

MINUTES of a Meeting held at Dunton Green Pavilion on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30pm

00. PUBLIC SESSION

None.

01. PRESENT / APOLOGIES

Present: Cllrs. Lockey, Hersey, Parker, Copeland, Forster-Pearce, Gomes-Chodynieski, Norton, Carrol

Apologies: Cllrs. England, Lapham

In attendance: Tracy Godden (Clerk), Wendy Jackson (Bookings & Facilities Assistant)

In the absence of the Parish Council Chair, Cllr. Lockey chaired the meeting.

02. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

It was Resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 3rd December 2024 as a true and accurate record.

ACTION: CLERK

It was Resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th December 2024 as a true and accurate record.

ACTION: CLERK

03. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

04. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

None.

05. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

5.1 To receive updates from Kent County and Sevenoaks District Councillors

No updates available.

5.2 Learning Opportunities (Cllr & Staff): to consider what is available, booked or undertaken

The Clerk will attend the SLCC Practitioners' Conference at the end of January. Details of KALC training courses will be shared with Councillors.

ACTION: CLERK

5.3 English Devolution White Paper: to note publication of the document in December 2024 and consider any summary information about the proposals, if available

It was noted that the White Paper lacks detail on how ultra local communities will be empowered and how they will be engaged. There are generalities about parish and town councils, but no commitments to structural changes to devolve specific responsibilities, or mechanisms to empower local communities that aren't currently parished. It was also noted that the White Paper had invited councils to apply for priority status and that Kent County Council and Medway Council have formally asked the government to be included its Devolution Priority Programme (DPP). Essentially this supports a proposal for devolution with a combined authority for Kent and Medway, including an elected mayor and comes after significant engagement with district and borough council leaders. The Clerk will include regular updates on the progress of these proposals on agendas going forward.

ACTION: CLERK

5.4 To consider the 'Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England' Government consultation (deadline 26th February 2025)

Members indicated that there should be support for proposals to strengthen the framework. The Clerk will forward details to members and add this to the agenda for the February meeting to allow time to review the information.

ACTION: CLERK/ALL

06. DGPC REPRESENTATIVES – EXTERNAL BODIES

6.1 To consider feedback from any meetings attended by DGPC's representatives on external bodies and to note any meetings due to be attended

No meetings attended.

07. CLERK'S REPORT

Car Park Bollard Damage

Further to the report at the December meeting, the reinstatement of the damaged blue bollard and the lower car park barrier post was completed. A £200 contribution to cover the cost of the bollard reinstatement was made by the person who knocked over the bollard.

Community Infrastructure Levy Report 2023-24

The CIL Report for the 2023-24 was completed and published on DGPC's website in December. SDC have been notified (as is required).

Castle Water

Castle Water discovered an inconsistency in tariffs applied to some customers' previous bills. A correction has been made and bills recalculated which has resulted in the reduction of bills over the last few years. DGPC will be rebilled as soon as the small amount of credit has been used.

Chevening Estate – Parkland Enhancement Scheme

The enabling works have been completed which means that the temporary access road has been created to allow material to be brought onto site to build up levels so that a new access off the public road can be created. Materials must be certified at source and the first site has been identified, with materials due to start arriving in mid-January.

Dunton Green Closed Churchyard

The Countryside & Clean and Green Manager at SDC has confirmed that some work is being done at the churchyard, acknowledging that the condition of some graves is unacceptable. The Clerk will ask Cllr. Bayley to monitor progress.

Meeting Dates 2025

To confirm, the remaining meeting dates for 2025 for Full Council will be as follows:

11th February, 11th March, 8th April, 13th May, 10th June, 8th July, no August meeting, 9th September, 14th October, 11th November, 9th December

These are all the second Tuesday of the month.

08. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SAFETY

8.1 Anti-Social Behaviour – to note or consider any issues brought to the attention of the Parish Council and to note the latest Police newsletter

There was no Police newsletter available for the meeting. The Clerk advised that there had been reports of crime via the e-watch newsletter (multiple thefts from vehicles, thefts from outbuildings, thefts of parcels).

8.2 DGPC funded Community Activities: to note any updates regarding youth and senior activities

Nothing to report.

09. FINANCE

9.1 To receive a Bank Reconciliation (to the end of the previous month) and to acknowledge balance statement values have been verified.

