

Dunkirk Parish Council – Full Council Meeting

Minutes of Full Council meeting held at Dunkirk Village Hall 7.30pm 21 February 2022

Present:

Parish Councillors: Kevin Kemp (KK) Chair, Julie Coleman (JC) Vice Chair, Jeff Tutt (JT), Daniel Brice (DB) and Nicola Smith (NS) and Matthew Bullen (MB) clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Ward Councillors: Alastair Gould (AG)

1 member of the public

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

Apologies for absence – received from Councillors Greg Hewett and Jason Clifford, County Councillor Lehmann and Ward Councillor Tim Valentine

1. Village update from local Police Community Support Officers

PCSO Pashov and his colleague attended the meeting to update the council on village matters and respond to queries raised. The principle issue concerned dangerous driving along Dawes Road and Staplestreet Road, which had been raised by the council with PCSOs previously.

It was stated that the roads had been observed twice in the prior months with no issues found. Despite road signs having been turned around and confusing matters, the National Speed Limit does apply here so PCSOs are not permitted to carry out speed check, though they are willing to refer the matter to their Traffic division if required.

One accident had been reported in the area recently but it was judged that speed had not been a determining factor in this. A consensus was reached that the current speed limit is not appropriate for the road conditions, given it is a narrow road, lined with residential properties yet no pathways.

Members also advised of issues regarding unregistered motorcycles being used in woodland but also along public roads in the village which had been reported to the police. PCSOs advised that this is an issue that they are aware of but that they have to observe an issue for themselves in order to be permitted to then follow up.

PCSOs asked for villagers to report all such matters either online or by calling 101 as this may help to build up a pattern of behaviours for them to investigate. They had received 29 calls for the Dunkirk area since the turn of the year.

It was agreed the local inspector would be asked to attend a future meeting of the council, with the clerk to liaise with relevant parties **ACTION MB**

2. Minutes of Full Council meeting 17 January 2022 and Planning Committee meeting 7 February 2022 and matters arising

A motion to approve the minutes of Full Council meeting was proposed by NS, seconded by JC and agreed unanimously. A motion to approve the minutes of Planning Committee meeting 7 February 2022 was proposed by JT, seconded by DB and agreed unanimously

Matters for public concern:

a) Highways Issues

i. **Speeding on Dawes Road**

These matters were considered as part of discussions with PSCOs in item 2

ii. **Potholes in Dunkirk Road North**

Several Residents had reported concerns. KCC had inspected but determined a water leak was the cause and would attend to repairs but only after the leak had been fixed. The clerk advise South East Water had logged the issue for repair and would follow this up with them before following up with KCC again **ACTION MB**

iii. **Manson Wood/ lorries turning on A2**

Swale Borough Council had responded to concerns raised by the council to advise that no breaches had taken place. The council asked National Highways to confirm their response to this position and they have asked Swale Borough Council to review this again **ACTION MB/KK** – provide details to AG for him to review with Planning team

iv. **Entrance off A2 slip road to Dunkirk**

Members noted an area of land had been cleared and that this could be related to a recent planning submission **ACTION MB** ask Tree Officer to review the trees that have been felled against TPO register for them to then liaise with AG and Planning team

v. **Consider Highways Improvement Plan**

The clerk advised that any changes to speed limits or similar should be presented to KCC as part of an Highways Improvement Plan. The Plan should be developed in conjunction with KCC with members identifying and then prioritising any potential schemes for inclusion in the plan.

One member suggested that the plan could consist of just one scheme, if desired.

