



Downley Community Centre
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DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

You are **HEREBY SUMMONED** to attend a **MEETING** of the **DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL** which takes place **ON TUESDAY 12th JANUARY 2021** at 7pm

This meeting will be held by Zoom Video Conference for the purpose of transacting the following business. Instructions for joining the Zoom meeting are as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6482386990?pwd=djJUJzNBd21BZDRtdElld0xFWG4zdz09>

Meeting ID: 648 238 6990 Passcode: 639877

A G E N D A

- 1) To record Attendance and receive Apologies for Absence
- 2) To receive and note any Declarations of Interest made by Councillors in connection with any agenda item
- 3) Public Participation Session - To receive questions and comment from the public on any matter on the Agenda or which affects the Parish
- 4) To Approve the Minutes of the Meetings of Council held on 15 December 2020. (Below)
- 5) To receive and note reports from Buckinghamshire Councillors
- 6) To receive and note the reports of the following Committee:
 - (i) Staffing/HR Committee 7th January 2021 (copy to follow)
7. To submit Comments on Planning Applications received as set out below:

**The Timber Barn Plomer Green Lane Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5XN
20/08284/LBC**

Listed building application for the replacement of the north and south elevation midstrete glazing (retrospective)

37 Downs Park High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5LU 20/08103/FUL

Householder application for construction of part single, part two storey side/rear extension following the demolition of existing garage, single storey front extension, insertion of roof light to rear elevation and widening of existing dropped kerb

8. To receive and note the Decisions made by The Buckinghamshire Council in respect of the following Planning Applications set out below:

Hill Cottage Plomer Hill High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5NB 20/07438/FUL

Demolition of existing dwelling and erection detached 4-bed dwelling with detached single garage, bin store, parking, and creation of new access. **Decision: Approved**

83 Westover Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5HX 20/07765/CLP

Certificate of lawfulness for proposed single storey side extension with 2 x roof lights, hip to gable roof extension, box dormer to rear with installation of 3 x roof lights to front roof slope in connection with loft conversion **Decision: Certificate Granted**

8 Narrow Lane Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5XP 20/08010/ADRC

Application for approval of details subject to conditions 4 (surfacing materials) and 5 (parking scheme) of householder planning approval ref: 20/06572/FUL **Decision: Permit - detail Reserved by Condition**

31 Hithercroft Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5LT 20/07806/FUL

Construction of single storey front entrance porch, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation, part single storey/part two storey/part first floor side and rear extension and associated external alterations **Decision: Approved**

40 Sunny Croft Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5UR 20/07761/FUL

Construction of part single/part two storey rear extension with internal alterations. **Decision: Approved**

9. To Receive, Consider and Approve the Draft Budget for 2021/22 (below)
10. To Approve a Precept of £100,000 on the Buckinghamshire Council for the year 2021/22
11. To Receive and Note the Progress Report (below)
12. To consider whether this Council wishes to contribute the sum of £4,855.22 towards the Downley Controlled Crossing Feasibility Study (Clerk's report below)
13. Park Fencing School Close Park To consider the Council's further response to the Buckinghamshire Council. (Clerk's report below)
14. To Receive and Consider the report of the External Auditor on the Accounts for 2019/20 (Clerk's report below)
15. To Adopt the following Policies as recommended for approval by the Staffing/HR Committee:
 - i) Capability Policy
 - ii) Disciplinary Policy
 - iii) Grievance Policy
16. To note the payment of Invoices below:

Bank Balance at 29.11.20 was £234, 704.24 includes £50,000 ring fenced projects			
Ch No.	Payee	Amount	Description of goods/services
1928	cancelled cheque		
1929	Royal British Legion	£16.00	Poppy Wreath
1930	KAD Garden service	£1,101.00	Grass cutting /Leaf clearance November
1931	Colin Clarke Construction	£6,114.00	Works to Downley Community Centre
1932	PKF Littlejohn	£480.00	External Audit Fee
1933	Mr Peter Redman	£1,368.00	Clearing Downley Village for Jan-Sept 2020 (replacing cheque number 1926 payable to Fourlegswood
1934	West Wycombe Estate	£450.00	Annual Rent of Jubilee Allotment Gardens
BACS	M W Kennedy	£2,162.63	Replacing cheque Nos. 1927 & 1928 Professional fees & Expenses Locum Clerk for November – Both cheques stopped
BACS	M W Kennedy	£3,094.86	Professional fees & Expenses Locum Clerk for December
	TOTAL	£14,786.49	

17. To note the Date and Place of next Meeting February 9th, 2021
18. Closure of the Meeting.

*Mike Kennedy
Locum Clerk to the Council
6 January 2021*

Downley Parish Council
Minutes of the Council held online, via Zoom
on Tuesday 15 December 2020 at 7.03pm

Present: Councillors M Lazenby, (Chairman presiding), R Bowden, K Chandarana, A Lenard, S Monroe-West, V Naik, V Srao, S Steneskog, and S Tozer

In Attendance: Buckinghamshire Councillors W Mallen and P Turner and 2 Members of the Public.
Officer: M Kennedy (Locum Clerk)

1) Apologies for Absence (8206/12/20)

None.

