

Dunkirk Parish Council – Full Council Meeting

Minutes of virtual meeting held via “Zoom” at 7.30pm on 16 November 2020

Present: Councillors Jeff Tuff (JT) Chair, Julie Coleman (JC) Vice Chair, Steve Hitch (SH), Daniel Brice (DB), Kevin Kemp (KK) and Jason Clifford (JCL), Matthew Bullen (MB) clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council, Phillipa Clarkson on behalf of Apsley Trust and two members of the public.

Any Declarations of Interest by members present to be made at the commencement of the meeting – none declared.

Apologies for absence:

- Ward Councillors Alastair Gould and Tim Valentine and County Councillor Andrew Bowles.
- Whilst the Council acknowledges this meeting regularly clashes with one attended by Ward Councillors, members felt that given both attend the same meeting, it is reasonable for one or the other to attend our meeting on occasions to ensure any queries are heard and addressed. **ACTION MB** – to contact ward councillors with request at least one attend next full council meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising:

- The minutes of Full Council meeting 19 October 2020 and Planning Committee 2 November 2020 were approved as a true record.
- MB confirmed all actions points from full Council meeting had been followed up and would seek responses to any matters where none had so far been received.
- DB confirmed the grass cutting on London Road hedgerows bordering Foresters Farm had recently been tidied.
- JT reviewed the streetlight terms with the contractor and this is addressed later in the meeting.
- The proposed site meeting to discuss potential options for installing playground equipment was cancelled due to Covid lockdown restrictions. **ACTION MB** – diarise to discuss the matter again at February full Council meeting.
- JT confirmed a discussion with KCC was had with regards to apply double-yellow lines in Weatherall Close, who advised that there was no justification for this at this time. JT also discussed the mud and clay along Courtenay Road and was advised that this was not on the highway - which DB questioned and agreed to provide photos – **ACTION DB**

Matters for public concern:

Footpaths, Verges & Hedges

Members had raised the issue of a lack of dog waste bins either side of the A2 underpass at Dunkirk Road South and Dunkirk Road North and Swale Borough Council have agreed to install both bins. The Council’s own map of such bins proved invaluable in the discussions and will need to be updated once these are installed.

Streetlights

The council discussed the proposed contract to change the streetlights to LED ones and to include remote lighting management. This is a 3 year contract representing a significant outlay by the council, the benefits of which are expected to be seen over the coming years in terms of both reduced energy costs to the Parish and any faulty lighting being identified earlier and thus repaired more quickly than previously. JT proposed a motion to proceed with the contract which was seconded by KK and unanimously agreed.

Planning:

Received decisions:

The following decision was received subsequent to the meeting’s Agenda being issued but prior to the meeting taking place:

20/501601/FULL | Full planning permission for the erection of a new coffee shop (Use Class A1/A3) including drive-thru facility with associated car parking, cycle parking, motorcycle parking, landscaping and associated works. As amended by drawings received on 14TH September 2020. | Gate Service Station London Road Dunkirk Faversham Kent ME13 9LN - **GRANTED**

Consider applications:

20/505111/SUB | Submission of Details to Discharge Condition 3 -Details of external facing materials, Condition 7 - Sustainable construction techniques and Condition 8 - Water consumption rate subject to 19/506163/FULL. | Bracken Brae Jezzards Lane Dunkirk Faversham Kent ME13 9PH

Members discussed the submission which had been made ostensibly for information only without the need for further review.

