

Downswood Parish Council Meeting – 2nd June 2026

Borough Councillor's Report – Cllr Val Springett

We are now in a new municipal year, and I am delighted to say that Denis is now our deputy mayor. He may be last Mayor next year if the proposed changes to Local Government go ahead. I am sure he will be an excellent Deputy Mayor.

When the Local Government Review (LGR) changes happen (if they actually ever happen!) the Mayor will be attached to the new Maidstone Town Council, which is in the process of being formed.

The proposed new Town Council will provide the equivalent of parish council services for those areas of Maidstone previously not parished that have been 'looked after' by MBC up to now. The Town Council will raise its own precept from its residents like existing parishes do and will no longer have any control over existing parishes. So, things we have been used to, like MBC managing open spaces and looking after verges and hedges, will move to the new unitary council when formed. There may be the opportunity for parish councils to acquire small local assets currently managed by MBC, rather than allow them to be looked after by the large unitary councils but this process is still at a very early stage. It might be worth the parish council considering what small areas MBC look after to consider if the parish wish to try to acquire them. Although Mallards springs to mind, I think it would be too big and would be a costly exercise to take over its management, even if permitted, , but there may be small play areas that would be worthy of consideration.

On the subject of Mallards, PC James Phillips has offered to try to get a police mobile CCTV unit to put near the lake. I did ask if it could be done for half term, which hasn't happened as far as I know, but hopefully we can get this done for the school summer holidays.

I have not been contacted by any Downswood residents for assistance this month but was made aware in a conversation that the catapult issue is still happening in Mallards.