2) Declarations of Interest (8207/12/20)

None.

3) Public Participation (8208/12/20)

Pamela Brookes addressed the meeting on two agenda items. As regards the application for an additional Street Light in Polmer Green Lane, agenda item 14, she considered that the costs would be prohibitive. As to the suggested proposal that the Council should seek a permanent office in the Community Centre, agenda item 15, Mrs. Brookes supported this opportunity adding that the Council needs a focal point for the public and councillors.

4) Minutes (8209/12/20)

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 13 October 2020, 24 November 2020 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 7 December 2020 were presented for adoption. It was **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020, be received, approved, and adopted and signed by the Chairman as a true record);
- (ii) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020 be received, approved, and adopted and signed by the Chairman as a true record); and
- (iii) that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 7 December 2020, be received, approved, and adopted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

5) Reports from Buckinghamshire Councillors (8210/12/20)

Members had before them, copies having been previously issued, the reports from Councillors Mallen and Turner. It was **RESOLVED** that the reports to received and noted.

Councillor Mallen entered the meeting at 7.28pm

Councillors Turner and Mallen left the meeting at 7.30pm and 7.34pm, respectively.

6) Committee Reports (8211/12/20)

- a) The minutes of the meetings of the Finance Committee held on 24 November and 7 December, 2020, copies having been issued were presented to Council. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for presenting a draft budget for 2021/22. The latest figures had been circulated to the members of the Finance Committee for consideration and would be presented to Council on 12 January 2021 for adoption. A proposed precept of £100,000 would be recommended. Councillor Bowden highlighted the provision in the estimates for Parish IT costs and looked forward to receiving Councillor Naik's proposals for storing documents in the Cloud. It was **RESOLVED** that the reports be received and noted
- b) The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 November, copy having been issued were presented to Council. It was **RESOLVED** that the report be received and noted.

7) Planning Applications (8212/12/20)

The Chairman presented the recommendations of the informal meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14 December as the Council's representations to Buckinghamshire Council on current planning applications. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council submits the following comments to Buckinghamshire Council as set out hereunder

14 Southfield Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5LA

Householder application for single storey rear extension, alterations to fenestrations, rear decking, and privacy screen

Recommendation is to refuse this application. As per a comment on the application, there are light restrictions to the neighbouring property (#16) on their lounge and patio. Overall, DPC feels this application be refused.

8 Narrow Lane Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5XP Application for approval of details subject to conditions 4 (surfacing materials) and 5 (parking scheme) of householder planning approval ref: 20/06572/FUL

This notifies the Council of proposed work or development not needing its permission. The Council will not be approving or refusing the proposal, so comments are not invited.

25 Hillfield Close High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5NA

Householder application for insertion of windows to front and side and raising of existing garage roof in connection with garage conversion to habitable accommodation

The application to make the changes to garage to convert into a habitable accommodation does not cause any impact to the overall look and feel of the neighbourhood. There will be an additional window to the front and 2 small windows on the side, but the side windows (at ground floor level) are far enough from the adjoining property to avoid any overlooking issues. Overall, DPC feels this application be approved

28 Gosling Grove Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5YS

Householder application for construction of single storey rear extension, first floor side extension and fenestration alterations

The application to construct a single storey rear extension, first floor side extension and fenestration alterations is partially okay with the DPC. If the applicant wants to go ahead with the single storey rear extension, they can do so via separate application as DPC does not see any objections with that part of the application. Also, as per a previous decision on application 06/07820/FUL for same work, the applicant was refused based on height, scale, and projection towards #20 Gosling Grove (neighbouring property). Finally, current occupiers at #20 have already raised a valid objection for this application which should be noted. Overall, DPC feels this application be refused

57 Sunny Croft Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5UR

Householder application for construction of single storey rear extension and fenestration alterations

The application to construct a single storey rear extension and fenestration alterations has an objection from a neighbour next door. DPC have independently reviewed the application and objections raised and the view is even though the extension work is okay, the roof for the rear extension is out of general appearance of the street. Other concerns around drainage and covenants do not fall with DPC's remit. If the applicant applies again changing from sloped roof to flat roof, the application can be reviewed, and a decision made accordingly. Overall, DPC feels this application be refused.

