Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council

Monday 5th March 2012

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm. 386

1. APOLOGIES: Diana Biddlestone

Present at Meeting: Alastair Whetstone, Daniel Robertson, David Hutt, Trevor Gill, Clerk, Councillor Williams

Public: Peter Biddlestone

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS : None

3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Proposed: Alastair Whetstone, Seconded: Daniel Robertson. Signed and dated by Alastair Whetstone.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

5. Co-option of Councillor: David Hutt welcomed Trevor Gill to the meeting.

Community

a. **Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch:** David Hutt read out a note from Lily Hope-Frost who commented that there was little to report. LHF highlighted the Neighbourhood Watch meeting on the 15th March, 7.30pm at Southam Police Station and hoped someone from ADPC would attend. Councillors checked availability and no-one was available to attend the meeting.

A letter will be written to the landowner regarding removal of waste in village. **ACTION: Daniel Robertson to write letter to landowner regarding removal of waste materials**

b. **Update of Avon Dassett welcome packs**. Alastair Whetstone provided an update: Bill Heath has offered to assist in preparing the welcome packs for loading onto the website. Trevor Gill offered to check and update the contacts within the packs. **ACTION: Trevor Gill to update welcome pack contacts.**

c. Playground: The Clerk confirmed that she had been told that the inspection was planned for February. Daniel Robertson commented that someone had spoken to Pete Wallace and it had been agreed to remove the totem pole for safety reasons as the bottom of the post was rotten. Pete has offered to replace the totem pole if required.

d. Jubilee Event – 4th June 2012: A committee has been formed consisting of Daniel Robertson, Jill Burgess, Claire, Debbie Hughes, Steve Santori. A flyer will be developed t find out what people want. The pub is willing to organise an event to celebrate and a meeting is due to be held on the 7th March. Several locations have been mentioned as potential sites for the celebrations. **ACTION: Daniel to provide update on jubilee event at next meeting.**

Roads

Traffic, Roads and Drains: Daniel Robertson has inspected the roads. Holes are appearing in the road at the top of the hill and will be reported to Patch Byre for repair. Some drains were superficially blocked by leaves and have now been cleared. **ACTION: Daniel Robertson to report holes in road to Patch Byrne.**

(Since the meeting it has been confirmed that the manhold cover close to the play area has been replaced).

Environment/Maintenance

d) St John's – Councillor Chris Williams gave an update to a meeting held last week where the District Council stated that any shortfall in funds will be made up by the District Council. The DC is currently undertaking the site drawings and the project will be completed before the 2nd June 2012. The contractor will be appointed by the District Council. The Councillors thanked Councillor Williams for his support of this project and were grateful to the District Council for their support.

The Clerk read an email from Diana Biddlestone with her update and highlighting various points of concern from the Steps Steering Committee meeting held recently:

- The funding issue between the district council and the CCT.
- Involvement of the fete committee in the handling of funds.
- Donation from the fete committee if there is no fete this year.
- Possible change of focus of fete committee to the organisation of jubilee celebrations.
- Possible combining of steps opening with the jubilee celebrations. Potential for an exhibition in the church.

Alastair Whetstone commented that he felt AD would have a fete this year and would report back with more information at the next meeting. **ACTION: Alastair Whetstone to report back on whether AD would have a fete in 2012.**

e) Upkeep of 'green areas'

The Clerk has organised for the first cut of the village to include the bank close to the church.

Communication/Administration

Centralised External Contacts: Trevor Gill suggested it would be useful to have a spreadsheet of PC contacts for use by Parish Councillors. This was agreed. **ACTION: Trevor Gill to create and update a contact list for ADPC.**

6. COUNCIL REPORTS

Avon Dassett Parish Council 05.03.2012.
County and District Councillor's Report

1. **County Council Fiscal Matters** – The budget was decided on Tuesday 7th February 2012, and the decision was taken to keep Council Tax at its present level and I assure you that there will be no dramatic changes in either service or taxation for next year. Other items of good news are that as a result of the government providing more funding for rural transport, some the draconian cuts announced last year will not now be implemented. I explained last month the criteria under which the County Council is having to operate due to the present fiscal restrictions when preparing our budget this year. I hope you will understand why some unpalatable savings have had to be found. We will, of course, continue to look after both the young and old, maintain highways, education and public health but where we over provide a service a review is taking place to assess whether or not this over provision is essential. An example of this over provision was the provision of couriers on school buses. Warwickshire was the only county that provided this service and it was discontinued from last April providing a saving across the county of some £750,000.

