

Dunkirk Parish Council – Full Council Meeting

Minutes of Full Council meeting held at Dunkirk Village Hall 18 September 2023 at 7.30pm

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 Also R Parr (Clerk).

There were eight 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 planning application 23/503967/FULL Courtenay Gardens (formerly Deja View) London Road, Dunkirk Kent ME13 9LF due to having previous undertaken work there.

Cllr Smith declared a nonpecuniary interest in relation to the same planning item mentioned above as her property boundary on the far side away from the house borders that of the application site.
2. **Apologies for absence**
Cllr R Lehmann (KCC & SBC) Cllr J. Clifford, Cllr A. Gould (SBC)
3. **Minutes of the full council meeting 21st August 2023.** A motion to approve the minutes by all present was proposed and seconded with unanimous approval.
4. **Public Participation**
 - i) A member of the public had attended to raised concerns with regards to safety and untidiness in the churchyard. **Action:** It was agreed to add to the agenda at the next meeting. Cllr Kemp would also visit the churchyard to view the area ahead of the next meeting.
 - ii) Another member of the public attended to raise ongoing concerns with overgrown vegetation regards to a footpath ZR531 between Staple Street and Berkeley Close. The Clerk commented that this had already been reported to KCC. However, apples from neighbouring properties are said to be thrown there. **Action:** The Clerk is to investigate the latest with KCC and to write to the neighbouring properties requesting the items are not left on the path.
 - iii) The remaining members of the public had attended in relation to the planning item 23/503967/FULL Courtenay Gardens (formerly Deja View) London Road, Dunkirk Kent ME13 9LF. One was the applicant with the others residents of Courtenay House. The applicant put forward their case with the other attendees raising concerns and the ongoing confusion around lawful development and other refusals and permission with regards to change of use in relation to past history.
5. **Planning:**
 - A. **Received Applications:**
 - i) 23/503967/FULL PROPOSAL: Change of Use of residential garden land to permit the siting and all-year occupation of a mobile home (Retrospective). ADDRESS: Courtenay Gardens (formerly Deja View) London Road, Dunkirk Kent ME13 9LF

Following the planning raised by the public present, the item was brought forward in order for the council to discuss. The Chair mentioned that only the information submitted as part of the application can be taken into consideration. The council commented that some information had just been received ahead of the meeting and was deemed too late to assess ahead of the meeting and that they too required further clarification from SBC Planning and enforcement regarding the case and what had been applied for. **Action:** It was motioned and agreed by all for the council to prepare questions for SBC Planning to answer. The case would be revisited at an extraordinary meeting on the 2nd October and for the Clerk to request an extension in case the answers were not received in time for that meeting, to then revert following the next full council meeting on the 16th October 2023.

6. Remembrance Sunday – update on arrangements

The arrangements were discussed and the occupants of the church agreed to provide refreshments. The council agreed to ask for Mark Bradley to undertake the cleaning of the war memorial ahead of the service. **Action:** The Chair would arrange for a bugler and the service and contact Mr Bradley.

7. Planning Received Decisions:

- i. 23/502631/FULL. Wilverley Dunkirk Road North Dunkirk Kent ME13 9NZ. Erection of a front and rear extensions to attached garage along with changes to materials. Application Permitted
- ii. 23/500942/FULL. Woodseaves Staplestreet Road Dunkirk Kent ME13 9TJ. Raising the roof height and loft conversion with dormers to front and rear including 6 no. roof lights and changes to fenestration. Application Permitted.

8. Community Youth Forum

Carol Clayson and Frances Holliday from Boughton PC attended to speak about their plans for a community youth forum to encourage younger members of the parish to have a say. At present it is early days and they are fact finding. They asked if Dunkirk PC was able to provide a representative to support a working group for the initiative. The council discussed and agreed to support with Cllr Hewett volunteering. **Action:** The clerk is to provide all relevant parties each other's each address.

9. Correspondence

- i) A2 resurfacing Brenley Corner to Honeywood Interchange overnight 8pm – 6am every night until 4th November 2023.
- ii) Rural Swale Small Business Grant – Details of the grant and how to apply added to the website and Facebook.
- iii) The Clerk had received thanks from parishioner regarding help with arranging of clearing of flytipping on the footpath on Dawes Road.

10. Matters for public concern:

A. Highways Issues

None.