The Clerk presented a bank reconciliation (31st December), and it was Resolved that it be accepted. Two Parish Councillors have verified all the bank balances stated on the reconciliations against the bank / investment statements.

BANK RECONCILIATION TO END 31/12/2024

Description	Value £	Value £
Cash in hand 01/04/2024		£212,640.96
ADD Receipts 01/04/2024 – 31/12/2024		£188,950.41
TOTAL		£401,591.37
SUBTRACT		
Payments 01/04/2024 – 31/12/2024		£195,513.60
A: Cash in hand 31/12/2024		£206,077.77
Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
NatWest Reserve 31/12/2024	£70,654.45	
NatWest Current 31/12/2024	£9,016.20	
CCLA Public Sector Deposit 31/12/2024	£86,407.12	
CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund 01/04/2024	£40,000.00	
TOTAL CASH IN HAND per Bank Statements		£206,077.77
Less unrepresented cheques		£0.00
TOTAL		£206,077.77
Plus unrepresented receipts		£0.00
B: Adjusted Bank Balance		£206,077.77

9.2 Precept: to discuss and agree the Precept level for 2025-26 (the Budget for 2025-26 having been approved at the December 2024 meeting)

It was Resolved that the Precept for 2025-26 be £139,500. This is the same as for 2024-25 and will result in a reduction in the Band D Levy, equivalent to a saving of £0.29 for the year.

ACTION: CLERK

9.3 To note information from CCLA about the Local Authorities Property Fund and the implementation of the FCA's Sustainability Disclosure Requirements

Noted.

9.4 To note a customer update re the Network Charging Compensation Scheme and the impact on billing for DGPC

It was noted that there will be an increase in relation to DGPC's pavilion electricity bills but that this increase is forecast to be less than £7 per annum.

10. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

10.1 It was Resolved to note expenditure for December 2024 and January 2025 to date and to approve items for payment in January. A list of cheques, bank transfers and direct debits (with supporting documentation) was provided and signed off by two councillors.

Payment Type	Description	Net £	VAT £	Gross £
December 2024 Payments (reported at December meeting in <i>italics</i>)				
DEBIT CARD	<i>Adobe Systems Software</i>	<i>16.64</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>16.64</i>
	<i>Adobe Acrobat monthly subscription</i>			
DD	<i>Heliocentrix Ltd</i>	<i>77.00</i>	<i>15.40</i>	<i>92.40</i>
	<i>IT Support</i>			

DD	Hiscox Annual Insurance Premium Monthly Payment	463.16	0.00	463.16
DEBIT CARD	Amazon Office supplies	26.30	5.27	31.57
BANK TFR	SPY Alarms Fire Alarm Panel paper roll	8.00	1.60	9.60
BANK TFRS	Staff Salaries & Expenses December 2024	3242.20	0.00	3242.20
BANK TFR	HMRC QTR 3 PAYE Tax & NI 2024-25	3411.74	0.00	3411.74
DD	People's Partnership Pension payment December 24	310.37	0.00	310.37
BANK TFR	Forzar Mazars LLP External Audit Costs (AGAR 2023-24)	630.00	126.00	756.00
BANK TFR	Netwise Annual Domain subscription / Website Hosting	390.00	78.00	468.00
BANK TFR	Chris Knott Insurance Allotment Public Liability Insurance	92.80	0.00	92.80
BANK TFR	NSALG Ltd Subscription (Allotments)	30.00	0.00	30.00
BANK TFR	Heliocentrix Ltd Microsoft 365 Licences	89.40	17.88	107.28
BANK TFR	Heliocentrix Ltd Microsoft 365 Set Up (Email & Files) – One Off payment	420.75	84.15	504.90
DD	Smartest Energy Pavilion Gas Supply Nov 24	920.37	184.07	1104.44
DEBIT CARD	Jackery Ltd Portable Power Station (for events)	665.83	133.17	799.00
DD	SAGE UK Ltd Payroll software	10.00	2.00	12.00
BANK TFR	Safeplay Playground Services Ltd Quarterly Inspection & Report	153.00	30.60	183.60
DD	Npower (was E.ON) Unmetered Electricity Supply November 2024	83.59	4.18	87.77
DD	EE Mobile phone contract	11.12	2.22	13.34
DEBIT CARD	Amazon 4 x 5l insulated hot drink jugs	121.60	24.34	145.94
DEBIT CARD	Amazon Disposable cups	27.99	5.61	53.60
BANK TFR	Tatsfield Aquatics Ltd Reinstatement of car park bollard and barrier post	396.00	79.20	475.20
BANK TFR	Gala Lights Ltd Hire, installation & removal of Christmas lights	9897.00	1979.40	11876.40
BANK TFR	Mr P Lockey Refreshments for Christmas Singalong	77.95	0.00	77.95
DD	Lebara Mobile phone contract	4.12	0.83	4.95
DD	CPRE Annual Subscription	36.00	0.00	36.00
DD	Smartest Energy Pavilion Electricity Supply (Budget Plan payment)	724.17	144.83	869.00
DD	Heliocentrix Ltd IT Support (monthly)	77.00	15.40	92.40
DD	HugoFox Ltd	19.99	4.00	23.99

