

# DARENTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes from the Remote Council Meeting  
Held on Wednesday 16 September 2020

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## *COVID-19 2020 Regulations Statement*

*The COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic and the unprecedented Government measures in response to the crisis (e.g. prohibitions on gatherings, social distancing, self-isolation and shielding of those deemed to be the most vulnerable) have meant that the requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person with all members present in one place cannot currently be met. The statutory requirements for meetings are mainly contained in the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act") and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 ("the 1960 Act").*

*In recognition of the difficulties of holding and attending meetings, the Government included s.78 in the Coronavirus Act 2020 and provided the Secretary of State the power to make Regulations for the provision of holding alternative format meetings.*

*As such, this Meeting was held under agreed terms, being to conduct the Council business remotely by Zoom with decisions recorded by the Clerk.*

**Councillors' participating in virtual meeting:** I Gutteridge (Chairman), W Cook, T Hicks, M Mahoney, S-J Mahoney, D Risely, Y Seymour and N Weavis (Vice Chairman).

**Public present:** There were two members of the public observing who joined after commencement of the remote meeting due to technical issues regarding registration.

### **41/09/20: TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR NON-PARTICIPATION**

No apologies for non-participation were received.

### **42/09/20: TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **43/09/20: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 JULY 2020**

The Minutes of the virtual Meeting held on Wednesday 15 July 2020 were approved and adopted as a true record by Members present except for Councillor Cook (see Agenda Item 44/09/20).

### **44/09/20: MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Councillor Cook wished to note that he did not agree with the Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy adopted at the July meeting of the Council.

Councillor Cook referred to a meeting with Kent County Council regarding the village green outside The Ship on Green Street Green Road. The Clerk confirmed that, as instructed, a Land Registry Search had been carried out. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the Senior Project Manager for KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste team to discuss the area. The Clerk had contacted the Senior Project Manager on 4 August 2020 and was still awaiting a reply regarding a potential meeting.

### **45/09/20: URGENT MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman had received an urgent item following publication of the agenda: Councillor Hicks pointed out that the inlaid wooden cross at the Memorial needs attention in terms of sanding and stain/varnish before any potential Remembrance commemorations take place. Members gave approval for the works.

The Clerk would contact St Margaret's Church to make enquiries regarding the Remembrance Day Service, considering any provisions in place for social gatherings concerning COVID-19 restrictions.

***At this juncture the Chairman invited the pre-submitted question from Mr D Bass who was observing the meeting as a member of the public:***

*"The greens in my opinion have been well looked after this summer but the pavements alongside have let the village down by the amount of weeds growing on the pavement. I know KCC spray the weeds twice a year but the problem would not exist if Dartford BC were to regularly sweep the pavement of the dirt in which the weeds grow. DBC's contractors have the vehicles to sweep pavements could they not be deployed to look after our village? What is the Parish Council's opinion? I know this a repeat question from me but the problem seems to be getting worse every year".*

*The Clerk informed the meeting that she had sent Mr Bass details of the Borough's Street Care Cleaning and Road Sweeping Schedule. Members concluded that the Clerk contact the appropriate department at Dartford Borough Council to enquire if the Darenth Schedule could either be upgraded or, a more substantial weeding method introduced.*

**46/09/20: FINANCE**

**(a) To note the findings of the Internal Audit Report for the year 2019-20**

Members considered, noted, and agreed to make the necessary amendments to the Financial Regulations as recommended.

**(b) To consider closure of Co-operative Bank Account**

Members approved closure of the account with existing funds being transferred to the NatWest Current Account with immediate effect.

**(c) To consider Membership to the Kent Association of Local Councils**

Members approved affiliation to the Kent Association of Local Councils under the terms presented, being a six-month period of membership from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021 at a cost of £507.06 with a membership review at the meeting of the Council in February 2021.

**(d) To note interest rate reduction to the Cambridge & Counties Savings Account together with an update in Terms and Conditions**

Members noted the interest rate reduction as presented.

**(e) To receive Financial Statements as at 30 July & 31 August 2020**

Members approved Financial Statements as presented.

**47/09/20: COUNCIL POLICIES**

**(a) To consider and adopt Council Data Protection Policy**

Members considered and approved adoption of the Data Protection Policy as presented and confirmed this would assist in both subjective and objective decision-making of the Parish Council.

**(b) To consider and adopt Council Complaints Policy**

Members considered and adopted the Complaints Policy as presented and confirmed this would assist in both subjective and objective decision-making of the Parish Council.

**48/09/20: PLANNING**

**(a) To consider new applications received during August summer recess**

Members noted comments submitted to the Local Planning Authority during the August recess.

**(b) To note recent decisions and appeals made by the Planning Authority**

Recent decisions and appeals were noted.

**(c) To consider new applications/recent decisions received after agenda production**

No new applications or recent decisions had been received.

**49/09/20: CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

The Chairman had nothing to report that had not been covered elsewhere in the agenda.

The Chairman resolved to bring forward agenda item **54/09/20: DATE OF NEXT MEETING** so that any public and press leaving, received notice of the date, confirmed as Wednesday 21 October 2020.

**50/09/20: EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To consider the **exclusion** of the **press and public** for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

The two members of the public left the meeting.

**51/09/20: UPDATE REGARDING NORTH KENT DISABLED FOUNDATION**

The update provided was noted by Members with a further review required at the next meeting of the Council.

**52/09/20: PARISH CLERK REVIEW**

Details regarding the Parish Clerk Review were approved as presented.

**53/09/20: TO REVIEW GREENS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AT WALLER PARK PAVILION**

Following review of the Greens Maintenance Contract at Waller Park Pavilion, Members undertook to consider matters further.