40 Sunny Croft Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5UR

Householder application for construction of part single/part two storey rear extension with internal alterations

The application for construction of part single/part two storey rear extension with internal alterations is very similar to application 15/05565/FUL for next door neighbours (#42 Sunny Croft) which was a permitted development, hence this application is in line with the neighbourhood appearance. The 2 new windows on side have been mentioned to be glazed and non-opening which means there will be no overlooking impact on the neighbouring properties. Overall, DPC feels this application be approved

25 Gosling Grove Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5YS

Householder application for construction of part single, part two storey side extension, dropped kerb and aluminium flue to fireplace at ground floor

The application for construction of part single, part two storey side extension, dropped kerb and aluminium flue to fireplace at ground floor is in line with expectations. An application in the past (15/07468/FUL) to drop the kerb was a permitted development so that part is already covered. In terms of building a side extension, there is an alleyway next to the property on the side the extension is being built so no concerns around overlooking or line of sight. Overall, DPC feels this application be approved.

45 White Close High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5ND

Roof alterations incorporating double hip to gable roof extension, erection of 1 x dormer window to rear and installation of 2 x rooflights to front all in connection with conversion of existing loftspace to habitable accommodation.

There is nothing in the application and the plans that seems out of ordinary for this application. This design was put forward in 2019 and withdrawn in February 2020. Then a Certificate of Lawful Development for the same design (without dormer) was requested as a part of 20/05496/CLP which was refused on 20th April 2020. An appeal was lodged against the refusal which was allowed on 18th November 2020. Given the current application is the same which was allowed post appeal with only addition being the rear dormer window which does not have any impact on the decision of DPC. Overall, DPC feels this application be approved.

8) Decision Notices (8213/12/2020)

The Council noted the Decision Notices received from the Buckinghamshire Council as set out hereunder

4 Curlew Close High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5JY

Notification of proposed single storey rear extension; Depth extending from the original rear wall of 5.5 metres, a maximum height of 3.0 metres and an eaves height of 2.9 metres **Decision: Application Refused**

3 Ravens Court Commonsides Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5YA

Side and height reduction by up to 2m of hedge including Hawthorn, Holly, Hornbeam, and Hazelnut. **Decision: Not to make a Tree Preservation Order**

14 Southfield Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5LA

Householder application for single storey rear extension and alterations to fenestrations. **Application Withdrawn**

4 Downs Park High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5LX

Householder application for construction of two storey front and side extension and front porch with three roof lights and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing garage. **Application Withdrawn**

55 Plomer Green Lane Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5TU

Construction of an attached two storey end terrace dwelling, creation of new access to rear with associated car parking **Decision: Application Refused**

2 Plomer Green Avenue Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5LN

Householder application for construction of single storey conservatory extension **Decision: Approved**

2 Court Close High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5JF

Certificate of lawfulness for proposed construction of 2 x side and rear box dormers in connection with loft conversion and fenestration alterations, **Decision: Grant Certificate - Proposed Development**

2 Court Close High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5JF

Householder application for roof alteration works with front dormer in connection with conversion of loft with staircase access to create snug with front balcony, external alterations, and alterations to fenestrations. **Decision: Approved**

43 Plomer Hill High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 5NB

Householder application for construction of extension to lower ground floor and associated external alterations **Decision: Application Withdrawn**

Hughenden Hall Plomer Green Lane Downley Buckinghamshire

Householder application for construction of single storey linked extension, extension to & conversion of carport to store, internal alterations, and landscaping (alternative scheme to 18/05433/FUL) **Decision: Approved**

Hughenden Hall Plomer Green Lane Downley Buckinghamshire HP13 5XN

Listed building application for construction of single storey linked extension, extension to & conversion of carport to store, internal alterations, and landscaping **Decision: Approved**

9) Code of Conduct for Downley Parish Council (8214/12/20)

A Code of Conduct for Downley Parish Council was circulated to all Councillors for consideration and adoption. Despite extensive research, and notwithstanding the former clerk's claim that a Code of Conduct had been issued to all Councillors, it was acknowledged that the Council had never formally adopted a Code of Conduct for Downley Parish Council.

The previous Parish Council's document, issued to Members in October 2016, was taken from the former Wycombe District Council's Code of Conduct, and had erroneously referred to undertaking duties as a member of that authority. It was proposed by Councillor Lenard, seconded by Councillor Chandarana and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the draft document as presented be formally adopted as the Code of Conduct for Councillors serving the Downley Parish Council.

10) Appointment of a Staffing/HR Committee (8215/12/20)

Members considered the appointment of a Staffing/HR Committee for the remainder of the local government year. Suggested Terms of Reference for a Staffing/HR Committee were issued for Members' consideration and adoption.

It was generally felt that a committee of 5 was too large because a future Clerk might be unhappy that too many Councillors would have sight of confidential business.

There followed a lengthy discussion when the following additional points were made.

The Clerk's Job Description states that the Clerk is line managed by the Chairman. It was recognised that the Clerk reports to the whole Council and until such time as the on-going dispute is resolved, the whole Council should meet to consider this issue rather than delegate responsibility to a smaller committee.

There was some doubt as to the existence or otherwise of a contract of employment for the former clerk. A view was expressed that it is possible to have a job description without a contract of employment. A member requested that the former clerk's job description be circulated to all Councillors and the Chairman agreed to issue this to everyone.

