Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council

Monday 7th March 2011

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm. 345

1. APOLOGIES: LHF.
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: None
3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes of the previous meeting as January were signed by JB.
4. MATTERS ARISING: ACTION

Community (LHF to lead)

a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch: No report.

Roads (JB to lead)

b) Traffic, Roads and Drains JB

Traffic- nothing to report

Roads- Some pot holes have been filled. JB has been in contact with Patch Byrne regarding the outstanding ones and has asked for an update on the speed sign by the playground. This was requested as an urgent job on 23rd Feb as there is jagged metal sticking out of the ground. The pole has been removed- whether this was done by WCC or someone else is not known.

Crash debris on Farnborough Lane was reported on 8th Feb and is still there

Drains- Request for householders who have drains outside their properties to check them periodically for leaves and mud. Please report any blockages to Jill

Grit bin – Order form has now been received by Clerk and cheque for the purpose will be issued from this meeting.

Environment/Maintenance (DH/AR to lead)

c) Playground- Report from Sarah Rutherford AR

1. New equipment.

Somersault bar, balance beam, and 3 whirling spices were installed w/e 26th/27th Feb and rubber safety matting laid. The conditions were wet which churned up the playground a little, but this should settle down. The total cost of these new items (including delivery, matting, installation etc) was £4,242.93 – including cost saving measures (e.g. arranging our own installers and independently sourcing the matting). Sarah Rutherford has written a piece for the April Compton Chronicle.

2. Lease.

Alsters Kelly assures that this will be sorted ASAP. All relevant paperwork has been received from the Worrall family and a draft lease is in place.

Sarah Rutherford is the only one left on the Playground Committee and she has asked for more volunteers. The pot is now completely dry but there is still more that could be done but more fundraising help is needed.

d) St John's SR/LHF

Condition of steps has been reported to SDC and The Churches Conservation Trust and await repair.

Tea Party- confirmation of interest from Abacus and Thelma Watts.

Bells will be rung on Easter Sunday and possibly also on the day of the royal wedding.

e) Upkeep of 'green areas' All

JB will be walking round village with new contractor in next week or so to highlight maintenance needs.

Village Tidy up day was discussed and set for 16th April, 10 am to 2 pm, meeting at the Reading Room. All volunteers are very welcome for a great day.

f) Cemetery – Revised rules and plans

The plans have been accepted by the councillors and now integrate an area of plots for the burial of cremated remains. All plots will now be clearly numbered by the Clerk on the main plan. The Cemetery rules will be reviewed and a new set sent on to funeral directors, the cemetery warden and published on the website. ACTION: HHW

The Burial register will be adapted with the back of the book containing the list of plots and details of the cremated remains buried. ACTION: HHW

It was agreed that Tony Buckingham of Estee Design, Fenny Compton, had undertaken a professional and timely service in re drawing the plans. His services had saved the Council a significant cost recognised by all.

Communication/Administration

JB suggested that each Parish Councillor record what their roles have been during their term and provide a list of useful contacts ready for the incoming Councillors. It was agreed that this would be useful. SR and JB reiterated that they would be willing to continue to upload information onto the ADPC website if the incoming Councillors wished them to do so. ACTION: Councillors

Information for Election

5. COUNCIL REPORTS

1. **Fiscal Matters SDC –** SDC is due to debate 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. I will update the committee at the meeting.

2. **Fiscal Matters WCC** - On 15th February 2011 Warwickshire County Council set the budget for the next financial year after an eight hour debate. The good news is that Council Tax is set at the same level as last year. In view of the current national financial climate, we are having to work with less money than was available in previous years. This has meant that all departments within the County Council have 20% less money previously. One consequence is that we have had to reduce the number of staff by over 1,000. Some of the headlines in the Budget include:-

- **Caring for the Aged** – We are changing the way we care for the aged – i.e. ceasing the building of new Care Homes, selling off existing Care Homes and improving the care of the aged allowing them to stay in their own homes.

- **County Council owned Street Lights** – Lights on major roads will be turned off between 12.00 midnight and 5.00 a.m.