	Website (duntongreenpc.org.uk)			
DD	Onecom Ltd Broadband and Telephone at Pavilion	117.20	23.44	140.64
January 2025 Payments to date				
DEBIT CARD	Adobe Systems Software Adobe Acrobat monthly subscription	16.64	0.00	16.64
DD	Hiscox Annual Insurance Premium Monthly Payment	463.16	0.00	463.16
BANK TFR	KCC (KCS) Photocopier leasing	82.52	16.50	99.02
BANK TFR	Bishops Services Ltd (Bibby Factors Northwest Ltd) Pavilion cleaning, jet washing December 2024	930.39	186.08	1116.47
BANK TFR	SDC Cleaning Rec & Mill Rd/Dog Bin Emptying (Oct-Dec 2024)	425.10	85.02	510.12
BANK TFR	Streetlights Column repair	97.75	19.55	117.30
BANK TFR	Streetlights Column repair	146.25	29.25	175.50
DEBIT CARD	Amazon Office supplies	76.62	15.33	91.95
DEBIT CARD	Tesco Postage stamps	47.20	0.00	47.20
BANK TFR	SLCC Enterprises Ltd Clerk's Annual Membership Subscription	300.00	0.00	300.00
BANK TFRS	Staff Salaries & Expenses January 2025	3116.19	0.00	3116.19
BANK TFR	rCOH Ltd ONH Planning for Good re Visioning Exercise	4775.00	955.00	5730.00
DEBIT CARD	Adobe Systems Software Adobe Acrobat monthly subscription	16.64	0.00	16.64
January Payments (expected but unconfirmed/not yet paid as at 14/01/25)				
DD	People's Partnership Pension payment January 2025	369.32	0.00	369.32
DD	SAGE UK Ltd Payroll software	10.00	2.00	12.00
DD	Npower (was E.ON) Unmetered Electricity Supply Dec 2024	77.23	3.86	81.09
DD	Heliocentrix Ltd IT Support	77.00	15.40	92.40
DD	Heliocentrix Ltd Microsoft 365 Licences	89.40	17.88	107.28
DD	EE Mobile phone contract	11.12	2.22	13.34
DD	Lebara Mobile phone contract	4.12	0.83	4.95
DD	Hugofox Ltd Website (duntongreenpc.org.uk)	19.99	4.00	23.99

ACTION: CLERK

11. DUNTON GREEN FOR THE FUTURE

11.1 ONH Planning for Good Vision Report: to consider the report compiled following the November 2024 workshop session and agree next steps

Members considered the comprehensive report, and the consensus was that DGPC should be proactively involved in any discussions and proposals for development in the village, to ensure that the best interests of the community are

central and that any development has a positive impact on the village. ONH Planning for Good have suggested a follow up online session to help facilitate community and stakeholder engagement. Members would like this to take place prior to the March DGPC meeting and the Clerk was asked to make arrangements with ONH.

ACTION: CLERK

11.2 RACE (Rural and Community Housing Enabling) – Dunton Green Housing Needs Survey: to consider and note the results of the 2024 survey

There had been a total of 13 responses to the November 2024 survey and the result of the consultation is that there is a need for eleven affordable homes in Dunton Green. This information should factor into any future developments or neighbourhood planning.

12. PLANNING

12.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): to note summary and comments provided by ONH Planning for Good

Information was noted and members noted that there will be impacts in relation to SDC's Local Plan.