Another suggested that a public meeting be held for residents to express their views as to what schemes they would like to be included. It was agreed that this could potentially be combined with the council's annual meeting and could involve the police inspector if he were to attend the same

- b) **Footpaths, Verges & Hedges** – no issues raised
- c) **TPOs** – the clerk is to liaise with the Tree Officer and then AG with regards to an area which has been cleared near an entrance off the A2 Slip Road as noted in 2 a) iv. above **ACTION MB**
- d) **Streetlights** – no issues raised
- e) **Playground Equipment and Safety Surfacing**

It was commented that the recent village survey had not indicated much desire for additional play equipment. However there was enthusiasm for more park benches, with 3 people offering to donate these. **ACTION JC/DB** to liaise with potential donors to offer guidance regarding the specification of the benches.

3. **Correspondence**

The Chair advised that going forward, this item would be included on a permanent basis early on the Agenda for future Full Council meetings and he would run through correspondence received in the preceding month for members to review

4. **Planning:**

a) **To co-opt another member to the Planning Committee**

The Chair of the Parish Council is not currently a member of the Planning Committee so a motion to co-opt him to this was proposed by JT, seconded by JC and agreed unanimously **ACTION MB** to update council records

The Planning Committee now consist of Cllr Tutt (Chair), Cllr Coleman, Cllr Clifford, Cllr Brice and Cllr Kemp

b) **Received decisions:**

21/505180/FULL | Demolition of existing single side garage. Erection of a single storey side and rear extension together with replacement of roof tiles with enviro slate effect tiles and cedar cladding to front elevation. | 2 Dawes Road Dunkirk Faversham Kent ME13 9TL – **WITHDRAWN**

c) **Consider applications:** None

5. **Finance:**

a) **Finance report**

The clerk read through the contents of the Finance Report

b) **Approve payments**

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

c) **Confirmation of Budget and Precept for 2022/23**

The clerk formally noted that at the previous Full Council Meeting, members had agreed:

- the Annual budget for 2022/23 to be set at £20,185
- The precept had been set at the same level as the budget of £20,185. This equates to a precept of £32.56 for a band D property, compared to £26.88 for 2021/22 – an increase of 21%.

The clerk advised that a figure of 28% had been referred to in error at the previous meeting and apologised for this.

6. **Review banking arrangements**

The Chair reminded members that at the previous meeting he had presented options for 3 types of bank account available with Metro Bank for them to consider. The Chair recommended that the Council proceed with the "Business Online Plus" account which is subject to a monthly fee but does enable payments to be made online, subject to councillor authorisation, which it is hoped will improve efficiencies. This was agreed unanimously.

7. **Consider providing the clerk with a mobile phone**

Members agreed to supply the clerk with a "pay as you go" mobile phone

8. **Review of councillor responsibilities within Dunkirk Parish Council**

The Chair would like members to consider the areas of their expertise or which they are particularly interested in, and how these could be brought to the council in the form of them overseeing matters relating to that area. An example given was the Highways Improvement Plan discussed earlier. If a particular member has an interest in this, it could be a project they oversee to support the chair, clerk and other members in fulfilling. **ACTION ALL COUNCILLORS** to report back to KK with their thoughts.

9. **Internal audit report findings and appointment of internal auditor for next audit**

The clerk summarised the report and confirmed no issues had been raised with only a couple of advisory comments made. It was agreed to appoint the same internal auditor for the forthcoming audit this year

10. Playing field access

The Council has a right of access across private land to the playing field behind Courtenay Road. A query has arisen as to how this right, and the scope of it, applies in practice.

The Chair suggested a meeting with the landowners which NS agreed to facilitate **ACTION NS** and to ask solicitors to review the deeds for a legal opinion **ACTION MB**

11. Update following village survey and playing field meeting

JC updated the Council on the findings of the recent village survey as follows:

