

Minutes of an Ordinary meeting of Avon Dassett Parish Council

15th May 2023 at

The Reading Room, Avon Dassett

All attended were requested to follow the meeting protocol

The meeting commenced at 19.15

1. PRESENT

Cllr Mike Blakeman
Cllr Trevor Gill (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Liz Hirst
Cllr Alex Jackson
Cllr Darrell Muffitt (Chairman)
Cllr C Mills

Joanne Jarman (JJ) – Parish Clerk (minute taker)
Three members of the public were present.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllrs Gist and Rock (SDC)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3 members of the public were present.

A resident congratulated the Parish Councillors, Cllr Mills and Cllr Gist on their election. National Garden Scheme and the shortage of volunteers was raised. Resident to send a script to the Clerk.

ACTION: Mailchimp to be sent out to the village asking for volunteers for the National Garden Scheme - Clerk

St Josephs – planning application approved to move assets out of St Josephs to Shipston on Stour, a resident has expressed her concern at the lack of consultation and made a plea that when assets are removed their provenance is clearly stated. The request has been acknowledged.

ACTION: SDC to be contacted to raise the concerns around the lack of consultation around St Josephs – Cllr Blakeman

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2023 were approved:

Proposed: Cllr Gill

Seconded: Cllr Hirst

Unanimously approved

6. TO RECEIVE PROGRESS REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS NOT COVERED LATER ON THE AGENDA

The Clerk's Report (Appendix A) forms part of these minutes. The completed actions are referred to in this report.

The outstanding actions will be taken forward as follows:

ACTION: Tree Warden to be contacted to arrange to discuss the next steps arising out of his report - Clerk

ACTION: Confirmation to be obtained from National Lottery that the Coronation grant is complete so that the application for the adult and children's play equipment can be progressed - Clerk

ACTION: Adults' and children's National Lottery Grant Application to be progressed – Cllr Hirst
ACTION: Drains on Bitham Hill to be inspected and any necessary work to be arranged – Cllr Gill
ACTION: Diocese to be contacted regarding the plans for St Joseph's – Cllr Gill (Clerk to send on contact details)

7. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

7.1 Warwickshire County Council

Cllr Mills presented his report. Appendix B.

It was noted that the County Council Grant fund is now open.

Cllr Gill asked if SDC has a long-term plan for the roll out of central charging points for electric cars.

ACTION: Information to be provided on SDC plans for central charging points – Cllr Mills

7.2 Stratford District Council

The Clerk presented the report from Cllrs Gist and Rock. Appendix C.

The reports were accepted.

8. PLANNING

Planning submissions made since the last meeting are reported in the Clerk's report – Appendix A

9. PROJECTS GROUP

The group has not met since the last meeting due to the elections.

ACTION: Projects Group meeting to be called – Cllr Muffitt

10. COMMUNITY

10.1 To receive an update on the refurbishment of The Reading Room

Cllr Muffitt confirmed that the refurbishments are complete. Requests have been made for additional improvements; the hot water supply will not be upgraded at this stage. Cupboard next to microwave will be looked at along with a cupboard in the storeroom.

ACTION: The need for additional or replacement cupboards along with a number/new lock to be reviewed – Cllr Muffitt

10.2 To receive an update on the Burial Ground

No update

10.3 To receive an update on St John's Church

Resident asked to contact The Churches Conservation Trust to establish the progress on the repairs to the tower.

It was noted that the funds have been raised from the sale of plaques for the steps at Johns.

10.4 To receive an update on community policing/neighbourhood watch

No update. Cllr Jackson to take responsibility for this area.

10.5 To receive an update on the playground

ACTION: Flagpole to be moved to prevent the flag being embroiled in the trees, remedial repairs to be undertaken during the process – Cllr Gill

10.6 To receive an update on the War Memorial Grant Application

This has been submitted.

10.7 To discuss local GP surgeries and the impact of local building developments

Cllr Gill referred to the Lighthorne group lobbying for a GP surgery and the request for Parish Council support.

All Councillors gave their support. It was agreed that Cllr Gill will continue as liaison with Cllr Gist. It was noted that the Parish Council will require regular updates on the progress.

ACTION: Lighthorne lobbying updates to be provided as and when necessary- Cllr Gill

11. HIGHWAYS, STREET LIGHTING AND FOOTPATHS

11.1 To receive an update on highways, street lighting and drains

Various issues were raised at the meeting. Cllr Gill asked that all Councillors send him a list of issues.