Referring to the Terms of Reference for the committee, it was suggested that the appointment of members to hear any formal grievance should include Councillor grievances as well as grievances raised by the Clerk (*Locum Clerk's post meeting note: Councillor grievances are matters for the Buckinghamshire Council's Monitoring Officer to determine*). It was also suggested that business continuity planning should also be a matter for the new committee's terms of reference.

A member suggested that the question of appointing an HR/Staffing Committee should be deferred until the on-going dispute is finalised however this was rejected as the Council needs a committee in place to consider arrangements for the recruitment of the new clerk.

It was recognised that a Grievance Policy also needs to be in place as a matter of urgency.

Having regard to the on-going conflict it was **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference as presented be adopted and that the membership of the committee be deferred to a closed session of the Council following the conclusion of the remainder of business.

11 Co-option of Councillors (8216/12/20)

The Council considered a draft co-option policy for Downley Parish Council which sets out the procedures to be followed in the co-option process, copy having been issued. In noting there are presently two vacancies on the Council that may be filled by co-option, Member were asked to consider whether Council wished to fill the two vacancies or whether they should remain vacant until the local elections in May 2021.

A Member considered it was necessary to fill the two vacancies if only to share the workload identified earlier at the meeting. There was general disagreement with this view, instead Council should wait until the local elections in May. It was proposed by Councillor Lazenby, seconded by Councillor Naik, and **RESOLVED** that the vacant positions for councillors shall remain open until the local elections in May 2021. *Councillor Srao asked that his vote be recorded against the motion.*

Following further consideration of the co-option policy it was proposed by Councillor Steneskog, seconded by Councillor Tozer, and **RESOLVED** that the co-option Policy as presented be approved and adopted.

12) Taxi Licencing Policy (8217/12/20)

Council considered whether it wished to make any written representations to Buckinghamshire Council on the draft taxi licencing policy. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council makes no comment on the draft taxi licencing policy.

13) Defective Street Lights in the Village (8218/12/20)

On 24 November, min. no. 8197/11/20 refers, the Council had approved expenditure of up to £3,500 for the urgent replacement of approximately 13 lamps with new LED bulbs in the current financial year, these lamps to be removed from the final contract to be placed on Contract Finder.

The actual number of lamps out at the time of seeking a quotation was 15 however, a further two lamps were in urgent need of repair and for which a quotation of £4,993.92 had been received. It was proposed by Councillor Bowden, seconded by Councillor Srao and **RESOLVED** that the Council approves expenditure of £4,993.92 for the replacement of 17 lamps in the current financial year, 2020/21, this number to be deducted from the overall total listed on Contract Finder

14) Additional Street Lamp in Plomer Green Lane(8219/12/20)

A request had been received for an additional streetlamp in Plomer Green Lane from Patrick Crotty of 51 Plomer Green Lane. While Members were sympathetic to the request, it was generally felt that the application should be deferred until the full replacement programme of lamps to LED lights is completed. It was **RESOLVED** that the application for an additional streetlamp in Plomer Green Lane be deferred until the full replacement programme of lamps to LED lights is completed.

15) Street Lighting in Narrow Lane(8220/12/20)

The report outlined the issues concerning the installation of a column in Narrow Lane junction with Commonsides. Although the Council's electrical contractor could have had the new electrical connections underground, the nearest supply point is an overhead main that was referred to Scottish and Southern Electric.

There were further issues relating to cutting back a tree on the boundary at 23 Commonsides. Unfortunately due to the tree issue and increased cost the new connection was never progressed as there were on-going discussions between the resident and the Council.

The situation at present is that the lantern, installation of the column and upfront payment to SSE for the first quotation is still outstanding. It was **RESOLVED** that the matter be progressed by the Clerk

16) Use of the Community Centre as a Council Office (8221/12/20)

Members considered the detailed report of the clerk which explained the ownership of the Downley Old School Community Centre and the management arrangements under the terms of a lease between the Parish Council and the Downley Old School Community Association (DOSCA) dated 25 January 2011 for a term of 30 years at a peppercorn rent.

The report outlined the terms of the lease and the Council's responsibility for maintaining the building while DOSCA is responsible for the day to day running of the building. The Council has no rights or privileges for exclusive use of any room or rooms within the building. However, weekly drop-in sessions were held in the Community Library for residents and councillors when the former clerk was available to deal with questions and inquiries, the payment of allotment rents etc. No charge is made by DOSCA, for these sessions or indeed the hire of the Main Hall for Council Meetings including storage of old Council records and documents.

It was understood that the Council contributes £3,000 per annum towards library costs although it was unclear where or when this £3,000 contribution was agreed as there is no mention of this in the lease.