2. **Library Service –** You will recall that when we set our budget last year, the proposals included a recommendation to re-evaluate the Library Service. Kineton Parish Council rose to the challenge as did all the communities who had libraries under threat and we have been able to achieve the savings without reducing the number of libraries. A year ago it was intimated that the Mobile Library was also under threat. I can confirm that this service will continue unchanged at least until April 2014.

3. **HS2 –** The County Council along with other County Councils are disappointed by the announcement by the Minister of Transport that she supports the proposed route for HS2 through Warwickshire. I can confirm that there might be a legal challenge into this decision, not only by Warwickshire but also by other Shire Counties. Although it appears that there is strong parliamentary support for this project, it is hoped that the Courts might support the view of the Parliamentary Select Committee that the proposed route causes an unacceptable degree of environmental damage to rural England. The County Council is against the proposal for HS2 on economic grounds and the environmental damage it will cause. Their preferred option is that HS2 should utilities existing transport links such as enhancing the Chiltern Line.

4. **Local Broadband Plan –** The Local Broadband Plan sets out how the County Council will be able to deliver the government directive that in the next two years every household in Warwickshire should be able to receive a minimum of 2 mbs and, ultimately, elevate to a speed of 10 mbs. The benefits for the local authority partners are many. Superfast Broadband will provide an essential

5. underpinning for growth of the knowledge economy. It is anticipated that improved access to public services, quality of life and meeting consumer expectations will be of benefit to all. The government has agreed that it will match-fund to a maximum of £4 million, any money raised by local authorities in Warwickshire. The County's budget last week allocated £3 million and the Districts and Boroughs in Warwickshire add another £1 million. Therefore, the government has confirmed that its allocation to Warwickshire is £4 million and it is expected that the private sector will add a further £12 million to this figure. The rollout of Superfast Broadband will be prioritized to those areas who can demonstrate the greater need. People working from home have been identified as the faster growing sector in the economic growth for Warwickshire. Surveys are currently being carried out to establish the priorities. We hope that most communities will appoint a Champion to promote Superfast Broadband. I will be able to liaise with these Champions to provide the necessary documentation.

6. **Street Lighting –** The County Council will shortly be entering into a period of consultation with its proposal to turn off street lighting between the hours of midnight and 5.00 a.m. If this recommendation is implemented there is a significant financial benefit but it is recognized that this cannot be a universal decision since important road junctions and roundabouts will have to remain illuminated. I will keep you informed of developments.

7. **Stratford District Council Fiscal Matters – On** Monday 27th February the District Council set the Annual Budget. As I suggested last month there will be no increase in Council Tax and, in fact, it will be reduced by 1%. The District Council Budget, this year, is part of a four year plan and there will be no significant surprises within the budget. The only matter for debate is the proposal to charge for three Public Toilets in Stratford, the remaining toilets in Stratford and the market towns will remain free.

8. **Core Strategy –** After the consultation in May last year, a refined Core Strategy is now available for consultation over the next six weeks. As far as Avon Dassett is concerned the main points of interest are the suggestion that the community decides how much, if any, housing development should take place within Avon Dassett over the next fifteen years. Another proposal is that any development greater than 2% of the existing housing stock should be subjected to comprehensive sustainability tests to ensure that the community can accommodate any proposed development greater than the 2% figure. There are also proposals to control Windfarms in our district and reinstate the designation of Special Landscape Areas which were removed some six years ago. There is an important meeting for Parish Councils to debate the Core Strategy which will be held on Tuesday 6th March in Harbury Village Hall starting at 6.30 p.m. I do hope someone from the Parish Council will be able to attend.

9. **Community Forums –** The next meeting of the Southam and Feldon Community Forum will be held on Wednesday 21st March in Napton Village Hall. The matters for debate will include the allocation of housing as proposed in the Core Strategy as well as the current activities with the Early Intervention Project which shows how the County has a strategy to cope with difficult families and if successful will ultimately lead to a reduction of antisocial behaviour and readjust families who are unable to cope with society today. As usual the meeting starts at 6.30 p.m. with an opportunity to discuss privately with the local Police any concerns you might have.

Trevor Gill volunteered to be the "Superfast Broadband Champion."