ACTION: Any current or future issues to be reported to Cllr Gill – All Councillors

12. FINANCE

12.1 To approve the payments in the schedule attached to this agenda – Appendix D

Proposed: Cllr Blakeman

Seconded: Cllr Hirst

Unanimously approved

12.2 To review the financial statements to 31st March 2023 – Appendix E

Cllr Gill thanked the Clerk.

Proposed: Cllr Gill

Seconded: Cllr Hirst

Unanimously approved

12.3 To consider the AGAR and approve the signing of parts 1 and 2

<https://www.avondassettparishcouncil.com/finance/annual-governance-statements/>

Proposed: Cllr Gill

Seconded: Cllr Jackson

Unanimously approved

12.4 To receive the internal auditors report – Appendix F

Cllr Gill noted the good report.

ACTION: Review of information attached to the minutes and published on the website to be reviewed – Cllr Muffitt, Cllr Gill and Clerk

12.5 To confirm the dates of the period for the Exercise of Public Rights

Proposed: Cllr Gill

Seconded: Cllr Jackson

Unanimously approved

ACTION: Notice for the Exercise of Public Rights to be posted on the website on 2nd June 2023 - Clerk

12.6 To confirm the arrangements for external audit by Moore UK

Proposed: Cllr Hirst

Seconded: Cllr Muffitt

Unanimously approved

ACTION: AGAR and supporting information to be submitted to the external auditor - Clerk

12.7 To review the bank mandate

It was proposed that the mandate be updated to reflect the elected Councillors.

It was resolved that Cllr Baxter be removed from the bank mandate and that Cllr Alex Jackson be added to the mandate. All Councillors will be given internet banking rights.

Proposed: Cllr Gill

Seconded: Cllr Blakeman

Unanimously approved

ACTION: Bank mandate to be updated - Clerk

13. ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**13.1 To confirm the date of the Annual Parish Assembly**

A discussion took place around the format of the meeting. It was agreed that the assembly be as interactive as possible with a view to attracting volunteers and including the community in considering the priorities for the Parish.

It was proposed that the Chair call a meeting for 30th May 2023.

Proposed: Cllr Hirst

Seconded: Cllr Gill

Unanimously approved

ACTION: Community Groups to be invited to submit reports – Cllr Muffitt

ACTION: Agenda to be issued with 7 clear working days' notice – Chair

ACTION: Refreshments to be arranged – Cllr Hirst

14. CORRESPONDENCE (For Information Only)

None

15. COUNCILLORS REPORTS**To report on minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda**

Cllr Hirst thanked all the volunteers who supported the Coronation events noting that it was a great success.

Cllr Blakeman noted that no notice was given from Severn Trent for the recent works albeit these were emergency works.

ACTION: Contact at Severn Trent to be sourced to raise this with - Cllr Gill and Clerk

Cemetery Car Park – groups to let Clerk and Cllr Gill know if they want to use the car park. The grass will be cut if the car park is to be used.

Cllr Gill is considering a village tidy up in the coming months.

Cllr Jackson sends apologies for the Annual Parish Assembly.

16. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

- Cemetery Rules to be reviewed
- Projects Group terms of reference to be reviewed
- Operation Menai Bridge
- Cllr Blakeman sent his apologies

17. MEETING DATES

3rd July 2023

The meeting closed at 20.11.

ACTIONS summary:

- **Mailchimp to be sent out to the village asking for volunteers for the National Garden Scheme - Clerk**
- **SDC to be contacted to raise the concerns around the lack of consultation around St Josephs – Cllr Blakeman**
- **Tree Warden to be contacted to arrange to discuss the next steps arising out of his report - Clerk**
- **Confirmation to be obtained from National Lottery that the Coronation grant is complete so that the application for the adult and children's play equipment can be progressed - Clerk**
- **ACTION: Adults' and children's National Lottery Grant Application to be progressed – Cllr Hirst**
- **Drains on Bitham Hill to be inspected and any necessary work to be arranged – Cllr Gill**
- **Diocese to be contacted regarding the plans for St Joseph's – Cllr Gill (Clerk to send on contact details)**
- **Information to be provided on SDC plans for central charging points – Cllr Mills**

