

## AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of Meeting held at the Reading Room on Monday 2 June 2008

Present J Burgess; L Hope-Frost; S Richardson;  
Cllr D Booth (part attendance); Cllr C Williams (part attendance);  
Clerk

In Attendance -

1. Apologies: Cllr Williams (for late arrival); Warwickshire Police
2. Declaration of Interest:  
S Richardson declared a prejudicial interest in items 4.d) Traffic lights on Church Hill.
3. Confirmation of Minutes:  
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as correct by S Richardson and seconded by L Hope-Frost; they were then signed by J Burgess.
4. Matters Arising:
  - a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch (NW) –  
There was no representation from Warwickshire Police.  
Concern was expressed regarding drug usage by certain youths in the community.  
It was reported that the gates from St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church had been stolen.
  - b) Traffic Calming – J Burgess reported that:
    - the mobile speed camera will be in the village for half a day on Wednesday 4 June. J Burgess has asked for feedback from this latest visit.
    - Speed Aware signs have been posted to lamp posts.
  - c) Drainage: J Burgess met with Gez Romano from the County Highways Department of WCC on Wednesday 14 May to determine actions yet to be completed regarding drainage works. Gez Romano to provide details of the timescale for completion of identified works; J Burgess to chase. **Action: J Burgess.**  
Community Flood Prevention Tools: it was felt that the cost of flood defence barriers would be prohibitive to a successful grant application. Nevertheless, brochures have been requested and will be issued to those homes susceptible to flooding to enable householders to make an informed choice as to whether they wish to privately purchase flood defence barriers for their properties. It was agreed that an application be made for funding to purchase a flood pump for community use from SDC's flood assistance grant. **Action: J Burgess.**
  - d) Church Hill:  
Ongoing removal of dismantled scaffolding from the church site continues to necessitate short-term road closures, however it is felt that there has been some improvement since the May meeting. L Hope-Frost to contact Weldon Stone to suggest that signs notifying temporary road closure be placed sufficiently far from the traffic lights to enable drivers to take action to avoid the area. **Action: L Hope-Frost.**  
Church Hill Footpath: J Burgess reported that Tony Iwanikiw from WCC had met with Charlie Worrall who had agreed in principle to sell a strip of his land to facilitate works to extend the footpath at the bottom of Church Hill. Meetings with BT will follow and costs established for both the necessary BT works and for moving part of the Bitham Hall perimeter wall. Once these costs are known a report will be compiled and presented to the Area Committee.

e) Miscellaneous

M40 Motorway Bridge: Gez Romano has yet to provide details of timing for repairs – J Burgess to chase. **Action: J Burgess.**

f) Playground

Inspection Report: J Burgess presented her review of the Inspection Report (copy of findings available from the Clerk upon request). It was agreed that the Parish Council investigate whether the Playground Management Group would carry out the necessary minor repairs (primarily painting) to various items of play equipment, with cost of materials to be met by the Parish Council. **Action: J Burgess.**

Clerk to circulate Wicksteed catalogue to Councillors with regard to the possible replacement of swing seats. **Action: Clerk.**

Repairs to Bench: J Burgess has asked Mick Harris to remove the sunken bench and determine whether it can be repaired or requires replacing.

g) Reading Room

Maintenance: Works now complete.

Cleaning: Mick Harris will continue to provide a monthly cleaning service until a permanent replacement cleaner is found. It was agreed that an advertisement for the cleaning vacancy be placed in the Compton Chronicle. **Action: L Hope-Frost.**

Pest infestation: SDC's Pest Control Officer had visited the Reading Room in an advisory capacity. He felt that our ongoing actions to eradicate the mice infestation in the Reading Room meet Health & Safety obligations.

h) Future Uses for St John the Baptist Church – Meeting arranged for 18 June at 7.00 pm in the Reading Room with Philip Francis, CCT and Parish Council representatives to determine the boundaries and possibilities for future use of St John's.

i) 'Volunteer' Projects:

J Burgess had contacted Ms Starkey's land agent in an attempt to gain permissions for plans for a rustic seating area and nature trail at the land behind, and to the right of, the bus shelter. It was suggested that an application be made to the Stratford District Public Realm Grant Scheme for match funding for this project. **Action: J Burgess.**

j) Parish Plan Action Plan Review – J Burgess led discussions regarding the Parish Council's progress on the implementation of the Parish Plan Action Plan. Individual action points were discussed and actions agreed. In summary, items specifically identified for Parish Council action were either already complete, on target for completion or part of an ongoing process; these items will be publicised via Reading Room display boards, village noticeboards, the website and in the Compton Chronicle. However, it was clear that members of our community should be encouraged to establish special interest groups in order to fulfil some of the Action Plan requirements. Examples of possible groups: Playground Management Group, Friends of St John the Baptist Church, Mothers & Toddlers Group, Sports Day Committee, Young People's Activities Club, Village Design Statement Group. **Action: All.** These groups, in conjunction with existing groups such as the Local History Group, Gardening Club and Fête Committee, should facilitate the realistic achievement of Action Plan objectives.

