Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council

Monday 6th December 2010

1. APOLOGIES: Lily Hope-Frost and Andy Rutherford. 334

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – None.

3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING : One amendment was noted: within the financial statement, it should have read "bins" rather than "bin" as two were sold for a total income of £10.

4. MATTERS ARISING: ACTION

Community (LHF to lead)

a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch LHF

JB read a note from LHF which stated that there was nothing to report on Neighbourhood Watch.

Roads (JB to lead)

b) Traffic, Roads and Drains JB

Traffic- Two road safety packs have been given to ADPC by PC Rod Joy. JB suggest they remain in the RR. Further leaflets and promotional material will be sought by JB in due course. The bin stickers are available which say "Slow Down" and can be obtained through JB.

Roads- Patch Byrne inspected the dips in the motorway bridge on Friday 5th November. His comments were as follows: 'this is always going to happen to a certain degree, it is caused by the differential in the underlying subsoils/structures, on one side there is a concrete abutment on the other there is the normal clays & sub base. I would not intervene at this stage but it is probably something that will require attention in the next few years.'
www.warwickshire.gov.uk to see gritting routs for this winter.

Poster for reporting potholes, pavement repairs and highway and street lighting to be displayed on lower notice board as notice board at RR is currently frozen shut.

To report any of the above call 01926 412515 or email countyhighways@warwickshire.gov.uk
HW confirmed that this info has been passed to the CC editorial team and SR will put it on the website

Drains- nothing to report

Environment/Maintenance (DH/AR to lead)

c) Playground: No update.

d) St John's

Poster for the church cleaning day and the Christmas gathering have been put on notice boards

e) Upkeep of 'green areas'

Lily has planted the big flower tubs with some spring bulbs.

A decision was taken to purchase some shrubs for the front of the RR to a maximum cost of £60.

The hedges around the Fete field and on the bend of Church Hill have been cut back. Thanks to whoever did this.

Thanks to Mick for tidying up the flowerbeds by the playground and for sweeping the war memorial in preparation for the Remembrance Day.

The leaves on Church Hill have been swept up. Thanks to BH residents for arranging this.

A reminder for all residents with trees adjacent to the roads or pavements to please check them for safety.

Tenders.

A petition was received by ADPC signed by 26 villagers in favour of one contractor. This information was circulated to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting in order that they could consider its content. The Parish council thank the individuals for taking an interest in this area of work within the village.

Four tenders were returned. One tender stood out as the best value for money and risk. It was decided to award the contract to this individual through a unanimous decision.

f) Cemetery

HHW had tried to contact the architect who drew up the original plans for the cemetery but they appear to be no longer in business. It was decided that HHW will get 3 quotes for the plans to be redrawn. ACTION: HHW

JB proposed an amendment/ addition to the rules:

C) Memorials

Insert between point 3 and 4 to be come point 3

Flat tablet memorials for the marking of cremated remains should be 18x12x2 inches and of a natural English stone e.g. Hornton stone. Inscriptions should be in black lettering.

This change was adopted unanimously. ACTION: HHW to update cemetery rules.

Communication/Administration

Precept

The level of precept was debated and, having drafted a budget for 2011/12, it was felt that it could remain at its present level of £7,000. Advice was sought from Councillor Chris Williams who confirmed that the local authorities are not intending for Parish Councils to start to provide services that they currently provide. He went on to explain that within the “”big Society” concept central government was encouraging citizens to undertake voluntary work such as sweeping up leaves etc. Councillor Williams went on to state that Parish Councils were not expected to hold large reserves as this was tying up public funds. SR confirmed that ADPC currently holds reserves of around 25% which Councillor Williams comments on as acceptable.

There is a need for a new notice board outside the RR. This will be researched and purchased in the next financial year.

Cost of election

It was agreed that £600 would be budgeted in case there was a contested election.

5. COUNCIL REPORTS

1. **Fiscal Matters –** The County Council is well on the way to setting next year’s budget. I can confirm that the County Council will not be increasing the Council Tax higher than that set last year. We are now reaching the Public Consultation stage where various options outlined last month will be considered. Over the next four years the County Council will have to operate with some £100 million less than is currently available. We have already identified £40 million of savings but the remaining £60 million is painful and regrettable. Two weeks ago some 1850 members of staff were placed on notice that their employment might be subject to redundancy. It is hoped that when this exercise is completed the County Council will still provide a service that is appreciated by everyone. The District Council is going through a similar exercise although the figures are considerably less. A recent survey district wide put options to the public to try to find out the priorities that would be acceptable. The District Council has to save some £2.1 million. As with the County Council all saving options are being considered. Some palatable, some are not. For example, some of the options being considered are:- Disinvestment from CCTV, Stopping Grants to the Tourism Industry, Closing Toilets in Stratford and Cutting Grants to CAB and other such charities. The debate continues for both authorities.
2. **High Speed Rail –** The HS2 saga has recently crystallized with the Prime Minister coming out in support of the project. The District Council’s Cabinet discussed their response at today’s Cabinet Meeting. The general feeling is that the District Council’s response to the Minister of Transport given the current evidence available will Object to the route of the HS2 passing though the district on the basis that the benefits it will have on the local area would not outweigh the impacts it will have on local

communities, landscape and other important features. The County Council will debate the subject of HS2 on Tuesday 14th December and they take a similar view to that taken by the District Council. There does appear to be an inevitability that the line will be constructed and both authorities are striving to ensure that the impact to the environment will be kept to a minimum.