B. Footpaths, Verges & Hedges

- i) A councillor commented that the hedge at Prospect house, previously reported to KCC had not been cleared. **Action:** The Clerk is to chase KCC.
- ii) A councillor commented that following the works undertaken on Boughton Hill, there was a gap in the railing between the footpath steps and the end of the footpath to the newly installed railings. **Action:** The Clerk is to raise this with KCC works project manager to arrange for the rails to join up copying in the KCC Councillor.

C. TPOs

None.

D. Playing field (incl. benches)

The Clerk is waiting to hear from HE regarding a meeting

E. Village Hall

Cllr Barkaway provided an update on the village hall.

F. Bus Shelters

None.

11. Speed Limits/TRO

- i) The Council is still waiting to hear from KCC with regards to the costings from the civil engineering aspect of the project, which is delayed due to an extension in the consultation for the moving of the 30mph speed limit southwards closer to the bridge.
- ii) A councillor raised concerns on the poor condition of a number of poles used for the speed signs. **Action:** The Clerk is to assess and report accordingly.
- iii) The council agreed for the Clerk to invite PC Gary Morris to the October full council meeting asking for an update on speeding and the parking at Gate Services. **Action:** The Clerk is to action and request quarterly invites going forward.

12. Boughton Hill Works

- i) Drains –Annotated drainage plans had been received from the project manager but these are not the official version. Work has been undertaken by the bungalow in Staplestreet. The council agreed to wait and see how the drainage occurs going forward.
- ii) Soft landscaping. The Clerk confirmed that no response had been received yet despite chasing.
- iii) Regarding the open manhole to gas services, this had now been repaired and thanks given by a parishioner.

13. Village Hall Land titles

Investigations are still ongoing at it was agreed to move to the next meeting.

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

The Chair had received an email from a concerned parishioner regarding an overgrown tree blocking the pavement in St Pauls Road. The Clerk had sent details to soft landscaping. The St Paul's Road resident had also raised health and safety issues concerning the poor structure of the block of garages in the road, some of which form the rear boundary in neighbouring gardens. The Clerk had investigated and ascertained that they were owned by a housing association called Southern Housing. The council discussed and agreed to send to a letter to the HA outlining the safety concerns. **Action:** The Clerk is to send the letter.

15. Streetlighting Contracts Renewal due at year end.

The Clerk highlighted that the current maintenance contract runs out at the end of the year. The council discussed and agreed for the Clerk to obtain 3 separate quotes. The council would need to decide by the November full council meeting at the latest. **Action:** The Clerk is to contact the existing company plus two additional companies for comparative quotes.

16. 80th DD Celebrations

The Chair confirmed that he is still trying to obtain details of the new cypher. **Action:** Cllr Kemp is to chase.

17. Regular Cleaning of new shelters

The council discussed three quotes received for cleaning of the bus shelters. These varied from £195 once a year for all three, £80 per visit each bus stop including cleaning and removal of vegetation and £20 each shelter for just cleaning alone. Given the bus shelter are on new tarmac, vegetation should not be an issue. The council discussed and agreed for cleaning once a year, starting in April for £20 for each bus shelter from SG Window Cleaning Ltd. **Action:** The Clerk is to prepare a contract for signing.

18. Milestones

Cllr Gould had forwarded to the Clerk a response from the SBC Conservation Officer. The CO replied that ownership on the land it sits on needs confirming, which he offered to ascertain. He commented he would be able to advise on any repairs/refurbishment needed.

19. Triangle – Courtenay Road/ Dawes Road

No response received. Need to incorporate into a new HIP **Action:** The Clerk is to advise Cllr Lehmann to chase KCC again.

20. Councillor's Reports

- i) The council commented that the litter pick went well on the 17th September. There was slightly less rubbish than normally, most likely because some residents undertake their own litter pick. A councillor commented that as at the end of Monday the rubbish had not been collected. The Clerk stated she had informed SBC of the litter pick and the need for rubbish collection. **Action:** The Clerk is to chase SBC for collection.
- ii) A councillor raised concerns of possible activity not in accordance with planning concerning a property in the parish. **Action:** The Clerk is to report to SBC.
- iii) A councillor mentioned that the Gorilla Gardeners will be undertaking further work at the Courtenay Road site 15th October for the Shrubbery in Courtenay Road at 10:00am and the 22nd October to plant daffodils outside the Village Hall, again at 10:00am.