J Burgess volunteered to prepare a piece for the Compton Chronicle as part of the process of advertising the activities of the Parish Council. **Action: J Burgess.**

Whilst confirmation of the Post Office closure programme is awaited, questions have been raised as to the economic viability of Avon Dasset Post Office. The Post Master will provide a written report to the July meeting of the Parish Council.

Litter was identified as a problem in the Parish Plan. It was felt that the litter situation was appreciably worse at Church Hill near the traffic lights, in the area around The Avon and during school half-term holidays. It is believed that there are sufficient litter bins, but that they are not being used. It was suggested that organised litter picking by groups linked to events such as Open Gardens be encouraged to ensure that the village is best

presented for the influx of visitors at this time. It was also suggested that the Fête Committee consider placement of additional bins at key points in the village on Fête day eg at car parks and en route from the Fête ground to The Avon pub. It is hoped to promote civic pride by encouraging villagers to be responsible for removing litter found close to their homes.

Stratford District Public Realm Grant Scheme: All Councillors to identify preferred style of noticeboard and benches in order that J Burgess can draft an application for match-funding from the Public Realm Grant Scheme. Clerk to provide information from Glasdon brochures.

**Action: All/J Burgess/Clerk.**

k) Housing Needs Survey

A list of residents identified from the electoral register was divided into four to enable the three Councillors and the Clerk to distribute the second Housing Needs Survey which will be rolled-out as follows:

- survey to be delivered to all households in the village on Monday 16 June.
- completed surveys to be inserted in sealed envelopes for collection on Monday 30 June.
- responses will be opened at the 7 July meeting of the Parish Council.

l) Website

Prior to the meeting S Richardson issued a draft policy document for use of Parish Council IT equipment. S Richardson volunteered to provide PC user support on Tuesday mornings from 9.30 am to 12 noon in the Reading Room, commencing 8 July. **Action: S Richardson.**

PC support and the availability of copying facilities at the Reading Room to be highlighted in the Compton Chronicle. **Action: Clerk.**

S Richardson confirmed that she received website statistics each week. The website received approximately 60 visits a week, at least half of which were new users. The website had been visited by users as far afield as the USA, Australia and Europe.

A letter had been received from James Corns, Grants Assistant at Awards for All, to confirm that the necessary information had been received from the Parish Council and that our grant file is now closed.

Norton Anti-Virus software will be purchased for the second laptop. **Action: Clerk.**

m) Procedures

Parish Council Vacancies: Vacancy notices were advertised on both village noticeboards and on the website. SDC will inform the Parish Council whether a minimum of 10 residents had contacted them to request that elections be held to fill these vacancies; the deadline for this is Tuesday 3 June 2008. (POST MEETING NOTE: SDC had advised that there were insufficient requests from residents to warrant holding an election to fill the vacancies; the Parish Council is given the mandate to co-opt two representatives to its ranks. A meeting would be held by the three Councillors to progress this as quickly as possible.)

Health & Safety: three actions were required in order to satisfy H&S requirements:

- eradication of vermin: see item 4. g) above.
- the chimney was swept on 19 May 2008.
- fire extinguishers: The Clerk met with Chubb's Extinguisher Service Engineer who provided costs for purchase or rental of replacement extinguishers, as well as costs for removal of the existing equipment which he identified as being obsolete. It was agreed that a 10-year rental contract be arranged (incorporating annual maintenance checks and refills) for 1 x water extinguisher and 1 x CO<sup>2</sup> extinguisher. It was also agreed that Chubb be asked to remove the current obsolete equipment from the Reading Room. **Action: Clerk.**

Following completion of the above actions, the Reading Room will be Health & Safety compliant.

J Burgess created a prototype H&S folder containing emergency contact numbers, first aid information, etc. which was circulated to all Parish Councillors for comment. Amendments to be incorporated to the final version prior to it being placed in the Reading Room. **Action: All.**

Standing Orders: NALC's Model Standing Orders are being revised this summer, after which time these will be used as the basis for a new set of Standing Orders for Avon Dassett Parish Council.

Bank Authorisation: Documents obtained to enable new councillors to authorise Parish Council cheques. Clerk to hold these on file until such time as new members are co-opted to the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk.**

#### 5. Council Report:

Cllr Williams informed the meeting that:

- BT wants to remove the public 'phone box from Avon Dassett as it recovered less than £15 in 12 months and is not economically viable. Comments should be forwarded to Cllr Williams asap in order that the District Council may respond to BT by their deadline of 30 September. J Burgess agreed to advertise this on the 'phone itself, on noticeboards, on the website and in the Compton Chronicle. **Action: J Burgess.**
- Emergency Plans are due to be updated. In response to his enquiry, J Burgess informed Cllr Williams that a thorough revision of the Avon Dassett Emergency Plan was undertaken last year and that a further revision would be carried out to a timescale determined by WCC's Emergency Planning Unit. A copy of the current Emergency Plan is posted on the website.
- the revised refuse collection/recycling service is due to commence on 1 August 2008 and wheelie bins will be distributed prior to that date.

