Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council

Monday 3rd October 2011

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm. **371**

1. **APOLOGIES**: Diana Biddlestone.

Present at Meeting: David Hutt, Alastair Whetstone, Kevin Martin, Councillor Chris Williams, Clerk.

Public: Trevor Gill

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:** None

3. **CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**: Proposed Daniel Robertson (DR), seconded Alastair Whetstone, signed by David Hutt

4. MATTERS ARISING:

Community

a) **Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch:** Kevin Martin had attended a police forum at Southam and had little to highlight at the meeting save for damage to a car number plate at the top of the village.

Note from Lily Hope-Frost was read out by David Hutt saying there had been little to report also.

David Hutt did go on to highlight reports of at least one group of men claiming to offer gardening service to elderly and/or vulnerable people who then went on to demand substantial payments, disproportionate to the works undertaken. The information had come from the police and householders should be aware of this.

Kevin Martin showed a new plan of gritting routes to the meeting.

b) Flood prevention Grant: With Diana Biddlestone unable to attend the meeting, it was decided to defer this item to the November meeting. Councillor Williams informed the meeting that funds are available for maintenance projects such as clearing of ditches.

c) Coffee Morning: Having reviewed the budget a letter has been sent to the organiser of the coffee morning confirming that the budget is set at £120 per year, allowing for a maximum of £10 expenses claim from each coffee morning. The letter also confirmed that a receipt for all goods purchased is required for accounting purchases.

Roads:

b) Traffic, Roads and Drains.

Daniel Robertson commented on the recently received Speed Aware report, following on from the monitoring sessions in September. The report concluded that speeding was not a significant factor in the village. It made recommendations including the establishment of a speed monitoring group. Councillor Williams explained that this would require trained volunteers who would need to make an ongoing commitment to monitor speeding in the village.

Alastair Whetstone commented that he continued to believe that the speed limit through the village was too high. Councillor Williams explained that to reduce the limit would require a Traffic Restriction Order and that this was unlikely to be granted based on the statistics for the village.

Drains: Kevin Martin confirmed that the drains are in a good condition but that leaves have started to fall and may cause problems if they block drains.

Daniel Robertson requested a copy of the hydrology report from David Hutt. **ACTION: David Hutt to send report to Daniel Robertson.**

Environment/Maintenance

Daniel Robertson has met with Peter Wallace who has now repaired the rotten wood in the window of the RR. The Parish Council wish to thank Mr Wallace for kindly undertaking this repair free of charge and are most grateful for his assistance and expertise.

Daniel Robertson confirmed that Patch Byrne has undertaken repairs to many of the potholes and drains listed. This includes the brick work around the drain at the top of the village.

c) **Playground:** Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge was discussed and it was concluded that the initiative applies to larger community spaces. In addition, as the Parish Council do not own the land which is necessary in order to transfer play-areas to the Trust, the matter cannot be pursued any further.

d) **St John's:** Diana Biddlestone has submitted a grant application. The Fete Committee has agreed to be the community group applying for funds and have asked for £3,000.

Daniel has received a quote for the repair of the steps leading up to the church, valid for six months, indicating a repair cost of £4,865.23 + VAT. Councillor Williams confirmed that such a contractor can be used if approve by the County Council. He also confirmed that the Diocese owns the land. The clerk also confirmed that the Council undertakes two cuts of the grass in the graveyard each year, in conjunction with the two cuts by ADPC.

Christmas Cards fund raiser for steps: A draft of the advertising poster was received by the Council from Jill Burgess. Everyone thanked Jill for her work on this. David Hutt submitted a photograph for consideration. **ACTION: Clerk to return poster and picture to Jill Burgess.**

e) **Upkeep of 'green areas'** Kevin Martin commented that all the areas are in good condition. The council agreed that the contractor continues to undertake a good job around the village.

