Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council
Monday 4th April 2011

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm.

1. APOLOGIES: Sarah Richardson
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: None
3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Signed by JB, seconded by DH.
4. MATTERS ARISING: ACTION

Community (LHF to lead)

a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch

LHF commented that it had been quiet until a series of Farm watch emails had been received. In addition there were concerns that with the imminent switchover from analogue to digital TV and Radio, unscrupulous individuals could try to gain access into homes on the basis of being technicians, Residents are encouraged to always seek identification before allowing people to access their homes.

Councillor Williams commented that there have been significant changes to police services. Community policing may be controlled from Stratford. Two officers are moving out of the area and an officer from Wellesbourne will take over their area.

Roads (JB to lead)

b) Traffic, Roads and Drains

Roads- A second defect was raised by Patch on 14th March to fill the pot holes missed in the last batch. The missing speed sign and ring of rusty metal it left has been reported for a third time.

Grit bin – has been delivered. Awaiting a date from Patch as to when it will be installed

Village road was swept 29th March. This happens roughly every 10 weeks but only on sections which have kerbstones.

Traffic- The speed camera visited on 24th March. This will be the last visit under the present scheme.

16 cars heading NE - average speeds 33.5 mph
18 cars heading SW - average speeds 30 mph

The village road has been set up as a mobile camera site monitored regularly by the police who are aware of the speeding issues.

Speedaware: change to service – Carry forward to the May agenda for the new PC to make a decision as to whether to continue with this service now that it will incur a cost. As they are keen to promote this new service Poonam has agreed to provide it in half day blocks to AD instead of full days at no extra cost if the PC felt that it would be more beneficial.

Street lighting was discussed and the quotation for maintenance was presented to the meeting. Maintenance costs per light have been reduced to £6.33 per light, representing a significant saving of over £16 on previous years. It has been confirmed that Avon Dassett has 8 mercury lights which will be outlawed by 2015 and therefore will need to be replaced.

Drains- nothing to report

Environment/Maintenance (DH/AR to lead)

c) Playground: No update. The report from the inspection of the play area has not yet been received.

d) St John's: The summer tea party is still being planned for the 25th June 2011. However, the poor state of the church steps is cause for concern. LHF has met with Gabriella of the Church Commission and shown her the extent of the problem. LHF subsequently met with Tim Berwick, contract Manager of SDC.

He has confirmed that Health and Safety make the repair of the steps a priority. A warning notice has gone up on the gate to the church. A builder has examined the site. Concrete steps have been cost at around £7k. Wooden steps are being investigated. LHF has suggested that if concrete steps are used, perhaps the concrete could contain a dye to

temper the brightness of the finish. LHF has requested that works are completed before the 25.6.11.

LHF understands that SDC will pay for the new steps on the grounds of health and safety.

LHF has had a site meeting with Pete Wallace to discuss a new opening into the vestry and bell tower. Pete had produced impressive and attractive design. ADPC thanks Pete Wallace for his work on this project and hopes that it will come to fruition soon one Gabriella of the Church Commission has considered the ideas.

e) Upkeep of 'green areas': JB met with the new contractor on 28th March and the village green areas had their first cut on 30th March. A great improvement has already been noted. Thanks to Michael Mann

Village tidy up day 16th April- suggested jobs- planting of shrubs in RR garden, remove brambles from cemetery verge, tidy up shrubs around village signs, clear away all dead branches and twigs from green areas.

– Village tidy up: JB has listed a series of projects for the Tidy up Day. This will include planting of the shrubs recently obtained on behalf of ADPC by LHF.

JB proposed that the £395.20 from sale of Worrall goods be spent on low maintenance shrubs for the front of the Reading Room and each of the three signs at the entrances to the village. Shrubbery will be planted near to village signs to enhance the look but provide low maintenance needs. Proposed by JB, seconded by LHF

Tricia Dow has offered to donate a small horse-chestnut tree. After discuss it was decided to accept this kind offer and explore planting it in the play area or another suitable location.

f) Cemetery – Revised rules: JB confirmed that the revised rules and plans have been sent out to local undertakers and the Cemetery Warden. No feedback has been received. The plans and rules are now fully adopted.