12.2 CURRENT PLANNING To consider the applications and to resolve to agree recommendations.

12.2a AMENDED Planning Application 24/02271/FUL

Location: Technical Treatments Ltd Station Works Rye Lane

Development: Alterations to and change of use of existing building for mixed uses comprising auditorium/event space and leisure, educational, community, place of worship, office and coffee shop uses (sui generis use). Including: upgrade of external building elevations (materials, fenestration, and office canopy). Associated parking and landscaping. Cladding to existing UKPN building.

Recommendation: Objection.

The reports that Brass Architecture have provided in response to the original planning consultation responses and highways responses do nothing to change the application and do not address the very genuine concerns that have been raised.

The Parish Council questions the purpose of the document 'Consultation Matters' and notes that some of its content is inaccurate. There is no mention of the Parish Council in Table 1. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee and submitted its response of OBJECTION on 5th November. Why is the Parish Council not included in this list? This document then sets out all the public support submissions and attempts to use these as a means to reiterate its claims and use this to promote justification for permission being granted. The Parish Council questions the credibility of many of these responses and the motive for submitting them. Many are clearly submitted by people who do not live in Dunton Green and have no real knowledge of the village. Are they responses from attendees of the Christian Revival Church who are the developers of this site? If so, the Parish Council would argue that many of these indications of support should be ignored as they are deliberately prejudicial in nature. Indications that some supporters have no real knowledge of village or the facilities available are:

- references to Dunton Green as a town;
- claims that the 'area' needs a soft play facility (there was one in the village until it closed in December 2024 due to lack of public support);
- claims that people drive through the area regularly (this area of Dunton Green is not what would be considered a suitable route for 'driving through' the village and these claims are therefore questionable);
- a claim that a place of worship is needed in Dunton Green (the Village Hall is used by two different religious organisations as a place of worship already; three churches that were in the village have all closed due to lack of support from the village);
- claims that there aren't places for the community to connect (there are three halls, social club, 3 public houses and a school);
- the claim that there is a lack of coffee shops (Bojangles is in the village, Costa and Malabar are a short walk into Riverhead and Eatnness is located at Turvins Farm just outside the northern end of the village).

Matter 8/Support at least is honest in confirming that the comment is not made by a local.

Matter 24 purports to be a response to the Parish Council's objections. It is not. What Brass Architecture claims to be the Parish Council's objections are simply not what the Parish Council submitted as its response and so this is a huge

editing error. Given that this is a response to an entirely different objection, how can the document be trusted to be an accurate reflection of what has been submitted in support or objection? This section (24/Objection) must be removed from the document, or the information needs to be replaced with Brass Architecture's response to the objection that the Parish Council submitted. This also then impacts Brass Architecture's assertion that one of the other responses (matter 38/Objection) is a direct copy of DGPC's response. It is not.

The developer shirks any responsibility for increased traffic volumes which will most certainly be the result of the site being redeveloped. Can they guarantee that the congregation coming to the CRC service(s) will come on foot, by cycle or train and only very minimal transport by car? This seems highly unlikely given the number of cars used to attend their services on a Sunday at Trinity School. What is going to change if members of that congregation live out of the immediate area of Dunton Green?

Whilst the applicant claims that they would be 'happy to agree robust planning conditions relating to parking, operational densities (user numbers), operational hours and noise mitigation' is small comfort. There are already issues with parking outside of the site and noise in relation to the gym (for which there has been no change of use planning application and so there is a question as to the legitimacy of this use at this time). How will planning conditions be enforced? What is to stop the applicant applying in the future for changes to its permissions and to the conditions? The Parish Council wants to prevent issues developing at all and the lack of realistic parking provision is a serious concern.

Whilst redevelopment of the site is to be welcomed, a proposal on this scale is out of keeping for a small village that already has many amenities for its community.

12.3 PLANNING NOTIFICATIONS To note the decisions from SDC or the Planning Inspectorate.
None received.

13. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES

13.1 Christmas Lighting project – to note the success of the 2024 project and consider any changes that might be required regarding on/off timings for 2025, as well as proposals for solar powered festive lighting in additional areas of the village

The festive lighting had been universally very well received. The project had been a great success. For 2025, it was agreed that the on/off timings should remain the same (7am to midnight), except for the tree which would remain lit 24/7 (as would the festive motif attached to the column powering the tree). In order to try to spread some of this festive cheer, the Clerk would follow up with regard to solar lighting options for the hanging basket poles in other locations around the village. These would not replicate the village green scheme but would be intended to help include other areas of the village.