Cllr Booth reported that:

- following commencement of the new refuse collection/recycling regime on 1 August 2008, there is likely to be a cessation of green waste collection until April 2009. The existing green waste disposal facility is not able to process food waste and the new green waste & food processing plant is not due to come on stream until April 2009.
- the County Council is undertaking a review of speed enforcement on county roads. No decisions have yet been made.
- the County Council has published its programme for major road repairs.
- Joint Area Committees (County & District Councils) are being piloted in this area facilitating joint decision-making on local issues.

#### 6. Correspondence:

'Private Sector Housing Team' leaflets from SDC. Leaflets to be placed on noticeboard and links to this information included on the Avon Dassett website. **Action: Clerk/S Richardson.**

WCC ITC Help Desk Support for Parish and Town Councils: The Clerk had completed the necessary document to register Avon Dassett Parish Council for this free IT support service.

Increased Bus Fares: Johnsons of Henley will raise bus fares by an average of 15% effective 1 June 2008.

Application for funding for land drainage improvement work: deadline extended for applications for community flood prevention tools funding – see item 4.c) above.

Planning – a provisional planning meeting was set for Thursday 26 June 2008.

An application was considered to fell 1 x apple tree at St Anne's Cottage for Mr Graeme Miller. There was no representation to make.

Planning permission (with conditions) was granted to Mr Trevor Tutton and Mr Paul Preston to erect an agricultural barn at Treetops Farm.

Planning permission (retrospective) was granted to Mr Steve Sartori for erection of a covered shelter with open sides at The Avon.

Planning permission (with conditions) was granted to Mr & Mrs Worrall for "demolition of existing corrugated metal sheet building. Erection of single storey extension to existing ancillary domestic building to provide a garage, gym/games room and pool room. Insertion of window in Building 1. Insertion of 2 roof lights, reinstatement of existing doorway and conversion of existing door openings into windows in Building 2." at Hillside Farm.

Planning permission (with conditions) was granted to Miss J Starkey for replacement of fire damaged trusses and wall plate, replacement of corrugated tin roof sheets with slate at Knights Barn.

A letter had been received from SDC's Planning Enforcement Officer to confirm that he will investigate whether planning permissions are required for the changes to the gate and fencing at 1 Hill View.

## 7. Financial Statement:

Balances at close of business on Monday 2 June 2008:

Current account	£319.26 credit
Deposit account	£9,972.91 credit

Cheque issued:

a) M Maughan (Clerk's pay & expenses - including chimney sweep payment for the Reading Room)	£145.80
b) M Edgington (Plants)	£25.00
c) M Harris (Mowing verges & cleaning Reading Room)	£78.00
d) Npower (Street light electricity supply)*	£462.67
e) PC World (Anti-Virus Software)	£29.99
f) R Groves (Reading Room maintenance)	£1512.42

\* Clerk to investigate increase in street light electricity charges. **Action: Clerk.**

The payment of cheques was proposed by S Richardson and seconded by L Hope-Frost.

7.1. The Clerk had completed the Audit for financial year 2007-8 and her findings were copied to all Councillors in advance of the meeting.

John Anderson had, once again, kindly agreed to undertake the internal audit for the Council and had inspected the accounts and completed Section 4 – Annual Internal Audit Report of the Annual Return form in advance of the meeting. The Parish Council extended its thanks to John Anderson for his work as internal auditor.

Section 1 – Statement of Accounts of The Annual Return form for the Year ended 31 March 2008 was authorised by J Burgess (Chair) and the Clerk (as Responsible Financial Officer).

7.2. Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement of The Annual Return form for 2007/8 was authorised by J Burgess (Chair) and the Clerk (as Responsible Financial Officer).

Clerk to return completed Annual Return to External Auditor: Clement Keys. **Action: Clerk.**

## 8. Any Other Business:

- Following an enquiry, Cllr Williams commented that the new incumbent(s) of No 2 New Council Houses would be chosen by the Housing Association.
- L Hope-Frost advised J Burgess of the process followed by Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators when a crime is made known to them. It is imperative that the resident reports the incident/event to the police.
- L Hope-Frost to email Rod Joy to request that Avon Dasset becomes a member of Farm Watch. **Action: L Hope-Frost.**

- d) Comments were made regarding the poor condition and appearance of the hedge next to the Reading Room.
- e) J Burgess informed the meeting that a set of display boards had been donated by Bill Heath and Natalie Walker of Spinney Bank. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Bill and Natalie.
- f) The Parish Council wished to thank Mary Edgington for the village flower tubs and borders displays.
- g) Following an enquiry made prior to the meeting, the Parish Council repeated that it is not possible to utilise part of the cemetery car park for allotments. (See minutes of January 2008 on the website for details.)

9. Questions from the Public:

None

10. Date of Next Meeting:

The next Meeting will be held on Monday 7 July 2008 at 7.30 pm in the Reading Room.

Meeting closed at 9.40 pm.