- Responses were received from approximately 8% of the 450 surveys distributed which members were pleased with
- Comments for Playing field:
 - Dog walking is popular and requests for a larger bin have been actioned by the council
 - Less enthusiasm for play equipment or an outdoor gym, with responses suggesting people prefer the open space
 - Comment regarding benches noted under item 3 e)
 - Provision of a shelter – less enthusiasm due to concerns about vandalism. Suggestions for hedgerows on the West side bordering Radar Farm to form a wind break **ACTION JC** quote for mixed native hedging, planting etc
 - Planting trees – some support for blossom trees in the corner but most respondents would prefer for the grassland to be left clear **ACTION JC** Quote for a number of natural blossom trees
 - Growing wild flowers – some support for this though not many people would be willing to help with maintenance, as well as some concerns raised regarding existing brambles spreading further **ACTION JC** obtain further information on possible options and quotes
 - Shipping container – some respondents felt that if it could be restored and repurposed then it may be worth retaining, whilst others would like to see this removed. **ACTION KK** to contact owners to clarify if they wish to remove the container or otherwise donate it to the Council for it to decide the next steps
- Queen's Jubilee Celebrations:
 - Some enthusiasm for this, including offers of help to run events **ACTION NS** to arrange a meeting with those who have kindly offered help
 - Another meeting involving some members of Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils (attending in personal capacity's) as well as other groups has been arranged for 1 March 2022 at Queen's Head pub **ACTION MB** to put notice of this meeting on the Council's Facebook page and website
 - Most respondents felt a tree should be planted in the playing field to commemorate the occasion
- Grass verges:
 - Some enthusiasm for leaving verges to grow as wildflowers i.e. only undertaking two cuttings a year, where this was safe to do so
 - One respondent asked a grass track to be cut from the bus shelter to the pavement over the A2 bridge, to allow access to footpaths at Foresters Lodge and for litter signs to be removed as they obstruct pedestrians
- Mast: Several respondents queried if a light could be reinstated on the mast and also as to when it was last maintained or due to be maintained **ACTION MB** to write to mast owners
- Streetlights: no negative responses were received to the recent transfer to LED lighting which members took to be a positive point
- Members agreed for the clerk to post the results to the survey on the website and Facebook page **ACTION MB**

12. Review of Grass cutting and maintenance contracts

Taking on board comments from the survey, members agreed the Council should look to incorporate pollinator-friendly procedures when drawing up specifications for the grass cutting contracts, which are due to be put out to tender shortly **ACTION MB** to provide members with further information on existing specifications and then include an item on the Agenda for the next Planning Committee meeting for members to agree specifications

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

One member indicated they had received a quote indication of between £1,200 and £1,500 for a bespoke brazier depending on cost of raw materials when manufactured **ACTION DB** to obtain formal quote

Members agreed to add an item to the Agenda for the next Planning Committee meeting to discuss possible road closure for the "lighting of the beacons" event **ACTION MB**

Members asked the clerk to see if the Salvation Army would be available for the event **ACTION MB**

One member offered to speak to a journalist with a view to publicising the event **ACTION KK**

One member agreed to contact mobile fish and chip caterers to enquire on availability **ACTION NS**

14. Petition for council's to hold meetings remotely if preferred

One member advised they preferred to hold meetings in person only, whilst another suggested it would be good for the council to have the option at least to hold a meeting remotely, for example where there is adverse weather

A motion for the clerk to respond on behalf of the council to confirm its support for the petition and for members to respond separately in a personal capacity to also offer their support where applicable was proposed by JT, seconded by JC and agreed unanimously **ACTION MB**

15. Email and internet security

Members were reminded of the threat of email and internet security, given all members email addresses are in the public domain. Members should double check the address from which an email has been received is correct and change passwords regularly

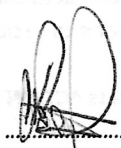
16. Matters not on Agenda (for information only)

JT mentioned that a report on the effects of transport on the Swale Borough Council Local Plan had a number of concerns identified which had the potential to undermine the Plan itself.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.37pm

Matthew Bullen
Clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Signed
Chairman
Date


..... AKKEMP
28-03-2022
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Date of next meetings: Planning Committee: 7 March 2022
Full Council: 21 March 2022

Dunkirk Parish Council Website: www.dunkirkpc.org.uk