- **The need for additional or replacement cupboards along with a number/new lock to be reviewed – Cllr Muffitt**
- **Flagpole to be moved to prevent the flag being embroiled in the trees, remedial repairs to be undertaken during the process – Cllr Gill**
- **Lighthorne lobbying updates to be provided as and when necessary- Cllr Gill**
- **review of information attached to the minutes and published on the website to be reviewed – Cllr Muffitt, Cllr Gill and Clerk**
- **Notice for the Exercise of Public Rights to be posted on the website on 2nd June 2023 – Clerk**
- **AGAR and supporting information to be submitted to the external auditor - Clerk**
- **Bank mandate to be updated – Clerk**
- **Community Groups to be invited to submit reports – Cllr Muffitt**
- **Annual Parish Assembly Agenda to be issued with 7 clear working days' notice – Chair**
- **Refreshments for Annual Parish Assembly to be arranged – Cllr Hirst**
- **Contact at Severn Trent to be sourced to raise this with - Cllr Gill and Clerk**

Avon Dassett Parish Council

Clerk's Report – 15th May 2023

Agenda Reference	Update
ACM 5 and 6	Review of standing orders – these have been updated to include the Policy Review Schedule. In the past all policies have been reviewed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting. This, in my view, makes the review of policies quote onerous. In order to facilitate a more meaningful review I have updated the Standing Orders to refer to a Policy Review Schedule.
ACM 7	I am not proposing any changes to the Code of Conduct, Risk Assessment, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations. The inventory is attached for approval.
ACM 11	The responsibilities of the Parish Councillors need to be reviewed. The areas which need to be considered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects Group chair • The Reading Room • Community events • Planning • Highways, drains • Green areas • Street lights • Community policing/Neighbourhood watch • Playground • St John's Churchyard • Cemetery • War Memorial
ACM12	The insurance cover was considered at the meeting held on 6th March 2023.
ACM13	A137 expenditure is included in the financial statements for the year to 31 st March 2023
ACM14	The dates of the meetings for the remainder of the year were agreed at the meeting held on 7 th November 2022.
6.1	Completed Actions
	Clerk to ensure the original email was forwarded to the Projects Group and Projects Group to respond - email resent 7.3.2023
	Voter ID FAQ was posted on the notice board and website on 7.3.2023
	Planning Committee meeting to discuss the application for Meadows Cottage – Cllr Baxter attended the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council.
	Detailed costings for the Coronation have been provided to the Clerk.
	Legal Protocol was sent to the agents and a meeting arranged. Minutes are available on the Parish Council website following the informal meeting.

	The resident who raised the possibility of safety mirrors has been contacted and informed that WCC will not permit the installation of safety mirrors on its land.
	Defibrillator process has been updated on the website.
	St John's Ambulance were approached for availability of defibrillator pads. The make and model of the defibrillator has been forward to enable them to respond.
	Street light maintenance contract with WCC has been renewed.
	LED street lighting will be considered at the Projects Group.
	The tree warden's report and recommendations have been sent to the Gardening Club.
	Insurance policy with BHIB has been taken out.
	The following actions remain outstanding:
	Tree Warden – discussions to be held to discuss the next steps.
	Drains on Bitham Hill still need to be cleared. It has been reported that the pavements on Church Hill are in need of attention.
	National Lottery Grant applications for adult and children's equipment was submitted. As only one application can be submitted at any one time they will be resubmitted now that Coronation events have taken place and once any necessary submissions have been made to the National Lottery.
	Diocese to be contacted to clarify the plans for St Josephs and to discuss any options for its use that would benefit the village
9	Planning: 23/00766/FUL – Spinney Bank, replacement of windows and doors - no objection response submitted 29.3.2023. Permission was granted on 24 th April 2023. 23/00919/TREE Meadow Cottage – a no representations response has been submitted 23/00612/FUL 9 Avon Carrow – installation of new 6 x 8 Cosy Shed in new position in the garden – a no objection response has been submitted
10.1	The Reading Room kitchen refurbishment is now complete.
10.6	War Memorial Grant pre application to be submitted.
12.2 to 12.6	The Financial Statements for the year ended 31 st March 2023, along with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return has been completed; the internal auditor has completed his work. Both the AGAR and the auditor's report is included with the agenda. The Notice of Public Rights is also included with the agenda. The gross receipts and gross payments both fall below £25,000 and as such there is no requirement to send the AGAR for external audit. No exemption from external audit has ever been claimed by the Parish Council so I have completed the forms based on them being submitted for external audit.
12.7	Review of bank mandate – I am proposing that all elected Councillors be added to the mandate and those Councillors no longer in post will be removed.
13.1	Annual Parish Meeting – it is not the Clerk's role to call this meeting but I am proposing that it is held on Tuesday 30 th May at 7pm. I will circulate an agenda for approval and ensure that it is posted to the website by Friday 19 th May, being at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

