Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council
Monday 1st February 2010

Present: Jill Burgess, Sarah Richardson, Andy Rutherford, Helen Hide-Wright, Chris Williams, Alysoun Glasspool (representing the Playground Group).

1. Apologies David Hutt, Lily Hope-Frost.
2. There were no declarations of interests.
3. The minutes from the previous meeting were confirmed.
4. MATTERS ARISING:

Community

a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch: Chris Williams reported to the council that since police patrols has ceased in the evenings, crime in Fenny Compton had increased and he was interested to hear if it had had any impact on Avon Dassett.

Roads

b) Traffic, Roads and Drains: The maintenance work for the speed enforcement camera area has been completed. JB has asked to know what the police powers are and awaits a report.

The new speed signs in the village have been installed and are more robust.

Potholes have been filled with the exception of the large hole at the crossroads with the B4100. JB will report this again. ACTION: JB

Chris Williams reported that during the snow and ice, a car had been involved in a serious collision near the cross roads with the B4100 on the Arlescott side of the junction. The resident nearby have requested a salt bin is located close to this junction in order that they can make safe this area during similar weather conditions. The Parish Council acknowledged that they would consider this and JB will approach Warks County Council for a quotation for a salt bin. ACTION: JB

Nigel Chetwind has surveyed the bottom of the village with a view to redirecting the flow of surface water. The intention is to ensure that water flows down the road, around the corner and into the ditch. His report is pending.

JB was present at the examinations of the drains at Bitham Hall recently. Both ends of the drain appear to be blocked by compacted material and it may have partially collapsed. A full report is pending.

Environment/Maintenance

c) Playground – Alysoun Glasspool, representing the Playground Group, addressed the Parish Council. She gave an update stating that fundraising was already underway with an £8.5k grant having just been secured from Stratford-upon-Avon's Development Fund. She thanked Councillor Williams for his assistance in the grant application and acknowledged the Avon Dassett Parish Plan had assisted the application.

The playground will be developed in two phases: firstly for 6-16 year olds followed by the under 6's. Alysoun has plans for the development which she will share with the Parish Council and was confident of securing further grant funds.

Alysoun requested assistance in obtaining financial support for the Avon Dassett Fete Committee. After some discussion it was decided that the Playground Committee would write two letters to the Parish council. The first letter would seek financial

support for the Parish Council and the second letter would seek assistance from the

Parish Council in gaining the release of £1k which is part of the £1,400 held by the fete committee and ring fenced for projects arising from the Parish Plan.

The Parish Council explained that the funds are for the benefit of the whole population of Avon Dassett and therefore they will have to consider how much they can give to this project without prejudicing their support for others groups.

Alysoun asked for a timetable for the Lease being drawn up. Andy Rutherford responded by confirming that the lease was almost ready save for some detail which is needed from the Worrall brothers. The legal costs are £250 plus land registry fees. The Parish Council will consider who pays for this cost and let the Play area Group know. ACTION: ADPC

Alysoun asked for confirmation that once the project is complete the Parish Council will continue its annual inspection of the play area. This was confirmed.

Alysoun thanked Sarah Rutherford for her work in securing the aforementioned £8.5k grant.

d) St John's: Nothing new to report.

e) Upkeep of 'green areas': The tender letters have been sent out to 5 contractors and already 2 have responded. The deadline for response is mid-February in order that discussions can take place at the Parish Council meeting in March 2010.

JB reported that the innards of the bin near the play area have disappeared and needs replacing. She also noted that the bin was dilapidated. Enquiries will be made to Street Scene for a replacement. ACTION: JB

The Nature Area grant is slightly under spent. JB looking into securing some woodchip for the area. ACTION:JB

Communication/Administration

JB reported that Sandra Rice will update the Avon Dassett Welcome Pack.

The design statement is almost finished. Copies will be sent out to those who were unable to attend the recent meeting for comment and then funding for publishing the document will be sought.

