clerk had received from KCC the Final costs being £3757.14. Cllr Lehmann has offered a KCC grant of £500, Cllr Gould had offered a SBC Grant of £100. This meant the revised cost due was £3157.14. The Clerk mentioned that £2500.00 was originally budgeted. Anything over budget would be met from reserves. The council discussed and agreed to defer the decision pending more information and support. A motion was proposed to ask the village hall committee if they would make a contribution. Action: Cllr Barkaway is to enquire. **Action:** The Clerk is to contact KCC for a full breakdown of the costs and enquire with regards to the reuse of existing posts.
- ii) The Clerk confirmed that they were waiting to hear back from Boughton about joint meeting for new HIP

**11. Village Hall Land titles**

Investigations are still ongoing. The Clerk had contacted Land Registry and they confirmed that the PC details were given as the village hall address and not a previous clerk. In addition, the Village Hall had provided a copy of the lease details **Action:** The Clerk is to undertake up to date searches with Land Registry. It was agreed to review the council's archives. **Action:** Cllr Barkaway is to collect these from storage for review. The Village Hall had provided a copy of the agreement March 2011 for flooring purchase by the PC and a May 2021 letter confirming extension of free hall hire with no end date.

**12. Biodiversity Policy**

The council discussed the draft policy prepared by the clerk. Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 there is a duty on public authorities in England, including Parish Councils to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of their policy or decision making. This was further strengthened by the Environment Act 2021 so public authorities must now consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. A discussion was held in respect of considering Kent Plan Bee, the National Pollinator Plan and the forthcoming Climate Ecology Bill. Further reading of guidance was required by the councillors and it was agreed to defer until the next full council meeting. **Action:** The next full council meeting agenda is also to include the Climate Ecology Bill.

**13. Publications Policy**

The publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities as required by the ICO and in a model format provided by the ICO. The Clerk had prepared a document which was approved unanimously by the council. **Action:** The Clerk is to add to the website.

**14. Bossenden Wood Memorial Stone –**

The Clerk had received correspondence notifying that the stone had been broken. This stone had been provided from donations by some local parishioners. **Action:** Cllrs Brice, Clifford and Hewett are to visit the stone and see if it could be repaired.

**15. St Paul's Road - Vegetation, garages and safety issues**

The Clerk provided an update that following the letter to Southern Housing an acknowledgement had been received pending an investigation. The Chair mentioned that he had received a report of a broken streetlight in that area. **Action:** The Clerk is to report.

**16. Community Youth Forum**

Cllr Hewett confirmed that there was no update.

**17. 80<sup>th</sup> DD Celebrations**

The Chair had received a quote for just under £300. In addition, the Clerk had received guidance from the project encouraging the use of existing beacon already held. The council discussed and agreed to save money by reusing.

**Action:** It was agreed for the Clerk to register the event on the national database with the Pageant master.

**18. Regular Cleaning of new shelters**

The Clerk is continuing to prepare the new contract.

**19. Milestones**

Still waiting to hear from SBC regarding ownership.

**20. Remembrance Sunday**

Details were finalised.

**21. Councillor's Reports**

- i) A councillor mentioned that the Gorilla Gardeners had obtained 10 bags for the tip. The next gardening event would be the 14<sup>th</sup> January.
- ii) It was mentioned that the village fete would be the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The next fete meeting would be on the 9<sup>th</sup> November.
- iii) KALC were arranging planning training in Iwade on the 14<sup>th</sup> November. Concerns were raised regarding a new planning approach by SBC where there would be delegation to the officer rather than committee. The council agreed to address this issue via an extraordinary meeting on the 6th November 2023.

**22. Finance:**

**a. Finance report**

The Clerk read through the contents of the Finance Report for the end of September, which was approved by the Council and signed by the Chair.

**b. Approve payments**

The council discussed the annual subscription payment to CPRE approving an increase from the old subscription rate of £36 to the new rate of £60. A motion to approve all remaining items for payment was unanimously agreed. It was agreed for Cllr Kemp and Cllr Smith to authorise online.

A/C Name	Invoice No.	Chq No	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
Rebecca Parr		L - Online	Salary 09/23- 10/23	725.40	0.00	725.40
Rebecca Parr		L - Online	TAX - HMRC	14.00	0.00	14.00
<b>Rebecca Parr</b>			<b>Net Pay</b>	<b>711.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>711.40</b>
Rebecca Parr	Advice only	S/O	Office Expenses	20.00	0.00	20.00
Rebecca Parr		L- Online	Expenses - eSim	15.44	0.00	15.44
<b>Rebecca Parr Total</b>				<b>746.84</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>746.84</b>
Ladybirds		L - Online	September churchyard	168.00	0.00	168.00
Mr Moon		L-Online	September Playing Field	100.00	0.00	100.00
SSE		L - Online	Streetlights September 2023	189.54	9.45	198.99
Mazars	2252930	L - Online	External Auditor	210.00	42.00	252.00
Kent County Playing Fields Ass		L - Online	Annual Subscription	20.00	0.00	20.00
G Doy		L- Online	Grass Cutting - September	70.00	0.00	70.00
Namesco		L- Online	Domain renewal dunkirkpc.org.uk	43.99	8.80	52.79
CPRE		L- Online	Annual subscription	60.00	0.00	60.00
SBC	7220270870	L- Online	Election Costs	169.07	0.00	169.07
Prime One	1413	L- Online	September Streetlight Maintenance	211.43	42.28	253.71
<b>Total</b>				<b>1988.87</b>	<b>102.53</b>	<b>2091.40</b>

**c. HMRC**

The Clerk advised that a £100 fine that had been received due to late payment of the HMRC online submission had been waived and cancelled.

**d. SSE Contract**

The Clerk advised that the bills were still being queried. Only partial adjustments had been received so far.

**23. Parish Pollinator Project**

The flowers on Boughton Hill since the works were noted. Action: It was agreed to continue to monitor the area and ensure brambles did not overtake

**24. Administration/ Clerk’s**

The Clerk following the previous meeting was struggling to find companies to quote for the Streetlighting Contract. The Clerk had also received from the current contractor a reminder that the current contract could be extended if they so wished. The council discussed and agreed to continue with a tender process and to also inform the current contractor of the council’s position. **Action:** The Clerk is to contact the existing company plus continue to find two additional companies for comparative quotes.

**The council resolved under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1 960 due to the confidential nature of the items of business to exclude the public and press.**

**The Clerk left the room**

**25. Clerk’s Pension – Agree Maintenance Options**

The council discussed options and agreed to defer a final decision.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.15pm

Date of next meetings:	Extraordinary (if required) :	6 November 2023
	Full Council Meeting:	20 November 2023

Rebecca Parr,  
Clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Signed .....  
Chair

Signed .....  
Vice Chair

Date .....

Date .....

**PLEASE VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE FOR ALL THE LATEST NEWS IN AND AROUND THE VILLAGE: [www.dunkirkpc.org.uk](http://www.dunkirkpc.org.uk)**