Councillors proceeded to consider whether it wished to establish a permanent office within the Community Centre subject to the agreement of DOSCA and further negotiation on a fee structure. Following further debate it was **RESOLVED** that

- i) the report be noted and that the Council reviews the £3,000 contribution it makes to DOSCA towards the library;
- ii) the Council pursues the use of the Maple Room as a permanent office from 1 April 2021 on terms to be agreed by the Council in consultation with DOSCA.

Arising from the foregoing it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk produces a comprehensive asset register for the Council.

17) Park Fencing School Close Park (8222/12/20)

The Council had received complaints that the fencing around School Close Park had collapsed in many places and needed repair. In noting that the Buckinghamshire Council is responsible for the park, the Clerk reported receipt of an email from Andy Sherwood, Contract Manager, confirming his intention to replace some sections with a grass bund from material available from the Wycombe Cemetery which will be used to form a mound capped with topsoil and seeded.

A view was expressed that a grass bund could be more environmentally friendly, should prevent illegal parking and further damage to the posts and railings. However, concern was expressed that a bund would not be seen as aesthetically pleasing for the visual amenities of the neighbourhood and quite enjoyment of the residents in School Close because it would enclose an otherwise open aspect given the relatively small size of the green and close proximity of surrounding properties. It was the view of the Council that Buckinghamshire Council reconsiders its position and replaces the posts and rails in an efficient and effective manner ensuring the posts are securely concreted into the ground and **RESOLVED** that the Council's position in this matter as expressed at the meeting be communicated to the principal authority.

18) The Community Library (8223/12/20)

The report gave details of work carried out by Colin Clarke Construction Limited to the lobby and drain in the total sum of £5,095 plus VAT. While acknowledging the Council's obligations under the terms of the lease for external works, Members wished to better understand the process by which an order was placed without apparent reference to the Council.

Since part of the invoice appears to concern internal works, i.e. repair and decoration to the Lobby and making good the window and door frame in the sum of £720 plus VAT, Members considered this was the tenant's responsibility and as such DOSCA should pay for these works. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk seeks further clarification from DOSCA on the matters expressed by Members at the meeting.

19) Additional Defibrillator for the Village (8224/12/20)

The report gave details of a charitable organisation, London Hearts, that works with parish councils in the supply and procurement of defibrillators and cabinets. They offer a small grant of £200 towards the cost of supplying a CPR/Defibrillator along with free training for the community. The usual cost for an SP1 IPAD Defibrillator is £1195.00 however considering the £200 donation, the required minimum donation for the Defibrillator alone is currently £995.00.

Council understood there were currently 2 defibrillators in the village at the Community Centre, School Close and at the Cricket pavilion at Plomer Green Lane. Members discussed two location, outside the Co-op in Plomer Green Lane and outside Tesco at Cross Court, close to the ATM and Pharmacy. Council thought an additional defibrillator would be positively received by the community and agreed that the Cross Court location was the better of the two given the greater footfall. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council procures an additional defibrillator from London Hearts and seeks a further grant from Tesco towards the overall cost of £995.

20) Payment of Invoices (8225/12/20)

The Council received and approved the schedule of payments, as set out hereunder

Ch No.	Payee	Amount	Description of goods/services
1920	M Lazenby	£4.80	Printing costs
1921	V Naik	£14.39	Zoom meeting monthly set up charge
1922	cancelled cheque		
1923	KAD Garden service	£2,987.00	Grass cutting /Leaf clearance
1924	James Glasgow	£80.83	Padlock for Allotment gate
1925	Mike Dean DCAG Expense	£140.00	Printing of Leaflets Covid 19
1926	Fourlegswood	£1,368.00	Litter picking January - Sept
1927	M Kennedy	£2,162.63	Professional services for November £1,666.20
			Batteries for TSID Cameras £122.15
			Office 365 £59.99
			Printer Cartridge £27.99
			Mobile Phone £139.95
			Sim Card – monthly charge £2.47
			Annual Zoom Pro subscription £143.88
	TOTAL	£6,757.65	

The Chairman indicated that cheque number 1926 payable to Fourlegswood in the sum of £1,368 for litter picking will need to be re-issued because the company had incorrectly submitted their invoice.

21) Exclusion of the Public and the Press (8226/12/20)

It was **RESOLVED** that the Public and the Press be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 as matters which are considered to be private and confidential were about to be discussed.

22) Appointment of a Staffing/HR Committee (8227/12/20)

Council considered the appoint a Staffing/HR Committee and the membership thereof. Having regard to the fact that all complaints to the Buckinghamshire Council’s Monitoring

Officers have now been withdrawn and following a detailed debate it was **RESOLVED** that the membership of the Staffing/HR Committee for the remainder of the local government year shall be Councillors Lazenby, Lenard, Monroe-West and Steneskog.

23) Readmission of the Public and the Press (8228/12/20)

It was **RESOLVED** that the Public and the Press be readmitted to the Meeting.