County Councillor report Avon Dassett Parish Council Meeting 15th May 2023

Charger Safety

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service is issuing a warning to the residents about the dangers of charging electronic devices on beds, following a recent house fire that started in a young girl's bedroom due to an overheated charger.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4137/warwickshire-residents-warned-of-the-dangers-of-charging-devices-on-beds-after-house-fire>



Hate Crime in Warwickshire

Everyone should feel safe and respected in Warwickshire, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender, or any other characteristic. The law protects everyone against prejudice or hostility that is directed towards them based on their disability, identity, nationality race or religion. Don't be afraid; speak up and #ReportHateCrime here:

<https://reporthatenow.com>

Transforming SEND support in Warwickshire

An innovative resource has launched to support neurodivergent children and young people in Warwickshire.

There have been issues with parents who have a child with SEND who cannot access mainstream schools. Fortunately, WCC does have a school for children with these needs in Bedworth.



Warwickshire's Food Strategy set to boost affordability and sustainability.

At its meeting on Tuesday 18 April 2023, Warwickshire County Council Cabinet approved its ambitious approach to transforming the county's food system and improving the health and wellbeing of its residents.

Taking action on food poverty and making good quality, healthy and affordable food available for all is at the heart of this new strategy. The aim of this plan includes Reducing food poverty and resulting ill-health; Promoting local and sustainable food; and Decreasing food waste and greenhouse gases related to our food system.

Warwickshire County Council has allocated £120k to support the development and implementation of this work.

The Warwickshire Food Strategy 2023-2026 is available to view online

at <https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/s30257/The%20draft%20Warwickshire%20Food%20Strategy%202023-2026%20Cabinet%20Report.pdf>

Cost of Living

Eligible families receiving certain benefits will receive their first Cost of Living Payment for 2023 between 25 April and 17 May.

Eligible families receiving tax credits will receive their first Cost of Living Payment for 2023 between 2-9 May.

You don't need to apply – if you are eligible, you will be paid automatically the same way you usually receive your benefit or tax credits.

For more info: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment>

I need Help now

If you are feeling overwhelmed by the rising costs of living and need advice on what you can do now to get the support you need, visit the “I need support now” page on the Warwickshire Cost of Living website.

You'll find advice on how to pay for your food, energy and water, how to get money advice, how to manage aspects of family life, how to access emergency food and what to do if your mental health has been affected.

Find help here: <https://www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk/home/i-need-urgent-help>

Energy Bills Support Scheme

Residents using prepayment meters are encouraged to claim their £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme voucher to help with paying energy costs this winter. Posters (in English + 5 languages)

For those who do not receive the discount automatically, you will need to apply for energy bill support. You may be eligible to apply if your main home is:

A residential park home, on a boat on a permanent residential mooring on a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site, part of a heat network without an electricity meter. In social or private rented accommodation which has a business energy connection or a communal electricity supply, off the mains electricity or gas grid. In a care home or assisted living facility and you pay for some or all of your care or in a separate domestic home within a non-domestic property (such as a farmhouse or a flat above a shop)

If you are eligible, find out how to apply here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic>

County Councillors Grant Fund

Round 1 of the Councillors' Grant Fund opened for applications on Tuesday 9th May the **deadline of Sunday 18 June at 5pm.**

Applications should be submitted using the online application form found on our webpage <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/cllrgrants>. For help with completing your application form, applicants are encouraged to speak to their local Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA) Funding and Group Development Officers. Details can be found on their webpage www.wcava.org.uk