5. COUNCIL REPORTS:

District Councillor's Report

1. **Waste Collection** - On behalf of the District Council, I would like to say a big Thank You to the parishioners of Avon Dassett for their understanding for the disruption that the recent bad weather has caused to their waste collection. It was difficult enough to understand the new rota covering the Christmas period and if you were like me and consulted the website, the proposals were frankly gibberish! However, as of last Monday collections are back to normal. I did see a refuse vehicle collecting from my road when conditions were thought to be better (still laying snow) and how it avoided parked cars left me in no doubt that had they collected during the really bad weather they would have put the lives of themselves and others at risk.

2. **Warmington Travellers' Site Appeal** – It was hoped that the Appeal by the Travellers against Stratford District Council's decision to refuse them permission to settle in Warmington would have been heard this week. However, the Applicant has asked the Inspectorate for the Appeal to be deferred until 18th March due to double booking by the

3. Defense Counsel. The Inspectorate allowed this deferment which is causing great inconvenience to the Appeal Team at Stratford, the Parish Council at Warmington and others.

4. **Budget** – It would seem that the District Council's budget will be settled at a figure of an increase in Council Tax of 2.5%. This equates to an increase for the District Council Band D Taxpayer of some 34p a month. There are no significant cuts in front line services but over £10 million of savings have been achieved through efficiency, natural wastage of labour and better use of partnership working.

County Councillor's Report

1. **County Budget** – It appears that the County Budget due to be set on 9th February will recommend an increase of 2.5% in Council Tax. This low increase has been achieved by savings right across the Council. On average each department has reduced its costs by a minimum of 4%. The budget for the Fire Service has not decreased. In the main front line services, as far as the public is concerned, will not been greatly affected and the real savings are in back office operations and improved efficiencies. This year, out a budget of some £500 million, the overall savings amount to £25 million. The prediction for next year indicates that savings of this magnitude will be difficult to achieve without losing some front line services. The Police are yet to decide by how much their precept will alter and any changes will affect the final amount of Council Tax applied.

2. **Gritting of Road** - The last four weeks have put a great strain on the gritting service. I personally believe that we should be proud of how well Warwickshire kept the main routes clear. One only had to cross the border into Oxfordshire to see how badly they were gritting and salting in comparison. This winters poor weather has lead us to review our policy regarding which roads should continue to be gritted and, of particular interest to Parish Councils, do we have the right policies regarding refilling and siting of salt bins. The Parish Council will be able to take part in a consultation to be commenced in March of this year. Warwickshire currently grits 47% of all major roads. This figure is far higher than other authorities. East night of gritting operation costs £40,000 in materials alone, let along the cost of maintaining the vehicles and paying gritting staff.

3. **Emergency Planning** – The recent disaster in Haiti has shown us just important Parish Councils will be in times of emergency. Most people imagine emergencies are such things as aeroplane crashes, major road accidents or flooding. The first two are usually handled by the Police and flooding we all know about. In reality, the people who are responsible for planning emergency response consider that a plague is far more likely and requires a sound plan to be in place. We thought earlier this year that the Swine Flu would be far worse than it proved. The concerns by Authorities are that if plague strikes and there is insufficient manpower to supply power, water, sewage and other such necessities how would we all cope? Wiser heads than ours are working on this issue but I think as an item the Parish Council should update and visit its Emergency Plan at least every six months.

6. CORRESPONDENCE: Had previously been circulated. Several new items were brought to the attention of the meeting: Chubb Security for the Reading Rooms, dogs and public rights of way, cessation of street lighting night patrol, costs of maintaining street lights.

The Parish Council would encourage the public to report any problems with street lights to the Parish Council.

7. PLANNING – Land At Mollington Lane, Warmington: Informal Hearing has been adjourned until 10th March 2010.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT: **Balance at close of business 01/2/10**

Current Account	£562.30
Savings Account	£5,776.64

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – JB has been invited to the Beacon Event at the Heritage Motor Museum on the 12th March to represent Parish Council Websites.

10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING –Monday 1st March 2010

The meeting closed at 8.45pm