A letter was read out from Lily Hope-Frost reminding the Council that the tubs would soon need replanting for the Winter/Spring. It was also felt that some of the tubs need replacing. **ACTION: Kevin Martin to look into the cost of a replacement tub. Clerk to speak to Sue Harris about potential purchase of plants.**

After a recent request and subsequent discussion, it was agreed that the bank near to the churchyard will be included in the specification for cutting within the green area maintenance. **ACTION: Clerk to add item to green area maintenance specification.**

Communication/Administration

f) **Notice board/s:** After discussion it was decided to retain the notice board outside the Reading Room and undertake a refurbishment. **ACTION: Daniel Robertson to purchase new cork backing and pins and install into existing board.**

Daniel explained that the new board at the bottom of the village needs some attention. He will rub down the wood and treat with oil. **ACTION: Daniel Robertson to treat new notice board.**

g) Community Funding: Councillor Williams wished for it to be noted that within the previous minutes for September 2011, page 369 it stated that up to two parish councillors could apply for £1k each. This is an erroneous statement and should be struck from the record.

The Parish Council noted the significant amount of work that Diana Biddlestone has put into researching and applying for grants and thanks her for her efforts.

i**) Travellers and showmen Questionnaire:** This item was carried forward from the last meeting. The deadline for a response has now passed. However, it was concluded after discussion that the matter was not relevant to small communities like Avon Dassett.

5. COUNCIL REPORTS:

1. **Parliamentary Boundary Reviews –** You may recall last year that the Coalition Government announced that there would be a reduction in the number of serving MPs from its present figure of 650 to 600. The rationale behind this proposal was to make parliamentary constituency equal in its electorate throughout the country. One outcome of this proposal is that the Boundary Commission has evaluated the West Midland region and decided that Warwickshire should have five MPs rather than the present number of six. It appears that the Kenilworth and Southam Constituency will be absorbed into the two Stratford-upon-Avon and Rugby constituencies. As a result of this our present MP, Jeremy Wright, will have to find another seat. Avon Dassett, currently part of the Kenilworth and Southam Constituency, will now transfer to the Rugby Constituency. These Boundary Reviews will be discussed at Shire Hall by the Boundary Commission during a Public Consultation on 10th and 11th November 2011.

2. **Police and Fire Service –** After a quiet couple of months the County Council is restructuring itself in the light of the fiscal pressures implemented in the last budget. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, unlike other Fire Services, is, in effect, another department of the County Council. The decision has been taken to form a Strategic Alliance with Northamptonshire County Council Fire Service. It is anticipated that this alliance will create savings especially with the decision to cancel National Fire Control Rooms. The original plan envisaged the control of fires in Warwickshire was to be controlled from Wolverhampton. It is felt that the possibility should be explored of Warwickshire and Nothamptonshire sharing one Fire Control Room as this would implement a tremendous saving in cost. In addition, other areas being considered is closer cross border cooperation. But I must clearly state that Warwickshire will continue to have its independence and no Fire Station will be closed as a result of this alliance.

3. **Police** – From the 1st October 2011, unless you are actually witnessing an incident when you should still dial 999, the way to contact the Police is to call a **NEW NUMBER – 101** - which will put you through to the Warwickshire Police Call Centre and will handle all non-emergency calls.

4. **Broadband -** At last central government has recognised that south Warwickshire suffers slow speeds with broadband connection. The County Council, working with the District Council and Coventry University are currently preparing an application to the government for funding to correct the current discrepancy in south Warwickshire. It is not simply putting a valve in the local telephone exchange, the proposal is that British Telecom would share the cost with local authorities and enhance telephone exchanges to provide the necessary fibre optics to deliver better broadband speed to local communities. This will not be a quick fix solution and will depend on the suitability and location of telephone exchanges within our area. I will, of course, keep you updated on developments.

5. **Flooding –** The County Council has taken over flood prevention initiatives from the District Council. This will reduce uncertainty where a degree of localised flooding is the responsibility of Highways with blocked drains etc, rather than geographical issues with land drainage.

6. **Housing Provision –** At a meeting of the SDC Cabinet some two weeks ago following a comprehensive Core Strategy Review, it was decided that the provision for housing within our district for the period 2010 – 2025 will be limited to no more than 8,000. Obviously some houses have already been allocated and work has commenced and in effect the total number of new houses to be built between now and 2025 will be 5,500. Additionally, the Cabinet decided that the maximum number of houses in any development should be no more than 100. However, we will still keep the policy which recognises the need for providing social housing for local communities.

6.CORRESPONDENCE – Paper copies circulated at meeting. Electronic mail circulated prior to meeting.