24) Date and Place of next meeting (8229/12/20)

It was agreed that the next ordinary meeting of Council shall be held by zoom on Tuesday 12 January 2021 at 7pm

25) Closure of the Meeting (8230/12/20)

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.00pm, thanked everyone for attending and extended seasonal greetings to all.

Chairman_____

Date_____

Downley Parish Council Financial Budget 2021/22

	Actual Budget 2020/21	Actual to date at Month 8	Anticipated for 2020/21	Proposed Budget 2021/2022	Remarks
<u>Clerks Salary & expenses</u>					
Salary inc tax and NI	£18,924.00	£13,085.17	£13,085.17		Estimated cost of clerk inc. DPC employers' costs for a year would be £31k
Employers Tax & NI	£5,100.00	£4,573.86	£4,573.86	£0.00	
Professional Fees		£1,666.20	£8,331.00	£33,750.00	£25phx45wksx30hrpw
Total	<u>£24,024.00</u>	<u>£19,325.23</u>	<u>£25,990.03</u>	<u>£33,750.00</u>	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Admin & General</u>					
Election costs	£580.00		£0.00	£600.00	
Parish IT costs	£500.00	£592.18	£600.00	£2,000.00	Clr Naik to investigate Cloud storage
Rent of office	£600.00	£350.00	£350.00	£3,000.00	fee to DOSCA for use of Maple Room
Phone, Printer & Scanner	£1,420.00	£486.89	£1,400.00	£1,400.00	Plus net + BT
Data protection- ICO	£50.00		£40.00	£40.00	
Training Courses	£500.00	£118.05	£200.00	£1,000.00	new councillor courses
Litter picker / Handy Man Salary	£3,000.00	£1,450.96	£2,901.92	£3,000.00	
Audit Fee	£1,000.00	£834.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	
Insurance	£2,600.00	£2,015.90	£2,015.00	£2,500.00	
Hire of Hall	£300.00		£0.00	£300.00	for council meetings memorial hall hire
Stationary / Office Supplies	£400.00	£1,080.96	£1,081.00	£400.00	
Wreaths for Remembrance Day	£80.00	£0.00	£16.00	£50.00	
Chairman's Expenses	£150.00	£11.25	£20.00	£150.00	
Annual Subscriptions	£1,400.00	£779.25	£780.00	£800.00	BMKALC
Library Costs	£3,500.00	£181.14	£4,556.14	£3,500.00	Additional invoice Colin Clarke
Health and Safety at DOSCA	£0.00		£0.00	£500.00	
Building Maintenance DOSCA	£5,000.00	£196.30	£5,291	£2,500.00	
Community Board contributions	£15,000.00	£3,480.06	£6,558.91	£10,000.00	includes junction markings
Road Safety	£1,500.00	£101.79	£102.00	£500.00	
Total	<u>£37,580.00</u>	<u>£11,678.73</u>	<u>£26,912.27</u>	<u>£33,240.00</u>	-

Open Spaces & Grass Cutting					
Grass Cutting + Ground maintenance	£23,000.00	£21,786.35	£25,551.20	£28,000.00	Adjusted for costs Nov -Mar 2021
Dog waste bin emptying	£3,400.00	£2,106.00	£3,186.00	£2,340.00	
Manning's field rent	£750.00	£718.75	£718.75	£750.00	
Pond maintenance	£2,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,500.00	(Incl. reinstatement & beautification)
Tree Maintenance	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	
Overhaul Parish Notice Boards				£3,000.00	5x £500 plus installation costs of £500
Total	£31,150.00	£26,111.10	£30,955.95	£38,090.00	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Grants & Contributions					
Downley Day marquee hire	£3,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3,000.00	
All other local grants	£3,000.00	£2,500.00	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	
Total	£6,000.00	£2,500.00	£3,000.00	£6,000.00	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Public Lighting					
Maintenance	£2,500.00	£1,112.40	£1,500.00	£2,000.00	
Energy	£2,500.00	£1,401.59	£2,500.00	£1,500.00	
Repairs	£0.00	£1,080.00	£1,080.00	£0.00	
LED Replacement	£45,000.00		£5,000.00	£0.00	
Total	£50,000.00	£3,593.99	£10,080.00	£3,500.00	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Allotments					
Water, maintenance, and subsidy	£1,500.00	£782.51	£1,565.02	£1,500.00	
Allotment Rent	£450.00		£450.00	£450.00	
Total	£1,950.00	£782.51	£2,015.02	£1,950.00	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure requirement for year	£150,704.00	£63,991.56	£98,953.27	£116,530.00	
Income 2021-2022					
Allotment rents	£1,300.00			£1,300.00	
VAT refund	£3,700.00			£3,700.00	
Devolution funding	£5,000.00			£5,000.00	
Total Budgeted income for year 2020/21	£10,000.00			£10,000.00	
Budget requirement Expenditure minus income for year ahead	£140,704.00			£106,530.00	