3. **Winter Service –** Following the past two severe winters, a review of the Council's Winter Service was carried out in June of this year. A questionnaire was forwarded to all Parish Councils in Warwickshire to determine their satisfaction. Through this review the County Council looked at a number of factors such as satisfaction with our current gritting service and sought opinions on the prioritization of the Council's Gritting Routes. The questionnaire revealed that over 80% were either 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with the current gritting service. Currently, we grit 46% of our highway network (A and B roads) and we can use up to 250 tonnes of salt a night. We must limit the route time to around 3 hours to ensure that the network is treated promptly. In addition, there are some 1,700 parish owned grit bins which are filled throughout the winter season. The local grit bins are a valuable resource for communities and encourage self-help on those routes which are not gritted. The last two severe winters have highlighted weaknesses in the salt supply chain. At the present time, Warwickshire has some 14,000 tonnes of salt in stock throughout the county. The amount of salt we currently hold is equivalent to that used in last winter's severe conditions and is some 50% more than that previously held at the start of the season.

4. **Snow Wardens –** The County Council is looking to launch a network of Voluntary Snow Wardens and is seeking volunteers from Parishes that are willing to participate in this trial for the coming winter. Basically, the role will be one of liaison between the Parish and the County Highways Team. For example, advising them when grit bins are empty, or when due to severe weather the footpaths are deemed dangerous and require attention. It would be helpful if a nomination could be made as soon as possible so that all contacts can be established before the onset of bad weather.

5. **Fire and Rescue Service –** You may recall last winter that there was debate about closing some Fire Stations and introducing a review of how the Fire Service was performing. The implementation of the review commenced in July and since that date there has been a steady fall in the number of domestic fires and improvement in the time taken to reach fires and an increase in the number of requests for the Fire Service to carry out a Home Fire Safety Check. Unfortunately, it does appear that statistically non-domestic fires, for example, fires at industrial premises, shops and schools, have increased. The thinking behind this increase is that for economic reasons industrial units are not maintaining and servicing their fire equipment. In addition, there is an element of arson which might be attributable to the economic climate but vulnerable properties such as schools are still being subjected to arson which is attributable to anti-social behaviour. We are hoping that as a result of measures introduced we will be able to reduce the incidence of non-domestic fires.

6. **Health Care in Warwickshire –** The Coalition Government announced last summer that changes will be implemented in the way that health services are delivered. One immediate result of this decision is that the County Council will be taking over all aspects of public health from the National Health Service. We have three main aims and these are:-

   (a) To meet the health care needs of our older population in Warwickshire
   (b) Review current service provision
   (c) Provoke discussion with the public about how, together, we can deliver the best health provision for all the people living in Warwickshire

   One other significant change is that the work of the Primary Care Trust at the NHS, the body that is responsible for commissioning services, medicines, doctors and hospitals, will be delegated to the Medical Practitioners themselves. It is believed that this reduction in bureaucracy will lead to better health provision.

7. **Administration at Stratford –** You may recall some months ago that I advised the Parish Council that exploratory discussions were taking place with Warwick District Council with the view to sharing services and management function. Unfortunately, due to logistic reasons and non-compatibility with the two councils' functions, the decision has been taken not to pursue this project. One significant decision at Stratford has been that in future the management structure will be far flatter, we will only have a Chief Executive and no Corporate Directions, and we are also proposing to reduce the number of Heads of Service from 8 to 6.

N.B. Jill Burgess volunteered to be the Snow Warden for Avon Dassett.

6. CORRESPONDENCE: Was distributed. Particular note was made of an email from Liz Griffiths, Assistant to the Monitoring Officer at SDC. She had highlighted the need for all Councillors to complete a Declaration on Financial and other Interest Form. Councillor Williams confirmed that this should include the Councillors homes because of the land they stand on.

7. PLANNING

Helen has logged ADPC's concerns about planning documents not always being available to view on line.

Notices of Decisions were circulated at the meeting.

"No Representation" was registered against 08/00379/FUL & 08/00351/LBC Hillside.

"No Representation" was registered against 10/02558/TREE Old New house

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Appendix A
FINANCIAL STATEMENT December 2010
Avon Dassett Parish Council

Balance at close of business 30/11/10		
Current Account	£1,191.59	
Savings Account	£7,204.33	
Cheques issued (Prepared prior to meeting)		**Cheque No**
Clerk	£171.43	1071
Jill Burgess (Christmas Card Envelopes)	£4.39	1072
W. Sherriff	£6.05	1073
Lily Hope-Frost (Flower bulbs for tubs)	£20.93	1074
Sue Harris (Cleaning)	£7.50	1075
Total cheques	£210.03	
Income		
Hire of RR by Avon Carrow (Cash)	£5.00	
Total to bank account	£5.00	

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The poppy appeal raised £1,616 in our region with the Avon at £26.52 and the door to door £91.53. Thanks to Alastair Whetstone and Steve & Sammie Sartori.

Christmas Cards to date have raised £16. There will be one further sale at the December coffee morning.

The dead badger on Farnborough lane earlier in the month was removed within 24 hours of it being reported.

A village halls survey has been completed and we have requested feed back. The open spaces questionnaire has also been returned.

HHW will be attending a website training session on 11th January.

HHW to seek a quotation to repaid the floor of the RR which is raised. Parish Councillors put down tape and a sign to alter the public to the potential trip hazard.

10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 10th Jan, 7th Feb, 7th Mar, 4th April, 9th May, 6th June, 4th July, 1st Aug, 5th Sept, 3rd Oct, 7th Nov, 5th Dec.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.