Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council

Monday 5th November 2012

1. APOLOGIES: Trevor Gill, Diana Biddlestone 420

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

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: None

3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: The minutes were accepted and signed by David Hutt.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

Community

a. Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch: David Hutt did not have any update from Lily Hope-Frost. Councillor Williams did not have any new information to share. The Clerk stated that there had not been any crime news emails during the last month.

b. PO computer: The Clerk has not received any further information on this matter and will continue to chase it. **ACTION: Clerk to chase up the storage of the PO computer.**

c. Playground: Alastair Whetstone has been seeking a meeting with Catherine Whalberg but no meeting has been set up yet. Alastair Whestone commented that Trevor Gill's legal advisor was going to look at the terms of the lease. **ACTION: Trevor Gill to organise review of the play ground lease.**

   The Clerk pointed out that it was important to identify what if any legal costs may fall upon the Parish Council in order that it could be factored into the budget which is being prepared.

d. Green Area Contract and DC contract: At the last meeting Councillor Williams had identified some possible cost savings associated with grass cutting by Stratford District Council. Upon examination of the map and schedule of cuts it was decided that the cuts should be retained as they added to the general appearance of the village for a minimal cost. **ACTION: Clerk to contact Matt Austin and confirm that ADPC wish to continue with the grass cutting service currently offered.**

   Alastair Whetstone confirmed that he will be putting a couple of sheep into the cemetery car-park to keep the grass down. The Clerk pointed out that the previous person to graze sheep there had removed them because of the danger presented by the yew berries. Alastair Whestone confirmed that he would deal with this matter before putting the sheep into the area.

   A discussion took place about the potential renewal of the current green area contractor's agreement. The Clerk presented a short report on the matter:

Report into the renewal of green area contractor, autumn 2012.

The existing contract was awarded after the work had gone out to tender to several contractors.

In considering the next year's provision for green area maintenance, ADPC undertook a review of the current contractors work, MFM Services.

- The work has been found to be of a satisfactory quality.
- There have been no complaints
- The work has been undertaken without additional costs
- The contractor has responded positively to the Parish Council's requests for extra work/quotations.

Rationale for renewal of contract.

The work for the following year is very similar to the work undertaken in the current year.

The increase in price for the next two years is marginal and, if offered a two year contract the contractor has offered to, "freeze my prices over that period based upon my most recent quotation. I always apply the most competitive price to any quotation I present, with true inflation particularly fuel my main concern."

Some of the benefits to ADPC or renewing the contract for two years include: 421

- Certainty in financial expenditure on green area maintenance, one of the major areas of expenditure for the parish council
- A marginal increase in costs
- Continuity of service provision
- Cost saving in administration by not putting contract out to tender for 2 years
- Fuel costs are a consideration in green area maintenance. Failing to fix the costs over the next two years could result in a significant increase in expenditure for ADPC

ADPC discussed the matter at the October 2012 meeting and sought further information based on an extension of 2 years, as well as one year.

After further discussions the Parish Council took a vote and decided unanimously that the contract should be renewed for a further 2 years. Alastair Whetstone raised a query about what would happen if the quality of work fell for whatever reason. The Clerk confirmed that the PC only paid for work that had been completed and that it was not obliged to pay for 2 years work if it was not undertaken. Proposed: David Hutt, Seconded: Daniel Robertson.
ACTION: Clerk to confirm renewal of green area contract with Michael Mann based on his quotation for a further 2 years.

Roads
Traffic, Roads and Drains: Daniel Robertson confirmed that the leaf fall was causing some issues with the drains and the Parish Council encouraged people to remove the leaves if they were causing a problem and in order to cope with heavy rainfall.

Environment/Maintenance

f) St John's – Christmas Gathering: The Parish Council had read a number of emails from Lily Hope-Frost concerning the arrangements and potential funding of the Christmas Gathering drinks. The Parish Council thought that LHF's suggestion that the pub might operate a cash bar would be a sensible way forward, reducing the pressure on PC funds and providing an opportunity for the pub. **ACTION: Clerk to Contact LHF to confirm that the PC agree with the idea she had proposed to operate a cash-bar run by the pub.**

Communication/Administration

g) Contents of Bank Safe – Carry forward to January 2013

5. COUNCIL REPORTS: County and District Councillor's Report

1. **Warwickshire County Council, Council Tax 2013-14 –** The County Council has already announced that there will be no increase in the County element of Council Tax for the year 2013-14. This will be the fourth consecutive year that there has been no increase in this tax. The District Council is expected to follow the lead of the County Council and freeze their Council Tax and the Police element remains to be determined when the new Police Commissioner is appointed.

2. **Children's Centre, Early Intervention Project** – I hope by now the Parish Council will have received an invitation from The Lighthorne Heath Children's Centre who will be holding an Open Evening on Thursday 22nd November 2012 from 6.30 p.m. until 8.00 p.m. to acquaint Parish Councils with the work of the Early Intervention Project. I do hope that someone from the Parish Council will be at the event so see firsthand the excellent work of the Children's Centre. I am aware of two families from Avon Dassett who have registered with this project.

3. **Police Commissioners –** Just a reminder that the election to select the next Police Commissioner for Warwickshire takes place on Thursday 15th November 2012. Unlike General Elections the alternative vote system will be used on this occasion where the public are invited to select their first and second choices. The result is expected to be declared mid-day 16th November.