Chris Mills
Kineton and Red Horse

County Councillor Annual Report

2022/23 has also been a challenging year for Warwickshire County Council and the residents of our County. Sudden unexpected expenditures created by the cost of living and the on-going Covid-19 crisis created real challenges for people experiencing financial hardship. Therefore, WCC received many calls asking for assistance. The Council were able to help through the WCC's Household Support Fund who support the most vulnerable residents. £421 million was also made available to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need to help with global inflationary challenges and the significantly rising cost of living. The objective of the Household Support Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with expenditures, specifically food, energy and water bills. This phase of the grant runs from 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2023. Warwickshire has been allocated £3.47million, which is being distributed through the existing Local Welfare Scheme. Also, since October 2022, WCC have spent £1.81m on vouchers and grants to community groups and charities plus additional grant to Act on Energy's Warm and Well programme which

supports residents with boiler repairs, servicing and fuel debt management. The grant and voucher scheme included:

£569k to children eligible for benefits related free school meals for food support. £926k as part of the November/December utilities promotion £250k in grants to community groups and charities. However, the largest spend for WCC is Adult Social Care @£200m per year. Furthermore, WCC paid £2.8m to increase capacity in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

One of the main challenges for the Council has been the displacement of refugees. Warwickshire has a proud history of support for refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, and most recently, Ukraine. Several Afghan refugees have been helped by WCC with an Employment Package part of the Fair Chance Employer Program. Similarly, the Council oversaw The Afghan Resettlement Scheme, Afghan relocation Scheme and the Afghan Refugee Scheme. There was a total of 147 refugees who were accommodated at Walton Hall, Wellesbourne. WCC were able to assist with GP registration, school places, benefit claims, housing, and childcare

In summary, Warwickshire County Council rose to the occasion during 2022/23, they were able to assist in supporting the neediest of our residents in these very unsettling times. Even though the number of unexpected problems has created an extra financial burden on Warwickshire County Council, they were nevertheless able to set the Council Tax at 3.94% which is less than the

Government have allowed Councils. WCC were not prepared to take more Tax than was needed from our hard-pressed residents. That being, the increase in the Council Tax will generate an extra £3.849m to provide funding to help with the cost-of-living crisis.

Chris Mills
Kineton and Red Horse

**From your District Councillors for Bishops Itchington, Fenny Compton and Napton Ward
ELECTION**

District Council elections took place on 4th May with the results being declared on 5th May.

Our Ward is much enlarged which now includes the parishes of Bishops Itchington, Shuckburgh, Napton, Priors Marston, Priors Hardwick, Wormleighton, Farnborough, Fenny Compton, Avon Dassett, Warmington & Arlescote and Shotteswell. Ladbroke has been removed. This will be the largest ward in the District and will have two councillors. The results for this new ward were as follows:

Nigel Rock - Liberal Democrats - 998 Elected
Natalie Gist - Liberal Democrats - 955 Elected
Christopher Kettle - Local Conservatives - 855
Keith Bushnell - Local Conservatives - 672
Judith Leask - Labour - 200
Seth Colton - Green - 188
Matthew North - Green – 150

This means your two new councillors are Natalie Gist and Nigel Rock.

The turnout was 38.44%.

In the March, before the election process was started, the Council was Conservative controlled with the balance being:

- Conservatives – 19 seats
- Liberal Democrats - 12 seats
- Independents - 4 seat
- Green - 1 seat

Following the election, the new balance is:

- Liberal Democrats - 25 seats
- Conservatives - 12 seats
- Independent - 1 seat
- Green - 3 seats

This means that Stratford District Council will now be Liberal Democrat controlled. Clearly this is change for our villages and for the District.

We aware that some residents were unable to vote because of ID problems and postal votes not arriving. Whilst this was a small number, it is unsatisfactory. It was always going to be a challenge for the Council's election staff with boundary changes, and the new photo ID requirement. There will be an examination of what went right and what went wrong.

From your District Councillors for Bishops Itchington, Fenny Compton and Napton Ward

Full results can be found here:

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/news/press.cfm/current/1/item/137970>

Natalie and I thank everyone for their support and will do our best to represent our communities.