7. PLANNING:

11/02897/LBC: The Coach house, Bitham Hall: No representation

12/00410/FUL: Orchard Cottage: (declaration of Interest by Trevor Gill). No representation.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance at close of business 29/2/12

Current Account	£2,409.31
Savings Account	£5,077.99

Cheques issued		Cheque No
H. Hide-Wright (Feb Clerk Expenses)	£15.80	1161
Sue Harris (Feb Clean)	£11.00	1162
Daniel Robertson (Flower tubs)	£60.00	1163
WCC (Street Light Maintenance)	£98.35	1164
Total Cheques	£185.15	

Income: No income to ADPC
Income to St John's Steps Appeal:

A. Rutherford	£100.00
G & S. Rice	£ 20.00
Total income to steps appeal	£120.00

Budget update March 2012. Areas of special note:

Item	Percentage of budget	Explanation
Income:		
Hire Of RR	180%	Good - Well used during the year
Christmas Cards	55%	Low - Sold at lower price to ensure sales which were good
Bank Interest	51%	Low - Poor bank interest rates everywhere
Burial Ground	17%	Low - No burials
Expenditure:		
RR Rates	42%	Good - Council rebate still in place
RR Maintenance	32%	Good - Essential maintenance undertaken
Admin. Expenses	158%	High - printing costs, phone, mileage
WALC	181%	High - training of new Councillors
Christmas Cards	5%	Good - Printing done for free by local resident
Electricity Supply	73%	Good - Fixed price contract working well
Playground	9%	Good - No major expenditure undertaken
Other (Notice board)	35%	Good - Notice board refurbished rather than replaced
Mowing	52%	Good - Excellent contractor
Audit Fees	141%	High - Extra delivery charges
Election Fees	16%	Good - Fewer elections than anticipated
Street Lighting	6%	Good – WCC have reduced costs

9. **MEMBER REPORTS:**

Discussion took place on whether the Council wished to continue to pay for Norton Security. It was felt that there were cheaper options and therefore Norton is not required. **ACTION: Clerk to contact Margaret Maughan and confirm that Norton security is not required.**

The Councillors looked at the storage of the PO computer and requested that the Clerk raise the issue of its storage and keeping the computer on 24-hours a day as a potential fire risk. The PC's felt the computer should not be left on and stored in the cupboard in that condition.

Councillors also considered heating needs for Reading Room. It was decided to price up a "Frost Stat" with a view to fitting it in the kitchen area and prevent the problems caused by freezing pipes. **ACTION: Daniel Robertson to enquire about cost of frost stat. ACTION: Clerk to contact PO and ask them to turn off heating after each PO session and to provide instruction on how to switch heating on.**

Parish Councillor responsibilities were discussed and Trevor Gill volunteered to take on roads maintenance.

Planting of tubs was discussed. **ACTION: Trevor Gill to contact Anna Prosser and enquire about surplus plants for use in the AD tubs with a red, white and blue colour theme if possible**

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

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – 2nd Apr, 14th May (7th May Bank Holiday), 11th June (4th June Bank Holiday), 2nd July, 6th Aug, 3rd Sept, 1st Oct, 5th Nov, 3rd Dec.
Extraordinary planning meeting dates at 7.30pm Reading Room: 19th Mar, 16th April, 28th May, 25th June, 16th July, 20th Aug, 17th Sept 15th Oct, 19th Nov, 17th Dec.
Agenda posting dates: 26th Mar, 10th April, 1st June, 25th June, 30th July, 24th Aug, 26th Sept, 28th Oct, 26th Nov.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Internal document. NOT for publication on website or within minutes.

Action Points Summary:

Matters Outstanding:

- None

Actions from February meeting:

Daniel Robertson:

- write letter to landowner regarding removal of waste materials
- provide update on jubilee event at next meeting.
- report holes in road to Patch Byrne.
- enquire about cost of frost stat.

Clerk:

- contact Margaret Maughan and confirm that Norton security is not required.
- contact PO and ask them to turn off heating after each PO session and to provide instruction on how to switch heating on.

Alastair:

- report back on whether AD would have a fete in 2012.

Trevor:

- update welcome pack contacts.
- create and update a contact list for ADPC.
- contact Anna Prosser and enquire about surplus plants for use in the AD tubs with a red, white and blue colour theme if possible

Ongoing ADPC Projects:

Update of welcome pack and loading onto website.