4. **Broadband –** The evaluation of demand has now been completed and District-wide the greatest demand for Broadband improvement comes not from emerging new business and existing business but from the domestic sector where parents have children receiving secondary education. For example, children now

submit their homework which is then marked and returned both electronically. With the decline of reference books, young people studying are increasingly using Google as a method of determining facts which previously would have been provided in their text books. The County Council is now able to start the tendering process to attract other partners to roll out the improved Broadband service. The government has raised the standard expected by requiring all households to be able to receive at least 10 mbs by 2014. In south Warwickshire, sadly there are many areas that are not receiving even the previous minimum standard of 2 mbs and the need to improve overall coverage is accepted by all parties.

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

Sue Harris submitted a letter outlining her immediate resignation as cleaner for the Reading Room. The Parish Council and Clerk were sorry to hear that she was leaving and thanked her for all of her hard work over the years. Sue Harris suggested an alternative person who was know to the Councillors. **ACTION: Clerk to contact potential new cleaner for RR.**

The Clerk highlighted the leaflet on the Sure Start initiative. Daniel Robertson hoped he would be able to attend.

The Clerk read two notes from Jill Burgess: 1. To establish what the PC wished to do about the Norton renewal on the laptop with access to SDC. The PC felt that the chances of being exposed to a virus were small when the only communications was with the secure SDC website. It therefore unanimously supported the move to uninstall the Norton reminder and to install free ant-virus software. **ACTION: Clerk to inform Jill Burgess that Norton should be removed from the laptop and AGV loaded on in its place.**

2. Jill Burgess reported the poor state of two of the flower tubs and informed the PC that she had taken up the geraniums and was storing them over winter. **ACTION: Clerk to thank Jill Burgess for removing and offering to store the geraniums over the winter. ACTION: Clerk to contact Trevor Gill and organise the replacement of the two degraded tubs with the new tub he is currently storing for the PC.**

The Councillors commented that it would soon be time to consider the purchase of plants for the tubs. The Clerk offered a reminder that all expenditure had to authorised through the parish council meetings before it was committed or spent.

A resignation letter from Diana Biddlestone was read out by David Hutt. The Parish Council was sorry to hear that Diana was unable to carry on as a Councillor and remarked on what great work she had undertaken whilst on the PC. **ACTION: Clerk to inform Graham Raspin of the resignation of Diana Biddlestone from ADPC.**

The Clerk had received a note from Jenny Sherriff informing her that the Postmistress had to leave the PO early as there was no heat in the PO area. After discussions it was felt most appropriate to provide a fan heater in order to provide instant heat to the area rather than rely upon the storage heater. The storage heater would be left on the minimum setting through the winter to avoid any pipes freezing. **ACTION: PC to provide fan heater for PO area. ACTION: Clerk to advise Postmistress of new method of heating the PO area and ensure that she was able to operate the new fire.**

The Clerk read a letter regarding changes to PAYE. David Hutt confirmed that this would be dealt with by the Payroll company, Douglas Tonks.

The Clerk had received an email from a 3rd year film student asking for permission to film around the village and inside St John's church. The Clerk had sought further information from the student about the filming. Chris Williams advised that the student would have to contact the Church Commissioners to gain permission to film within the church. **ACTION: Clerk to contact film student and inform them that they will need to contact the Church Commissioners to obtain permission to film inside the church.**

7. PLANNING (Declarations of interests):

12/02273/LBC Meadow Cottage, Mr and Mrs Lyth. Proposed demolition of existing conservatory to rear and replacement with garden room. ADPC considered the plans and the decision was to, "Make no representation." **ACTION: Clerk to log planning decision.**

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Appendix A: FINANCIAL STATEMENT November 2012:

Balance at close of business 31/10/12

Current Account	£ 3,616.16 *
Savings Account	£ 3,374.47

This figure includes a balance of **£443.40** for St John's Steps Fund. Total balance for ADPC is £6,547.23.

Bank Transactions October 2012

Current Account	**Chq/SO/DD**	**In**	**Out**
4.10.12	1204		180.00
5.10.12	DD		37.00
8.10.12	1209		62.38
10.10.12	1207		11.00
12.10.12	1203		3,000.00
15.10.12	1205		222.00
25.10.12	Douglas Tonks		250.63

Deposit Account		**In**	**Out**
9.10.12	Interest	0.15	

Cheques issued from meeting		**Cheque No**
J. Sherriff (Oct Coffee)	9.79	1210
Green Area Contractor (Sept Mowing)	222.00	1211
S. Harris	11.00	1212
H. Hide-Wright (Expenses Oct)	22.83	1213
Total cheques for ADPC	£265.62	

Cheques were signed by David Hutt and Alastair Whetstone.

The Clerk highlighted an unusually high invoice from Douglas Tonks and explained that upon enquiring she had been told that the VAT charge of £39 should have been the usual charge of £2.70 and a credit would go into ADPC's bank account.

- Budget for 2012/14: Alastair Whetstone confirmed that Trevor Gill was due to work on the budget figures. The Clerk suggested a meeting date so that the matter could be discussed in order that a draft budget could be formulated. **ACTION: Trevor Gill, Alastair Whetstone and Clerk to meet to formulate a draft budget.**

9. MEMBER REPORTS: The Clerk had not received advice from the Council regarding the type of tree to plant for the family seeking to install a tree as a memorial. It was decided that she will contact the family and ask them to submit a proposal on the type of tree they wish to install and when they will do this. **ACTION: Clerk to contact family to establish the type of tree they wish to plant and when they hope to do this.**

10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 3rd Dec.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm