

Dunkirk Parish Council – Full Council Meeting

Minutes of Full Council meeting held at Dunkirk Village Hall 7.30pm 20 December 2021

Present:

Parish Councillors: Jeff Tuff (JT) Chair, Julie Coleman (JC) Vice Chair, Daniel Brice (DB), Nicola Smith (NS), Greg Hewett (GH), Kevin Kemp (KK) and Jason Clifford (JCL) and Matthew Bullen (MB) clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council
County Councillor: Rich Lehmann (RL)

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

1. Apologies for absence – none received

2. Minutes of the previous Full Council meeting 15 November 2021 and Planning Committee meeting 6 December 2021 and matters arising

For the Minutes of meeting 15 November 2021, one member advised that it was they, and not a member of the public, who had suggested placing a bench in the playing field, to which the member of the public then offered to contribute towards the cost of, if required. The clerk agreed to amend the record and present a revised document to councillors for signing. **ACTION MB**

The Minutes of the meeting 6 December 2021 were approved as a true record and will be signed once the revised Minutes of the above have been prepared.

3. Matters for public concern:

a) Highways Issues

Dawes Road - Members again discussed the issue of “speeding” on Dawes Road and had noted that the national speed limit applies on the road all the way to the junction. Whilst members were grateful to the police for having undertaking speed checks, it was noted that exceeding the speed limit would be unlikely and that the issue is more of speed being excessive for the road conditions.

One member offered to discuss the matter with KCC at the next meeting of the Swale Area Committee **ACTION JT**

Staple Road – the Chair gave thanks to RL for his assistance in having the new crash barriers installed.

b) Footpaths, Verges & Hedges

One member raised the issue of overgrowing brambles at the bottom of Boughton Hill **ACTION MB** to report to KCC fault reporting website and ask RL to follow up on Council’s behalf

c) TPOs

None

d) Streetlights

The clerk updated the council to advise that, following the upgrading of street lighting to LEDs, an updated certificate had now been received from UK Power Networks confirming the Council’s electricity usage had reduced by just over half. This updated certificate was presented to the Council’s energy supplier, who has applied the changes retrospectively to February 2021, when the upgrade was carried out. There is now a credit on account which will be refunded to the Council.

e) Playground Equipment and Safety Surfacing

One member presented an updated version of the proposed survey which predominantly refers to the playing field. Members were informed that a few changes had been made, such as reference to allotments being removed.

Members were asked to respond by Friday 24 December with any further amendments required before the final version is prepared **ACTION ALL COUNCILLORS**

Members agreed the survey should be posted through every letter box, as well as placed on the website, to ensure everyone has the opportunity to respond.

The clerk offered to print all the necessary copies of the final version of the survey and return to councillors for them to distribute accordingly, as well as put it on the website and Facebook page **ACTION MB**

4. Planning:

a) Received decisions:

21/505804/FULL | Partial demolition of existing extension. Erection of part single storey, part two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and part ground floor, part first floor side extension with balcony. Erection of a detached double garage.

(Revised scheme to 20/505884/FULL) | 1 Rhode Common Cottages Rhode Common Dunkirk Kent ME13 9PT **APPROVED**

b) Consider applications:

21/506395/FULL | Demolition of existing side porch and erection of two storey side extension including, rear Juliet balcony and rear external flue. | Forge House London Road Dunkirk Faversham Kent ME13 9LL

One member raised concerns that the proposals included the removal of an oak tree which did not appear to be necessary. JT proposed a motion to support the application on the strict understanding the oak tree is not removed and this was agreed unanimously. **ACTION MB** to update Swale Planning

5. Finance:

a) Finance report

The clerk read through the contents of the Finance Report.

b) Approve payments

A motion to approve the payments requested was proposed by NS, seconded by JC and agreed unanimously

c) Budget options for 2022/23

A draft budget had been prepared for Councillors in advance of the meeting and the Chair asked for all councillors to review this and respond with their thoughts prior to the next Full Council meeting, in order for this to be finalised at that meeting

ACTION ALL COUNCILLORS

d) Precept options for 2022/23

The clerk had prepared information regarding the precept for 2022/23 in advance of the meeting and the Chair asked for all councillors to respond with their thoughts with regard to the level of precept required prior to the next Full Council meeting, in order for this to be agreed at the meeting **ACTION ALL COUNCILLORS**

e) Review and proposals for banking arrangements

One member had been looking into the possibility of changing bank and had been presented with options from the bank, which included free banking and another with a monthly charge.