less use of reserves for projects				
LED Lights	£35,000.00			
use of balances	£1,080.00		£6,530.00	
Actual Precept levied in the year	£104,624.00		£100,000.00	for council adoption and approval
Balance carried forward 1 April 2020			£171,064.38	Bank Balance 1st April 2020
add precept 2020/21			£104,624.00	
add estimated income for the year 2020/21			£10,000.00	
less estimated expenditure for the year 20/21			-£98,953.27	
Estimated Cash at Bank 31st March 2021			£186,735.11	
less ring-fenced expenditure to be applied in 2021/22				
Lighting project			£40,000.00	
Community Board Projects			£10,000.00	
Total ring fenced			£50,000.00	
Use of balances to reduce precept			-£6,530.00	
Overall Reserves (represented by Bank Balance) c/f			£114,534.38	

Progress Report to Council 12 January 2021

Minute Reference	Subject	Progress
8165/10/20	Streetlight replacement project	Scheme uploaded to the Government's Contract Finder 22.12.2020. Closing date 1.3.2021.
8167/10/20	Junction Protection Road Markings (Downley Element)	Email sent to Community Board on 23.1.2020 confirming DPC will contribute £3,078.85 towards this scheme as its matched funding contribution.
7973/07/19 7997/09/19 Finance Committee 30.7.19	The Downley Controlled Crossing Feasibility Study	Council resolved to apply for LAF funding for a survey to determine if there was a suitable location for a pedestrian crossing in the Village. Proposed sites would be – The junction of Plomer Green Lane/Plomer Green Avenue and the junction of Plomer Green Lane/Downley High Street. Agenda Item
8196/11/20	Policy Review	Capability, Disciplinary, and Grievance Policies presented to Staffing/HR Committee for recommendation to Council for adoption. Agenda Item. On-going
8197/11/20 8218/12/20	Defective Street Lights in the Village	Council approved expenditure of £4,993.92 for the replacement of 17 lamps in the current financial year, 2020/21, this number to be deducted from the overall total listed on Contract Finder. Order placed with Sparkx on 16.12.20
8220/12/20	Street Lighting in Narrow Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree on the boundary at 23 Commons side to be cut back. – letter to resident 5.1.2021 requesting trees are cut back • increased cost the new connection not progressed as there were on-going discussions between the resident and the Council. • Installation of the column and upfront payment to SSE for the first quotation still outstanding Clerk to progress. On- going
8221/12/20	Use of the Community Centre as a Council Office	Council to review the £3,000 contribution it makes to DOSCA towards the library, and to pursue the use of the Maple Room as a permanent office from 1 April 2021 on terms to be agreed by the Council in consultation with DOSCA. DOSCA has no objection and will look at favourable terms when the need arises next year, and details can be agreed. On-going
8222/12/20	Park Fencing School Close Park	Buckinghamshire Council had intended to construct a grassed bund around site. Council's objections conveyed. Agenda Item
8223/12/20	The Community Library	<i>Clerk to seek further clarification from DOSCA on the works undertaken by Colin Clarke Construction</i>

	The Community Library (cont.)	<p>Response from David Worsdall DOCRA: I reported this issue to our September meeting. It had arisen after we had started the project and was not foreseen. The Clerk said this would be a DPC expense as it related to the building and outside groundwork. I asked our contractor to quote for this and sent the quote to the clerk on 21st October. The Contractor had men and equipment on site during this time and I asked them to proceed and advised the clerk. It would have been difficult to bring in any other contractor at this point.</p> <p>The charge for the rear lobby was an agreed DPC item at the very outset of this project in 2018. The work was primarily external and consisted of repairing the rear window frame which had been rotting away for some years.</p> <p>Given the response and the Council's prior approval that the work was a DPC expense, payment has now been made.</p>
8224/12/20	Additional Defibrillator for the Village	<p>Council to procure an additional defibrillator from London Hearts and seeks a further grant from Tesco towards the overall cost of £995.</p> <p>Spoke with the Store Manager for Tesco Express on 5.1.2021, they already have a defibrillator in store and staff are trained in its use.</p> <p>I also telephoned the Co-op; they would be interested but would fund and pay for the unit themselves. It is something the store could consider although the Manager informs me that the Residential Care Home nearby in Langley Close would like one on the outside of their premises. I spoke with the Manager and was informed they are currently raising funds for one following a resident who had a heart attack last year. The Paramedics took 18 minutes to respond meanwhile staff made use of the unit at the Community Centre. Sadly, the resident died. Suggest Council considers this or alternative locations within the village</p>

Mike Kennedy
 Locum Clerk
 6.1.2021

Clerk's Report to Council 12 January 2021

Agenda Item No. 12 The Downley Controlled Crossing Feasibility Study

At a meeting of the Downley Parish Council held on 7 July 2019, the minutes record the following decision: **LAF proposals for 2019 applications (7973/07/19) *The Council resolved to apply for LAF funding for a survey to determine if there was a suitable location for a pedestrian crossing in the Village. Proposed sites would be –***

The junction of Plomer Green Lane/Plomer Green Avenue and the junction of Plomer Green Lane/Downley High Street.