A letter from Avon Dassett History Group was read out. They are seeking funding for a research initiative. The Parish Council agreed to donate a sum of £50 to the project. The cheque will be issued at the next meeting of ADPC.

David Hutt noted the information on a training day for Chairs of Parish Councils and requested to be booked on to the course set for the 4th November. **ACTION: Clerk to book place.**

PLANNING

No declarations of interest were made.

Planning reference: 11/00709/FUL. Planning Inspectorate Reference Number: APP/J3720/A/11/2160905/NWF. Msrs C. P, J and M Worrral. Land South West of , 3 Lower Terrance, Avon Dassett. Demolition of terrace of garages and construction of 5 No. double garages.

Trevor Gill addressed the meeting and outlined his intention to oppose the appeal recently lodged on this planning application. He went on to explain that he will be compiling a 3 or 4 page list of objections to the development with photographic evidence and would then seek support from villagers. This evidence and signatures would then be submitted to the planning Inspectorate at Bristol in time for the 4th November deadline.

Trevor Gill sought confirmation of the Parish Council's position on the appeal. David Hutt responded by saying that previous comments would be reiterated and sent to the Inspectorate at Bristol and reference would be made to the Parish Plan. **ACTION: David Hutt to resubmit comments by ADPC to Planning Inspectorate in Bristol and reference back to the parish plan.**

Notice of planning decisions were read out:

11/01472/LBC and 11/01471/FUL Mr Anthony Perks, St Josephs Cottage. Consent granted with conditions.

11/01333/FUL Mr and Mrs Deeming, Orchard cottage. Planning permission granted with conditions.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT October 2011
Avon Dassett Parish Council
Balance at close of business 30/9/11

Current Account	£1,761.31	
Savings Account	£7,276.79	
Cheques issued		**Cheque No**
H. Hide-Wright (Clerk Expenses)	£58.59	1137
J. Sherriff (Aug coffee morning)	£19.85	1138
Sue Harris (Sept cleaning)	£11.00	1139
Total Cheques	£89.44	

Income

Precept to Deposit Account	£3,500.00 direct credit to deposit A/c
Hire of Cemetery Car Park	£5.00 Cheque
Rebate of RR rate's from SDC	£91.59 Cheque
Total income	£3,596.59

Cheques were proposed by Kevin Martin and Seconded by Daniel Robertson.

New Projects/planned expenditure for coming financial year:

The Clerk highlighted the previously agreed decision to consider budgeting for replacement street lights as well as funding towards the repairs of the Church Steps within the budget 2012/13 which is under review by Alastair Whetstone and David Hutt.

Contracts out for tender:

The Clerk confirmed that she would be issuing invitations to tender for green area maintenance. The Clerk asked for names of any companies that the Parish Council would like to be approached. Trevor Gill registered interest on behalf of his son who runs a maintenance business. **ACTION: Clerk to contact green area maintenance firms.**

Councillor Williams offered a timely reminder for a review of ADPC's Emergency Plan. The clerk confirmed that the plan has recently been circulated to Councillors for their comment and that she would do this again. The contact at the Council, Sally Lange, had offered to review the plan to see if there were any areas which could be improved. **ACTION: Clerk to circulate Emergency Plan for comment by Councillors. Clerk to seek feedback from Sally Lange. Councillor Williams to send Emergency Plan templates of similar sized villages to Councillors for their consideration.**

9. **MEMBER REPORTS**: Alastair Whetstone reported that he has been approached to see if the Parish Council would plant a tree in memory of an elderly resident of Avon Dassett. It was felt that the family may object to this move so the Parish Council decided not to proceed with the matter.

Alastair Whetstone read an email from Paul Gallagher who was seeking information on how to set up a fireworks display. Kevin Martin agreed to provide information as he had organised displays within Avon Dassett. **ACTION: Alastair to forward email details to Kevin. Kevin to assist with enquiries.**

It was confirmed that David Hutt would purchase a wreath for remembrance Sunday. The purchase would be refunded from ADPC funds at the next meeting. **ACTION: DH to purchase wreath and provide receipt to Clerk for refund.**

10. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**: None.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS** – 7th Nov, 5th Dec.

The meeting closed at 9.32 pm