The monthly charge included online banking and the member suggested that this may be beneficial to the Council from an administration perspective but also for payees, as many no longer wish to receive payment by cheque.

Members agreed to explore the options further and the Councillor agreed to report back with further information **ACTION KK**

6. Informal response to Swale Borough Council revised Local Plan October 2021 Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18)

Swale Borough Council had informed the Council that, although the deadline had now passed, they were willing to consider the Council's response to the consultation on an informal basis.

Members raised concerns with the Plan on specific matters such as the air quality survey referenced having been prepared for the previous Plan, as opposed to conducting a new one, as well as a general concern that Swale Borough Council's overall approach to the consultation itself being too onerous on consultees, including the Parish Council –the nature of the questions and the understanding required to answering them is unreasonable.

That notwithstanding, members agreed that those who wished to provide a response, would discuss the matter again at its next meeting, 4 January 2022 where its final position on the matter would be decided.

ACTION MB to inform Swale Borough Council of the position and, assuming the timescale is in order, confirm a response is to follow

7. Review of current arrangements for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

The Chair advised members that the Boughton Community Project Group, who had attended a previous, non-council meeting to discuss plans for the Jubilee, had confirmed that they would not now be looking to undertake any projects with the Council on a joint basis.

8. Consider parishioner request to install a bench at the playing field

Members agreed that a bench would be beneficial and that this should be considered as part of its overall review of the playing field arrangements, which will be shaped by the survey that is currently being drafted. One member agreed to approach the parishioners who had offered to contribute to the bench to thank them, on behalf of the Council, for their offer **ACTION DB**

9. Review of grass cutting contracts to take into consideration pollinators

A recent presentation from local authorities had highlighted the benefits to pollinators, such as bees, of limiting the amount of cuttings made to grass verges. Members noted that whilst some parishioners would approve of this approach, others would possibly prefer to keep the verges maintained regularly so a question had been included in the draft survey for parishioners to state their preferred approach.

All members agreed to review the existing cutting contracts once the outcome of the survey was known.

10. Chairman's Statement

The Chair acknowledged that the past year had been difficult for everyone amidst the ongoing pandemic. He thanked the clerk and councillors for their efforts but confirmed that he had also decided to step down as Chair. He would continue to serve as a councillor. A new Chair is to be appointed at the next meeting Full Council meeting.

11. Matters not on Agenda (for information only)

RL updated the Council to advise that the issue of a replacement speed warning sign had been included on the Agenda for a meeting of KCC councillors in February and he would advise further in due course.

Members noted that members of the public had raised concerns with Swale Borough Council regarding works being undertaken at a thatched cottage on Staplestreet Road and that this is under review.

One member queried what has happened to the bus shelter and was informed that KCC are still looking into the matter. One member raised concerns with regards to the amount of litter on the verges of the slip road from Gate Services into Dunkirk. Another commented that trucks are also parking inappropriately on the kerbs of the same slip road. Members asked RL to take this up with KCC and to refer to National Highways if they are responsible for that section of the highway. **ACTION RL**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.20 pm

12. Meeting closed and private meeting held to review arrangements for previous clerk

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

Matthew Bullen
Clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Signed 
Chairman
Date
A K KEMP
17/1/22

Date of next meetings:	Planning Committee:	Tuesday 4 January 2022
	Full Council:	17 January 2022

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