Notification of Appeal Lodged with the Planning Inspectorate:

19/505953/LDCEX | Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) to establish the existing use of land as a residential garden in association with Flat A Courtenay House. | Land East To Courtenay House London Road Dunkirk Kent ME13 9LF

JT asked for members to review the appeal, together with the original application and respond with any comments in order for the Council to consider its position. Members queried whether any of the points which lead to the Council’s original position had changed? Members also considered how the site has been used over the years and whether or not there has been a change in this, all of which should be taken into consideration when formulating a reply. **ACTION – ALL COUNCILLORS**

Finance

- The clerk advised that statements from the bank had not been received either by him or the Chair prior to the meeting and thus was unable to prepare a full finance report in advance of the meeting. **ACTION MB** – to prepare a full finance report and submit to Councillors and the Parish Council website as soon as bank statements are received.
- A list of payments for approval was submitted. This included payment to the Clerk for a tax refund from the Inland Revenue which the Council is obliged to honour under the PAYE system and JT advised we will look to reclaim in due course – **ACTION JT and MB**

Swale Area Committee AGM 14 September 2020 – amendment to motion regarding litter - JT updated the Council to advise that sufficient responses for the proposal to amend the motion had already been received and that this increased the period in which a Local Authority would have legal power to seek and prosecute the driver of vehicle deemed accountable for the offence of litter from 24 to 48 hours.

Street-lighting – draft contract for routine maintenance with remote lighting – this matter was considered previously as noted above.

KCC “crisis support cards” initiative – Council members had queried if hard copies of the support cards would be available for distribution in the village to which KCC advised they had already distributed such to hospitals, GPs, pharmacies and the police and deemed it unfeasible to issue to all Parish Councils in addition.

Exploring the potential for the provision of allotments in Dunkirk

- JT queried firstly if this was an idea worth pursuing and secondly if any potential sites for this could be identified.
- All members agreed this would be a great facility for the parishioners of Dunkirk to have access to. JT requested members let him know of any potential landowners who may be willing to lease some land, usually on a “peppercorn rent” basis, for this purpose to take the idea forward. **ACTION – ALL COUNCILLORS**

Update from Apsley Trust – a Dunkirk based charity

- Phillipa Clarkson advised of six recipients who had been nominated and queried if there were any further nominations to which no more were offered.
- JT offered thanks to Phillipa for all that the charity does for the village and members also offered to include details of the charity on the Council website, which will be provided.

Update on the new website including proposed “go live” date

- KK confirmed the bulk of the work to prepare the website has been done and is ready to go live. There is now a process to go through to between the two different website hosts to finalise this.
- JT proposed a motion for the website to go live, which JCL seconded and was passed unanimously. **ACTION KK** – to begin the process the with different website hosts.

Matters not on Agenda (for information only)

- One member queried if the drains around Jezzards Lane had been cleared to which another advised only some had been done. It was suggested to report this on the KCC fault reporting website – a link to this is also available from our new website.
- The issue of grants available to businesses in light of the Covid pandemic was raised, with concerns that the process takes far too long for business that are facing immediate difficulties and secondly any items claimed for have to be purchased “up front”, which isn’t easy for struggling businesses. It was suggested that the authorities required proof of purchase to which it was suggested that invoices could be raised and settled directly.
- The difficulties encountered here is another reason for wanting Ward Councillors to attend Council meetings, for them to see issues first hand and take them up with relevant authorities.
- Members discussed a proposed leaflet regarding paths and verges and whether or not it is appropriate at this time to distribute these by post. JT has queried with KALC as to what actions the Council can undertake as being considered “essential” and will advise further – **ACTION JT**
- Members discussed the emergency roadworks on Courtenay Road, including the mess left behind and incorrect signage being left on the road. The Clerk advised that a notice from KCC had been received that day to advise of the works, with this being issued 6 days after the commencement dated stated within the notice. JT asked MB to respond to KCC, copying in Andrew Bowles to query the delay in the notice being issued. **ACTION MB**
- JT mentioned Unity Bank, to whom the Council’s bank accounts are to transfer to as previously agreed, have a £6 per month fee for servicing the account which all members noted.
- Parishioners have recently been leafleted regarding a possible planning application to build 1750 houses in the parish. Members raised concerns that parishioners in the village had raised concerns about this potential development. Members were reminded that the Council cannot predetermine any potential planning application until a formal application had been received. However, neighbouring Parish Councils had been in touch to query if this is something that should be discussed together at some stage and it was agreed this would be a good idea.

Date of next meeting: Planning Committee: 7 December 2020

Full council: 21 December 2020

Matthew Bullen, Clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council