



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Downley Parish Council held on  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7:30 p.m.**

Present: Councillors M Lazenby (Chairman presiding), S Biggs, P Brooks, K Chandarana, C Lenton, A Mann and W Steneskog

In attendance: One members of the public present

Officers: G Tandy (Clerk)

Buckinghamshire Councillors P Turner and M Hussain

**1) Apologies for absence (8711/09/23)**

Apologies were received from Councillors A Lenard, W Monroe-West, T Snaith and from Buckinghamshire Councillor M Hussain. Cllr Ahmed was absent.

**2) Declarations of interest (8712/09/23)**

Cllr Biggs declared an interest in item 13) Expenditure for third parties as a member of the Downley Festival Committee. Cllr Brooks declared an interest in item 13) Expenditure for third parties as a member of the Downley Common Preservation Society. Cllr Lazenby declared an interest in item 13) Expenditure for third parties as a member of the Downley Festival Committee. Cllr Lenton declared an interest in item 13) Expenditure for third parties as a relative of library volunteers.

**3) Minutes (8713/09/23)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**4) Public participation session (8714/09/23)**

A member of the public spoke about the grass verges along Plomer Green Lane between the Old Post Office and the Old Dairy. He explained that the verge on the left-hand side when heading to the allotments was considerably overgrown and had not been cut for several years. This obscured the view for motorists. The road carries considerable pedestrian traffic and the growth prevents pedestrians from taking refuge there when faced with oncoming traffic. The Clerk was asked to check our devolution map to see if the Parish council was responsible for this area.

**5) To receive and note the reports of Buckinghamshire Councillors (8715/09/23)**

Cllr Turner had provided his written report which was circulated to Council prior to the meeting.

**6) Planning Committee (8716/09/23)**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were received and noted.

**7) Speed limit signs (8718/09/23)**

Council considered the purchase of 30 mph speed limit stickers to affix to wheelie bins. Having been unable to source a free supply it was RESOLVED to purchase from smartwheelie.co.uk a pack of 100 making these available to residents at no charge on a first come, first served basis.

**8) Councillor Reports (8719/09/23)**

Councillor Biggs and Councillor Lazenby reported on this years Downley Day event and Festival describing these as well attended and successful. The Art Show also had many entries and this year allowed exhibitors to advertise and sell their ways through the show. It was believed that this practice detracted from the event and would not be continued.

Councillor Lazenby explained that the next working party at Sandpits point was scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> October.

**9) Risk Management Policy (8720/09/23)**

An annual review of the Risk Management Policy was conducted with no amendments required this year.

**10) Bank Reconciliation (8721/09/23)**

The Bank Reconciliation dated 29 August 2023 was noted.

**11) Independent Audit (8722/09/23)**

The Report of the Independent Auditor, Claritas Accountancy Ltd dated 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 was noted. The Finance Committee recommended the transfer of £25,000 (Twenty five thousand pounds only) from current account to reserves. Proposed by Cllr Steneskog and seconded by Cllr Chandarana it was unanimously RESOLVED to make this transfer.

**12) Budget Review (8723/09/23)**

Section 4.2 of the Parish council's Financial Regulations state that no expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council. Energy costs for Street Lighting have risen to a level beyond that anticipated when the budget was set and to comply with 4.2 It was proposed by Cllr Chandarana, seconded by Cllr Steneskog and RESOLVED that the budget for Street Lighting be increased to £31,200 for the year to be funded from reserves.

**13) Expenditure for third parties (8724/09/23)**

Three areas of expenditure currently covered by the parish Council were considered with a view to deciding whether a more formal structure should be agreed on for the future or indeed whether the Parish Council should continue paying for these items:

- i. The library's pitch fee for Downley Day
- ii. The provision of Stewards for the annual bonfire event and torchlight procession
- iii. The provision of the Marquee and associated costs in connection with Downley Day and the Downley Festival.

It was RESOLVED that the council would no longer pay for the Community Library's Downley Day pitch fee. Councillor Brooks wished it noted that she voted against no longer paying the Library Pitch for Downley Day.

The Council has budgeted £1300 to cover the costs of stewards and medical staff for the annual Downley bonfire and torchlight procession. Monies raised from sales are collected by the Downley

Common Preservation Society and the budget has been sufficient to cover those costs so far. Council considered putting a cap on the level that the Council would be willing to fund in the future with the expectation of DCPS taking responsibility for any surplus expenditure. It was agreed that the Council should have sight of DCPS's accounts prior to making any decision.

The Council has budgeted £3500 to cover the marquee bill for Downley Day and the Up Downley Festival. This year the bills including VAT totalled £4872. The Council claims back VAT from HMRC and the net cost was £4060. After the event, the Festival Committee agreed to pay £560 and the Downley Day Committee covered £48 to bring the costs back into budget. It was agreed that a meeting should be held prior to the next Festival to agree the limits on the Parish Council's funding of the event.

**14) Invoices (8725/09/23)**

Payments made since the last meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were noted and approved. The schedule of invoices received through the month of September was considered and authorised.

**15) Clerks Progress Report (8726/09/23)**

Noted

**16) To note the date and place of the next meeting (8727/09/23)**

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7:30 p.m. at the Downley Community Centre**

**17) Closure of the meeting (8728/09/23)**

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 08:32 p.m.