21. Finance:

a. Finance report

- i) The Clerk read through the contents of the Finance Report for the end of August, which was approved by the Council and signed by the Chair.
- ii) The Clerk advised that the end of July reconciliation had a £14 discrepancy due to non-payment of the HMRC tax due, which was alternatively taken from the credit balance held with HMRC. Consequently the Clerk provided a restated July Bank reconciliation for approval which was agreed by the council and signed by the Chair

b. Approve payments

A motion to approve all items for payment was unanimously agreed. It was agreed for Cllr Kemp and Cllr Smith to authorise online. The Clerk had raised prior to the meeting an issue with the SSE bill continues to be lower than expected and Utility Aid thought that there had been a mistake given that the council was on a fixed rate. It was discussed and agreed for the Clerk to continue to chase and query the bill. **Action:** The Clerk is to chase Utility Aid to continue to query the bill with SSE.

c. External Auditor report and certificate

The Clerk confirmed that the external auditor report and certificate had been received from Mazars with no comments on the certificate and circulated to all councillors. The clerk confirmed that she had updated the audit documents on the website with the final audited version with the certificate.

d. S101 Namesco ratification

The Clerk had prepared a S101 summary for formal approval following the agreement following the last meeting for the payment to Namesco to be increased from the £43.99 reported to £52.79 to include the VAT. This was ratified by the council and signed by the Chair.

e. HMRC

The Clerk advised that a £100 fine had been received due to late payment of the HMRC online submission. # The Clerk usually sends the submission following approval of the payment at the full council meeting. However, despite doing this for a number of years, it appears that this submission must be made with 3 days of the payment date placed on the online submission. The Clerk has appealed the fine and is waiting for a response from HMRC. **Action:** The council discussed and agreed for the Clerk to submit online just prior to the meeting subject to advance approval of overtime in order to ensure the deadline is met.

A/C Name	Invoice No.	Chq No	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
Rebecca Parr		L - Online	Salary 06/23- 07/23	725.40	0.00	725.40
Rebecca Parr		L - Online	TAX - HMRC	13.80	0.00	13.80
Rebecca Parr			Net Pay	711.60	0.00	711.60
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
Rebecca Parr Total				747.04	0.00	747.04
Ladybirds		L - Online	August churchyard	132.00	0.00	132.00
Mr Moon		L-Online	August Playing Field	100.00	0.00	100.00
SSE		L - Online	Streetlights August 2023	143.84	7.18	151.02
G Doy		L- Online	Grass Cutting - August	70.00	0.00	70.00
KALC	7466474999	L-Online	Barkaway Planning Course	50.00	10.00	60.00
KALC	7466436949	L-Online	Barkaway Dynamic Councillor Course	50.00	10.00	60.00
KALC	7494537789	L-Online	Kemp - Planning Course	50.00	10.00	60.00
HMRC		L Online	PAYE Fine	100.00	0.00	100.00
Prime One	1409	L- Online	August Streetlight Maintenance	211.43	42.28	253.71
Total				1654.31	79.46	1733.77

22. Parish Pollinator Project

Playing field works are still dependent upon Historic England's response.

23. Administration/ Clerk's

- i) The Clerk reminded the councillors of the change in meeting timings for the winter to 7pm starts.

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

Whilst not immediately due under the Pensions Regulations, it was agreed for the council to discuss the way forward in preparation should pay increases occur and/or overtime mean the threshold is reached. The Clerk had research the Clerk's contract and pension options and circulated ahead of the meeting to all councillors. The councillors discussed and agreed the following:

- i) The existing Clerk's contract refers to a LGPS, which is considered to be financial prohibitive. The council agreed to approach the Clerk to request a change of contract with Clerk to a Nest scheme.
- ii) Based on a Nest Scheme, the council will offer employer contribution of 10%. This is over the minimum 8% required, allowing the Clerk to pay no employee contribution or a higher contribution if they wish.
- iii) The contribution would be based upon Qualifying earnings and not full salary.
- iv) The decision on pension/payroll administrator still needs to be agreed and deferred until the next meeting.
- v) The council agreed that costs would need to be included within the 2024/2025 budget.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.30pm

Date of next meetings: Extraordinary (if required) : 2 October 2023
Full Council Meeting: 16 October 2023

Rebecca Parr,
Clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Signed
Chair

Signed
Vice Chair

Date

Date

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