JB explained that the RR fire has disintegrated in areas. A solid fuel kit Inc fire front, grate, ash pan and handle = £89.95 +£8.95 delivery, Clay back £49.95 approx. The councillors agreed to the purchase of replacement parts as the fire is still used. JB will purchase replacements on behalf of ADPC.

Communication/Administration (SR to lead)

5. COUNCIL REPORTS

The next Community forum will take place on the 8th June, 6.30pm at the Dassett School. The subject for discussion is "youth" and all are encouraged to attend. The CF supports local initiatives and does have a budget.

Avon Dassett Parish Council 04.04.11.
County and District Councillor's Report

Fiscal Matters SDC – SDC debated the budget proposals on Monday 28th February 2011. This year SDC will not be increasing the rate that is charged for Council Tax. I can confirm that despite ill-founded rumours in the local Press there will be no additional charge for collecting green waste, nor will a charging regime be introduced for parking in market towns such as Southam. The savings will be achieved by reducing the number of staff together with partnership working with local councils and in some places reducing the level of service. For example, the cost of the CCTV operation in Stratford and the other market towns will be shared with Warwick operating one joint control centre. The Council is looking for partners to share the cost of running Public Toilets in Stratford and market towns. In our own particular case, the Public Conveniences in Southam will probably be transferred to the Town Council but I must stress that at this moment in time nothing has been finally decided. Unfortunately, negotiations between Stratford and Warwick DCs did not come to fruition and negotiations have now been opened between Malvern DC and Stratford with a view to sharing costs such as Chief Executive and other senior staff members. This process is well established with other authorities that share synergies.

Southam and Feldon Community Forum – The next meeting of the Community Forum is on 8th June and will be held in The Dassett School, Fenny Compton commencing with the Police Surgery at 6.30 p.m. The Forums are growing in importance and as it is local I hope that some residents will attend.

Fiscal Matters – WCC - Having approved a very challenging budget for the next four years, the County Council are now entering a period of re-organisation. One of the tasks facing the County is to cut £2 million from the Library Service over the next three years. To do this a major reform of how we operate our libraries will have to be undertaken. The proposals include reducing Library Opening Hours and its Mobile Libraries from five to three. We are now entering a period of consultation which ends of 9th June and some of the options being considered are:-

(a) Extending existing services to housebound people provided by volunteers
(b) Order and direct delivery by village and community agents or volunteers
(c) Community drop-off points for books

(d) Continuing to support a postal service to visually impaired people
(e) Providing library-related learning activities at community venues etc. children's centres
(f) Books could be delivered to your home but a charge would be likely for this
(g) Community-run libraries

We would like to hear your views and you can consult using 'Consult online' at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/facingthechallenge.

As further changes occur to the way the County works, I will keep the Parish Council informed.

6. CORRESPONDENCE: Was distributed at the meeting.

It is possible that the current twice weekly bus service to Banbury may be reduced to once a week as part of WCC's budget revisions.

Information received from Warwickshire Libraries about possible changes to services and further Information about a 12 week public consultation will be put on website and village notice boards.

7. PLANNING: No new planning applications. Notices of Decision were read out at the meeting: 10/02744/LBC, 10/02741/FUL, and 10/02741/FUL

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT HHW

The present council will meet on May 9th to deal with outstanding invoices, salaries and bills before their term of office officially ends. The meeting will ensure continuity of payment to suppliers prior to officer changes and banking signatories.

Note: Clerk will receive an increment rise in her salary payable from April and RR cleaner's pay increased to £11 per clean from April also.