Cllr Natalie Gist

Natalie.Gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Cllr Nigel Rock

nigel.rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

APPENDIX D

AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS SINCE LAST MEETING**CURRENT ACCOUNT**

Date	Payee	Details	Expenditure	Income
07 March 2023	AD Local History Group	Community Website Support Grant	£270.00	
07 March 2023	J Jarman	Mileage	£48.60	
07 March 2023	J Jarman	Google account	£41.40	
07 March 2023	J Jarman	Dog sign for playground	£24.99	
07 March 2023	C Dancer	Cleaning - February	£30.00	
07 March 2023	T Gill	Reading Room equipment	£39.99	
07 March 2023	T Gill	Defibrillator pads	£52.81	
07 March 2023	WCC	Street light maintenance	£150.34	
07 March 2023	MW & DEM Watts	Coffee morning - February	£14.74	
07 March 2023	BHIB	Insurance	£553.29	
13 March 2023	EDF Energy	Electricity	£51.62	
20 March 2023	Joanne Jarman	Clerk Salary - March	£554.55	
08 March 2023	J Martin	Plaque	£0.00	
20 March 2023	Nuthatch Design	Reading Room refurbishment	£1,499.08	
21 March 2023	Transfer	00 January 1900	£0.00	
22 March 2023	British Telecom	Reading Room WiFi	£33.65	
22 March 2023	1&1	ADPC Website	£23.99	
22 March 2023	1&1	ADPC Email Accounts	£19.20	
22 March 2023	TB Gill	Reading room hire	£0.00	
28 March 2023	Total Energies	Electricity - to 31.1.2023	£100.72	
29 March 2023	TB Gill	Reading Room equipment	£18.32	
31 March 2023	National Lottery	Coronation grant	£0.00	
31 March 2023	Total Energies	Electricity - to 31.1.2023	£12.24	

£3,539.53**£0.00****DEPOSIT ACCOUNT**

Date	Payee	Details	Expenditure	Income
31 March 2023	Lloyds Bank Plc	Interest Income		£11.45

£0.00**£11.45****FOR AUTHORISATION**PAYMENTS FROM PRECEPT**Direct debits for the year for approval**

British Telecom	Reading Room phone	Estimated annual	360.00
EDF Energy	Reading Room electricity	Estimated annual	300.00
Total Energies	Street light electricity	Estimated annual	1,170.00
1&1	Website	Estimated annual	300.00
Data Protection			35.00
Other payments			
WALC	Annual subscription		136.00
Google	Clerk's email	Feb - May	24.84
WJ Robinson	Internal audit		140.00
D Muffitt	Coal and firelights for election day		15.90
WALC	Training for new Councillors		300.00
SLCC	Clerk subscription		69.50
J Jarman	Printer ink cartridge		20.09
J Jarman	Printer paper	2.5 reams	13.40
J Jarman	Use of home as office	£3 per week for 12 months	156.00
Frank Mann Farmers	April mowing		436.80
	Reading Room lock		150.00
	Reading Room cupboards		250.00
	Coronation	Bookers	360.38
	Coronation	Tesco	24.95
	Coronation	Decoration	17.97
	Coronation	Decoration	24.51
	Coronation	Prize for Sally	6.00
S Sandiford	Coronation	Bouncy Castle	150.00
S Sandiford	Coronation	Bouncy Castle	164.35
Site Plant Services	Coronation	Toilet hire	270.00

£4,895.69

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

FOR

**AVON DASSETT
PARISH COUNCIL**

FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR

2022 - 2023

Prepared by: Bill Robinson

Issued May 2023

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Statement of Responsibility

The audit work I have undertaken was carried out based upon the Internal Audit Scope agreed with Avon Dassett Parish Council

This report has been prepared solely for Avon Dassett Parish Council's use and should not be quoted in whole or in part. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, nor is intended, for any other purpose.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to my attention during the course of the audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. The Parish Council should assess recommendations for improvements for their full impact on the Parish Council's budget, financial regulations, standing orders, risk assessments, and any other activities before they are implemented.

The responsibility for a sound system of internal control rests with the Parish Council and therefore audit work performed by the Internal Auditor should not be relied upon to identify all circumstances of fraud or irregularity should there be any, although these internal audit procedures are designed so that any material irregularity has a reasonable probability of discovery. Even sound systems of internal control may not be proof against collusive fraud. Internal audit procedures are designed to focus on areas that are considered to be of greatest risk and significance. Effective implementation of Internal Audit recommendations by the Internal Auditor to the Parish Council is important for the maintenance of a reliable internal control system.