A subsequent meeting of the Finance Committee held on 30 July 2019, Min. No. 6 records the Council's priorities for 2019/20 and forecast spend as: **6. Priorities for 2019-20 and forecast spend- Parish Plan projects and other**

- ***Streetlight replacement – Need to budget approx. £50k***
- ***LAF –10k Survey covered if successful with grants – any funds available to reserve in case feasibility study shows potential crossing***

A later meeting of Council held on 10th September 2019 reaffirms the Council's application for LAF funding for this project and records: **LAF proposals for 2019 applications (7997/09/19) *The Council have applied for LAF funding for a survey to determine if there is a suitable location for a pedestrian crossing in the Village. Proposed sites would be – the junction of Plomer Green Lane/Plomer Green Avenue and the junction of Plomer Green Lane/Downley High Street.***

The North West Chilterns Community Board, (formally the LAF) has agreed to allocate £4,855.22 towards the scheme. This allocation is conditional on Downley Parish Council providing match funding.

As outlined in the Community Board Funding report dated 30 September 2020, Downley Parish Council is also to provide £4,855.22 towards the cost of the scheme.

For the Community Board to proceed with placing the order for works to be undertaken, confirmation that Downley Parish Council agrees to pay the match funding amount of £4,855.22 is required by 18 January 2021. If the match funding is not agreed or if confirmation is not received within the time frame specified, the works order will not be placed, and the funding may be reallocated to an alternative project.

Buckinghamshire Council will invoice Downley Parish Council upon completion of the scheme or at the end of the next financial year (March 2022) whichever is sooner.

Members will be aware that even if the feasibility study demonstrates that a crossing is desirable at this road junction, funding for the crossing of c£30,000 will be required before the scheme proceeds.

Recommendation: The Council is asked to consider whether it wishes to pay £4,855.22 as our share of the costs towards the Crossing Feasibility Study.

Agenda Item 13 Park Fencing School Close Park

At your last meeting, (8222/11/20), I reported that the perimeter post and rail fencing surrounding School Close Park had collapsed in many places and needed repair.



The matter was reported to Andy Sherwood, Contract Manager, Buckinghamshire Council because they are responsible for the park. In this response, I reported his intention to replace some sections with a grass bund from material available from the Wycombe Cemetery which will be used to form a mound capped with topsoil and seeded.

Members were concerned that a bund would not be aesthetically pleasing for the visual amenities of the neighbourhood and quite enjoyment of the residents in School Close because it would enclose an otherwise open aspect given the relatively small size of the green and close proximity of surrounding properties.

The Council's position in this matter was communicated to the principal authority and in his response, Mr Sherwood states: ***I will cancel my work – but I am not sure when or what will be done going forward.***

The open space I manage inside the fence and dates back to when we were Wycombe District Council, we excluded the knee rail from our adoption from the developer and I believed it was included in the transfer to Bucks County Transport at the time – they have told me they have not adopted it. I don't currently have the funds to replace the knee rail with the same.

The Council is invited to consider whether it wishes to pay for the cost of a new post and rail arrangement in view of Buckinghamshire Council's reluctance to do so.

Recommendation: The Council's further consideration and instructions are requested.

Agenda Item 14 Report of the External Auditor on the Accounts for 2019/20

The External Auditor PFK Littlejohn LLP has completed their review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for Downley Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2020. The external auditor makes the following comments. The Council's suggested response is added.

Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), **in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.**

The smaller authority has disclosed that it made proper provision during the year 2019/20 for the exercise of public rights, by answering 'Yes' to Section 1, Assertion 4. However, as was reported last year, we are aware that it failed to do this and therefore should have answered 'No' to this assertion. **COUNCIL'S SUGGESTED RESPONSE: Adequate provision will be made for the 2020/21 Accounts in the publication on Notice Boards and on the Website of the Public Rights to inspect the Council's Financial Statements during the period when the accounts are available for public inspection**

It has also disclosed that it took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit, by answering 'Yes' to Section 1, Assertion 7, which, on the basis of the above, is not correct.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority: We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as amended by SI 2020/404 the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2020/21 for the exercise of public rights, since the approval date was after the start of the period for the exercise of public rights. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2021/22. **COUNCIL'S SUGGESTED RESPONSE: Noted**

The smaller authority has not provided: • a year end bank reconciliation in support of Section 2 • an adequate explanation for the variance between the prior and current year values in Box 6 of Section 2 **COUNCIL'S SUGGESTED RESPONSE: Noted, and bank reconciliation statement and explanation of variances will be made on the 2020/21 return**

Recommendation: That the report be noted along with the suggested responses set out in the Auditor's report

Mike Kennedy
Locum Clerk
6 January 2021