Appendix A
FINANCIAL STATEMENT April 2011
Avon Dassett Parish Council

Balance at close of business 31/3/11

Current Account	£1,257.75
Savings Account	£5,205.42

Cheques issued (Prepared prior to meeting)		**Cheque No**
Clerk (March)	£251.97	1095
Sue Harris (Mar Cleaning)	£10.00	1096
Zurich Insurance	£624.52	1097
WALC Annual Subscription	£84.00	1098
SDC Business Rates	£91.59	1099
Lily Hope-Frost (shrubs)	£87.63	1100
Total cheques	£1,149.71	

Income

Hire of RR (Jo Cross, Regional Development Officer, TCCT)	£5.00	
Sale of Worrall goods		£5.00
Hire of RR (Avon Carrow Management committee)		£5.00
Total cash		£15.00

Cheques were proposed by LHF and seconded by DH.

JB thanked SR and HHW for preparing the budget review and read out a report written by SR. All agreed that Sarah notes should make the budget position very clear to the incoming parish council.

Comments to accompany Budget Report (to March 2011)

Income

Once the final instalment of the precept is received, we will have met 90 per cent of our projected budget. However, this figure masks some fluctuations. We did not realise the VAT reimbursement figure and this was probably set too high

following the high expenditure (via grants) in the previous year. We received no grant income (projected £500) but did received £425 in donations. Rent from hire of the Reading Room was also high this year.

Expenditure

Overall, we underspent on the Reading Room (70 per cent of the projected budget). This was mostly because of the low maintenance costs, but this is clearly an important area to provide funds for.
Our administrative costs were higher than budgeted (120 per cent) and this is mainly due to transition costs with a new clerk. The budget for next year has been set higher to reflect our experience of actual costs this year (rather than projected ones when we set the 2010-11 budget). This is an area that should be monitored over the coming year.
Helen's tireless work chasing the utility companies has been worthwhile and we will underspend by around 50 per cent (unless there are some high end of year charges).
On Miscellaneous items we spent nothing under all budget headings largely due to the delay in the playground lease. We did have some other expenditure to replace the stolen grit bin and to redraw the plans for the cemetery.
Our objective to reduce village environment and maintenance costs was achieved although this will also need to be kept under review as the parish council strives to get the correct balance between cost and appearance.

Summary

We met 90 per cent of our projected target for income and 63 per cent of our expenditure. We also spent slightly less than we received in income this year (unlike in previous years) because of our focus on saving costs. This has resulted in a higher than expected carry forward to 2011-12. A final account will need to be prepared at the end of the financial year ready for the AGM.
Sarah Richardson

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

The need for the Clerk to register with HMRC was discussed. The legal requirement to register by the 15th April was considered a tight deadline but should hopefully be achieved through the assistance of an accounting firm identified by DH. The cost for their service are £15 per month or £180 per year which is considered competitive in the market but an additional financial cost to ADPC Forms for registration were completed at the meeting, singed by councillors and handed to DH for action

Notice board outside the RR needs replacing and it is hoped that the new council will consider this. £1000 has been identified within the budget to purchase a suitable replacement. It would need to have one side open to public for their notices and one side lockable for Parish Council notices and papers.

LHF offered to assist in identifying a suitable colour of paint when the RR exterior is painted. JB suggested that the Probation Service Community Payback Team could be commissioned to undertake the work.

LHF read out an article from country Life about the power of Parish Councils in classifying roads and restricting access to lorries. CW responded by saying that the articles was misleading and that it was not so simple. Restricting access would stop the gritting vehicles from entering the village as well as emergency vehicles.

VDS update- Team need to amend document to take account of the Council's feedback which Steve has circulated. John and Jill McLean have reviewed and agree that most of the changes are useful but needs another meeting to finalise.

JB stated her thanks to all of the Councillors and Clerks during her term with ADPC. Fellow Councillors responded with warm words of thanks. Councillor Williams was thanked for his support of ADPC.

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10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING –16th May, 6th June, 4th July, 1st Aug, 5th Sept, 3rd Oct, 7th Nov, 5th Dec.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.