- **Student Transport** - The cost of transport for students aged 16 and above will increase from its present level of £475 annual charge to £660. It is estimated that this particular change in policy will save the County Council in the region of £700,000 per year. This level of charging is similar to that already charged by other authorities.

- **Rural Bus Service** – As a result of a reduction in grant aid received by the County Council towards the cost of subsidising passenger transport, some hard decisions have had to be taken regarding rural transport. These include:-
    - stopping all grant aid towards Sunday local bus services
    - removal of all financially supported evening local bus services
    - reduction in urban flexibus services

  As far as Avon Dassett is concerned the village will have a Monday – Saturday peak service to Leamington and the twice weekly off-peak service to Banbury will be reduced to once a week. All of these proposals are currently subject to consultation.

- **Youth Service** – We are transforming the Youth Service to allow local communities to become more involved with Youth Clubs.

- **Library Service -** We have had to cut £2 million from our £7.4 million Library Service. To do this, major reform of all our services is necessary. Currently, we have 34 separate Library buildings throughout Warwickshire and of these only 4 libraries account for 90% of the total use of libraries in the County. Some libraries will operate with reduced opening hours ranging from 20 - 35 hours per week. There will be a period

of consultation between now and July before any decision is taken regarding the future of those libraries that are not considered sustainable. Thought has been given as to how the Mobile Library Service can provide better value for money and one example is to consider calling on villages in the evening and at weekends and for possibly spending more time at each location. Ultimately, our aim is to look at alternative ways of providing our service to our customers and the Council is looking as to how this could be done with local communities.

- **Gritting –** One consequence of the bad weather during November and December is the damage to roads in our area. Unlike last winter, when there was a succession of freezing weather and thaws, this year there has been one relatively slow thaw resulting in less damage than we encountered last winter. The priorities have been in repairing A and B roads first and then we will get on to the C and D roads as soon as possible. We are aware that on country roads where there is no kerbing, the road side has broken rather than creating potholes in the centre of the road. The restoration will probably be spread throughout the year but potholes, where necessary, will be temporarily filled. It is worth noting that the snow clearance programme in Warwickshire was far more effective than in neighbouring counties and I believe full credit should be given to the Highways team for their performance.

Southam and Feldon Community Forum – The next meeting of the Community Forum is on Wednesday 16th March and will be held in Ladbroke Village Hall commencing with the Police Surgery at 6.30 p.m. The Forums are growing in importance and I do hope that the Parish Council will be represented together with some residents from Farnborough. The June meeting of the Forum is on 8th June and will be held in The Dassett School, Fenny Compton.

6. CORRESPONDENCE: Was distributed.

Speed aware service is changing in how it is operated. Two alternative speed aware "Packages" are available to Councils.

Discussion took place on the renewal of the Zurich insurance Policy. It was decided to renew on a 5 year fixed term as this would save the Council a considerable amount of money.

7. PLANNING - 11/00015/FUL, 3 Hill View. Comments were recorded on the application and will be logged onto the planning website. ACTION: HHW

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Appendix A : FINANCIAL STATEMENT March 2011

Balance at close of business 28/2/11		
Current Account	£1,264.20	
Savings Account	£5,675.20	
Cheques issued (Prepared prior to meeting)		**Cheque No**
Clerk (February)	£212.81	1089
Sue Harris (Feb Cleaning)	£10.00	1090
M. Maughan (Norton security)	£64.99	1091
Npower	£17.47	1092
ESE Direct (Grit Bin)	£136.80	1093
W. Sherriff (March Coffee Morning)	£7.65	1094
Total cheques	£449.72	

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – David Hutt agreed to undertake the registration required of the Clerk with HMRC.

Sarah will not be able to make the April meeting.

Money raised from sale of Worrall goods could be used for a special purchase. JB has asked PC's to consider a worth cause for the monies. Possible suggestions include buying plants for RR garden or donate it to the playground group another suggestion included the purchase of patio heaters for St John's.

10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

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

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.