Consultant

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Avon Dassett Parish Council Internal Audit for the Financial Year 2022 - 2023

The Internal audit was undertaken with the Clerk/RFO of Avon Dassett Parish Council on 24th April 2023, and online

Accurate book keeping

- Entries to the cashbook / spreadsheet were checked and found to be up to date and correct.
- Bank reconciliation – this was checked and found to be correct.
- In addition an audit trail of the following payments was carried out.

Payments

For year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Inv.	Payment	Amount	Payee	Min. ref.
	D.Debit	£218.14	E.ON	to be settled
	BACS	£1499.08	Nuthatch D&B	
6	BACS	£50.39	Ionos	AM2022
9	BACS	£524.80	F.Mann	AM2022-16
16	BACS	£176.20	D.Hicks	AM2022-16
18	BACS	£11.85	T.Gill	AM2022-16
20	BACS	£240.00	SPS Ltd.	AM2022-31
24	BACS	£524.80	F.Mann	AM2022-38
32	BACS	£37.85	C.Dancer	AM2022-38
34A	BACS	£600.00	DWF Law LLP	AM2022-38
40	BACS	£97.47	E.ON	AM2022-38
50	BACS	£54.02	Total Energies	AM2022-38
56	BACS	£240.00	PKF L'John	AM2022-38
66	BACS	£54.43	Total Energies	AM2022-45
70	BACS	£100.80	RoSPA	AM2022-45
80	BACS	£95.55	Total Energies	AM2022-53
84	BACS	£50.39	Ionos	AM2022-53
94	D.Debit	£33.65	BT	AM2023-10
96	BACS	£30.00	C.Dancer	AM2023-10
99	BACS	£150.34	WCC	AM2023-12
102	BACS	£51.62	EDF	AM2023-12
106	BACS	£112.96	Total Energies	AM2023-12
108	BACS	£218.14	E.ON	AM2023-12

All payments were matched to the individual invoice, bank statement and minute reference.

All payment audit trails were satisfactory

It was noted that a list of receipts and payments are sent with each agenda to Cllrs – good practice.

It was noted in minute 9th May 2022 (2022/16-12) that all Standing Orders and Direct Debits for payment are listed on the financial spreadsheet and presented to the Parish Council for approval – it is good practice to formally approve all standing payments.

It was noted that a bi- monthly budget monitoring spreadsheet is provided for Cllrs.

It was noted that all ring fenced funds are listed on the financial spreadsheet

Receipts.

It was noted that all receipts were properly accounted for

Minutes of the Parish Council meetings

All minutes checked, and found to be satisfactory, with no unusual activity.

It was noted that power is still formally delegated to the Clerk through the Scheme of Delegation to enable Council business to be carried out between meetings.

The Parish Council should investigate whether too many documents are being attached to the minutes because it could well be unclear exactly what is being approved. This could cause a problem should the minutes be challenged.

It was noted that some minutes have attached copies of letters to and from the Parish Council solicitors regarding outstanding claims from an individual, the Parish Council should consider whether these would be better kept in a restricted manner given the Data Protection Regulation, and individual rights to privacy. The Parish Council should be aware that to move into a confidential session must be by resolution only.

It was noted that the Parish Council has now moved to bi-monthly meetings

Parish Council Agendas

It was noted that all hard copy agendas were properly signed, dated and with no unusual activity listed

Budget Controls

It was noted that the Clerk/RFO continued to prepare a bi-monthly budget monitoring update for Councillors together with a financial spreadsheet with reserves listed, and these are produced as appendices to each minute. The Parish Council and its Clerk/RFO are to be commended on this practice.

It was noted that this monthly financial statement for Councillors reconciles to the bank statements – this too is good practice.

It was noted that the Clerk ensures that a formal proposal for the payment of invoices is seen on all agendas.

It was noted that the yearly level of precept and budget is the result of a clearly defined process – this is good practice.

It was noted in minute 2022-39-11.5 that a draft budget for the financial year 2023-24 will be circulated to all Cllrs (budget drafted by the Chair and Clerk).

It was noted in minute 2022-45-13.4 that draft budgets for the financial year 2023-24 were updated and circulated.

It was noted in minute 2022-53-12.4 that the budget and precept for the financial year 2023-24 was approved and submitted to the District Council – this is a good process for budget and precept defining.

It was noted that all year end balances were moved to reserves – this is good practice.

Income Control

It was noted that all receipts are banked promptly, and satisfactorily checked against the bank statements.