ACTION: CLERK

13.2 To note planned grounds maintenance works and 'handyman' works requiring scheduling

It was noted that a holly tree is still to be planted in Price's Wood. The Clerk was asked to follow up with the grounds maintenance team with regard to the strip to be kept clear at the southern end of Longford Meadow, behind the houses in Bankside.

ACTION: CLERK

The Clerk confirmed that the Bookings & Facilities Assistant was following up regarding an array of jobs to be completed by a handyman which had been outstanding for some while.

ACTION: BFA

13.3 To make suggestions for and to consider proposals for works during 2025/26

It was agreed the following items should be progressed:

- Solar panels on the Pavilion
- Gutter clearing and checking at the Pavilion
- Replacement tree for the diseased horse chestnut in the recreation ground that had been felled in 2024

ACTION: CLERK

14. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION (INFRASTRUCTURE)

14.1 Parking on Nicholson Road: to consider correspondence and a request from the RMG Property Manager for the Ryewood estate and additional correspondence from KCC about their position, Traffic Regulation Orders and costs

The matter was discussed. Members agreed that given the lack of support for an earlier consultation in relation to parking restrictions on Nicholson Road, the relatively recent nature of the alleged issues and the imminent start date for a new car parking enforcement company for Ryewood that the Parish Council could not support nor pay for a further consultation and a Traffic Regulation Order (which was estimated to be in the region of £3800). This would not be included on the Highways Improvement Plan.

14.2 To note information from KCC (Drain Scheduled Clean Program) in answer to the submission of a report about flooding in the underpass on London Road and to consider a response to KCC

KCC has indicated that there will be no additional intervention in relation to flooding of the subway by the school, despite the Parish Council's concerns that this is happening more frequently and compromises the safety of pedestrians wanting to cross London Road, school children in particular. The Clerk will continue to report flooding at every opportunity to raise the profile of this issue.

ACTION: CLERK

15. EVENTS

15.1 DGPC Events: to consider organisational arrangements for 2025 (lead councillors)

Cllr. Lockey confirmed his intention to step down as the 'lead' councillor for event organisation. Members were asked to consider taking on the role. Cllr. Lockey also commented that members should commit to organisation and attendance at events if agreeing that an event is to take place.

ACTION: ALL

15.2 Christmas Singalong: to review the 2024 event and consider timing of the 2025 event to coincide with a festive lights switch on event

The 2024 event had been well attended. After some discussion, it was agreed that the lights should be turned on unceremoniously by or on 1st December and that a Christmas Singalong should take place on either Friday 12th or Friday 19th December (date to be confirmed).

ACTION: CLERK/ALL

15.3 Fireworks Event 2025: to consider a proposal to delay the event to the first weekend of October (if more councillors could be involved in the organisation and running of the event)

Following discussion, it was agreed that the event should continue to take place on the last Saturday of September.

ACTION: CLERK

15.4 Annual Parish Meeting: to agree a date (Wednesday 26th or Thursday 27th March)

It was agreed that given the history of this event taking place on the last Wednesday of the month that it should continue to take place, and this would be 26th March 2025. It was agreed that an entertainer/speaker should be identified.

ACTION: CLERK

16. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

16.1 Members considered or noted correspondence received since the December 2024 meeting (not already covered by an agenda item)

16.1a SDC [Email] – Department of Culture, Media and Sport announcement of a UK-wide COVID-19 Day of Reflection on Sunday 9th March 2025

16.1b Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum [Email] – SDSAF newsletter (December 2024)

16.1c CPRE [Email] – Rooftop solar ‘Sunshine Bill’ (17/01/25), request to call on MP to support
It was agreed that the Clerk should submit a request to Laura Trott MP that she support this Bill.

ACTION: CLERK

16.1d Chairman SDC [Email] – Invitation to Valentines Ball (15/02/25)

16.1e Clerks & Councils Direct – January 2025 edition

16.2 Dunton Green News (newsletter): to note copy deadline of 1st February 2025 for Spring 2025 edition and to consider how best to obtain articles

Members noted the timing and various article topics were mooted.

ACTION: ALL

17. CO-OPTION

No applications for consideration.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

18.1 Scheduled: 11th February 2025 (7.30pm) – Full Council

19. PUBLIC SESSION

None.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chairman_____

Date_____