

Dunkirk Parish Council - Extraordinary Committee Meeting

Minutes of Extraordinary Committee Meeting held at Dunkirk Village Hall on 5 December 2022 at 7.00pm

Present:

Parish Councillors: Cllr K. Kemp (Chair of Parish Council), Cllr D. Brice, Cllr J. Tutt, Cllr G. Hewett, and Rebecca Parr (Clerk).
Cllr T. Valentine (SBC).

There were 0 members of the public.

1. **Declaration of Interest** – None.
2. **Apologies for absence** – received from Cllr R. Lehman (KCC) and Cllr J. Coleman (Vice Chair), Cllr A. Gould (SBC), Cllr J. Clifford and Cllr N. Smith
3. **Planning – Consider Applications**

- 1) 22/505369/FULLPROPOSAL: Proposed removal of containers and brick toilet and erection of data storage facility building with associated off street parking ADDRESS: Former RAF Mast Site Courtenay Road Dunkirk Kent ME13

A discussion noted that the site had previously received planning permission, with the delay in starting from 2018 likely to be due to Covid. It was considered that there were limited grounds for objection. At the time of the meeting, only 2 parishioners had commented objecting to the application. Main concerns were around noise. Cllr Kemp noted that the site was adjacent to the scheduled site and that Historic England was supportive. The design was in a 1940s style. A detailed discussion was held regarding the conclusions in the specialist noise report accompanying the application of which there were some uncertainties in the possible noise levels. The council voted unanimously to object to the application with the following planning comment.

“Dunkirk Parish Council voted unanimously to object to the planning application on the grounds of concerns over the uncertainty surrounding noise levels, which are considered unacceptable. The noise report shows that ventilation fans at 56 db will exceed the 26 + 4 db background noise level and will require silencers. The report suggests that these potentially have an impact on the performance of the fans and are as such untested. In addition, use of generators would also cause issues of noise. If the council are mindful of granting planning permission, we suggest that further investigations are made regarding noise attenuation examples especially at other data storage facilities.”

- 2) 22/505342/PNQCLA PROPOSAL: Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building and land within its curtilage to 1no. residential dwelling with associated operation development. For its prior approval to: - Transport and Highways impacts of the development - Noise impacts of the development - Contamination risks on the site - Flooding risks on the site - Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the use of the building to change from agricultural use to C3 (dwelling houses) - Design and external appearance impacts on the building -Provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwelling houses. ADDRESS: Land At Brook Farm Denstroude Lane Dunkirk Kent CT2 9JZ

The council discussed the application noting that the application referred to the use of the building for lambing, cattle shed and for poultry. It was commented that given local knowledge, the building has only been for equestrian use. There were also concerns that there was possible contamination of the land based on the clients past history use of the building. The council voted unanimously to object to the application with the following planning comment.

“Dunkirk Parish Council voted unanimously to object to the planning application on the grounds of local knowledge of the building only being used for equestrian use and not agricultural. There are also concerns of possible land contamination at the site and not being suitable for residential use.”

4. Historic England – Playing Field

The Clerk had spoken to Historic England to discuss the possibility of hedges at the playfield fields. This involved a review of aerial photographs and maps concerning the site. The possibility of archaeology at the site is considered to be high and it is likely that around the edges there is likely to be underground evidence of the layout of pathways etc. As there was already some vegetation around field margins, initially HE did not consider the inclusion of hedges to be an issue, especially with regarding to overall setting of the scheduled monument but given location of the features in the aerial photograph, they would now consider it to be problematic with also potential impact by tree/hedges roots potentially disturbing below ground archaeology. HE then suggested that if a geophysical survey could be undertaken, this could potentially highlight areas within the playing field not necessarily showing features, which could then remain on file in order to assist the PC in deciding appropriate area for future activity such as play equipment. Official permission from HE would be required but is likely to be granted as it is non-invasive. The appropriate information and links have been provided to the Clerk. The Clerk contacted John Clakestone of Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group (FSARG) who are local volunteers and are able to undertake geophysical surveys. They are willing to assist and are hoping to undertake the survey around early March. The Clerk will assist them in obtaining approval for the survey with HE. The council unanimously agreed to support the survey by FSARG and thanked the Clerk for her assistance and contacts in the matter. **Action:** The Clerk is to continue to liaise with FSARG and HE. In light of the hedge planting no longer going ahead, this will need to be communicated to parishioners. Action: Cllr Hewett is to liaise with Cllr Smith for the newsletter.

5. Lighting Grant

SBC had written informing of draft proposals. The draft budget includes a proposal to reduce the grant that the Council currently pays to some Parish Councils towards their footway lighting costs, paying 50% of the current grant amount in 2023/204 and 50% in 2024/25 with the grant ceasing in 2025/26. This would reduce the grant to DPC to £1540. Given the increase in street lighting charges to DPC, this was unwelcome news. The Chair had written to Cllr Valentine expressing our dismay asking them to reconsider. The council have now responded that this is a consultation but it is unlikely to change.

6. Budget

Cllr Kemp says that ideally the budget should be signed off in the December Full Council meeting. It was agreed that this should be presented on a worst case scenario assuming the reduction in the lighting grant. Current projected spend is circa £26.8k. This does not include expenditure relating to long term projects such as speeding. Cllr Tutt commented that in some areas KCC are paying for lights, whereas those in rural areas lose out. In addition, SBC are restricted in how much they can increase their council tax whereas Parish Councils had no limit. Cllr Kemp agreed to draft a letter Lisa Fillery at SBC. The Clerk explained that no comparison figures had been sent around yet as quotes etc. were still being finalised including a separate broker Utility Warehouse, associated with NALC. It was noted that the council has 2 MPAN accounts. One with very low usage which still attracted a separate standing charge meaning we are paying twice over. **Action:** The Clerk is to enquire with Prime One to find out which lights are using the smaller MPAN account. Cllr Kemp commented that there was little by way of options to reduce expenditure, other than perhaps future website developments spend. Cllr Kemp asked the clerk to email all councillors reminding them of the need to consider the budget in detail and where they feel cuts could be made. **Action:** the Clerk is to email. Cllr Kemp also raised possibility of rental income from the village hall regarding half of the land that the halls sits on belongs to DPC. A discussion concluded that this would be counterproductive as we currently are not charged for our use of the hall for our twice monthly usage.

The Meeting was closed at 8.30pm

Date of next meetings:	Full Council:	19 December 2022 (Hernhill Village Hall)
	Planning Committee:	3 January 2023

Rebecca Parr,
Clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Signed

Chair

Date

Signed

Vice-Chair

Date

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