Payroll

It was noted that responsibility for the payment of taxes, NICS, and pensions are still being undertaken by the Parish Council.

It was noted that the Parish Council fulfilled its pension obligations

Receipts and payments spreadsheet

The receipts and payments spreadsheet was checked and found to be accurate to the figures shown

Year end Accounts

The year end accounts were checked and found to be arithmetically correct.

AGAR 2022-2023

It was noted that the Annual Governance and Annual Accounting Statements were formally approved by the Parish Council, and properly signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

The internal auditor completed and signed page 3 of the AGAR 2022-2023 from Moore.

Sec.137 payments

It was noted that Avon Dasset Parish Council payments under this power are well within the statutory limits.

Internal audit

It was noted in minute of the meeting on 2022-31 that the internal audit report for 2021-2022 was reviewed and accepted – good practice to formally review the internal audit.

It was noted in minute 2022-61 that an Internal Auditor was formally appointed – good practice.

Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were checked on the Parish Council website and found to be current, this is good practice from the Parish Council in reviewing regularly

Standing Orders

The Standing Orders were checked on the Parish Council website and found to be current, this is good practice from the Parish Council in reviewing regularly.

Planning Standing Orders

It was noted that the Planning Standing Orders were reviewed on 9th May 2022 this is good practice from the Parish Council in reviewing regularly.

Insurance

It was noted in minute 2022-60-13.4 that BHB has been chosen as the Parish Council insurer.

It should be noted that it would be in the Parish Council's interest to clarify the position of the cemetery volunteer and public liability insurance with the Council insurer – it is good practice for the Parish Council to be aware of the insurance implications for volunteers.

Risk assessment

It was noted in the minutes of the meeting on 9th May 2022 that the risk assessment document was approved – good practice.

It might be in the Parish Council's interest to ask its insurer about a "key worker" policy to cover the extra cost of employing a locum Clerk should the incumbent be ill for any length of time.

Asset Register

The asset register was held on the financial spreadsheet and the figures agreed with the amount shown on the AGAR box 9 - the council is to be congratulated on the clarity of its register.

It was noted that the bus shelter is valued at £1, the Parish Council should investigate whether this figure needs to be reviewed given that the Parish Council could be liable for replacement should the shelter be damaged.

Cemetery

It was noted that the cemetery is now in use, and the regulations and map were checked and found satisfactory.

It was noted on the website that the Parish Council has in place the relevant Cemetery Regulations, a Memorial Maintenance Policy, and a Cemetery Volunteer Warden Role description, the Council is to be commended on this

Data Protection and Transparency Act

It was noted that Avon Dassett Parish Council is compliant with the transparency act and is to be congratulated on its website which is easy to find and move through..

Parish Council Policies

It was noted the minutes of the meeting on 9th May -2022 –item 6 that all Parish Council policies have been approved. All policies have been seen on the Parish Council website

Contracts

It was noted in minute 2022-9-12.i that a mowing contract has been approved – good practice to formally agree all contracts.

It was noted in minute 2022-9-12.ii that terms of reference with DWF Law LLP have been agreed.

It was noted in minute 2022-60-12.2b that the street light maintenance contract was renewed.

Website

It was noted that all Parish Council policies were reviewed online and found to be satisfactory
The Parish Council is to be congratulated on the clarity and content of its website and the ease of usage.

Conclusion

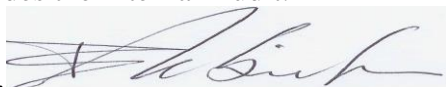
Whilst undertaking the Internal Audit, it is apparent that the Clerk/RFO is carrying out her responsibilities in a manner consistent with the standards required by Local Government Finance Regulations.

Where I have commented on future actions, these are only for Avon Dassett Parish Council to consider, and implement only if the Council feels that they will improve the Council's procedures.

It will be noted that in the Internal Audit Report 2022/23 of the AGAR Return 2022/23 Part 3 the internal auditor marked item F and K as Not Covered. This does not imply that there is anything untoward regarding the Parish Council accounts, rather this is a response required by the external auditor and in the case of Avon Dassett Parish Council it means that there is no petty cash, neither is item K applicable to Avon Dassett Parish Council. A letter to Moore to that effect has been added by the internal auditor

This concludes the Internal Audit.

Signed.....
W.J.Robinson



Dated 29th April 2023