

## AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of Meeting held at the Reading Room on Monday 1 December 2008

- Present J Burgess; L Hope-Frost; D Hutt; S Richardson; A Rutherford;  
Cllr D Booth; Cllr C Williams (late arrival); Clerk
- In Attendance Cllr Mrs Izzi Seccombe (part attendance);  
PCSO Katrina Taylor (part attendance); Mr S Sartori (part  
attendance); Mr J G Miller (part attendance)
1. Apologies: Cllr Williams (for late arrival)
  2. Declaration of Interest:  
Personal interests were declared with respect to discussions under item 6. Correspondence, Planning as follows:
    - The Avon Public House: J Burgess, A Rutherford, D Hutt
    - The Old Pump House: A Rutherford, L Hope-Frost
    - Church Cottage: J Burgess, S Richardson, L Hope-Frost, A Rutherford, D Hutt
    - Post Box Cottage: J Burgess
    - The Coach House: L Hope-Frost, S Richardson, D Hutt, J Burgess
    - Honeysuckle Cottage: J Burgess.
  3. Confirmation of Minutes:  
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as correct by L Hope-Frost and seconded by A Rutherford; they were then signed by J Burgess.
  4. Matters Arising:  
Guest Speaker  
Cllr Mrs Izzi Seccombe gave a presentation, followed by a Q&A session, on the work of the Standards & Ethics Committee on behalf of the Standards Board for England. Thanks expressed to Cllr Seccombe.
    - a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch (NW)  
PCSO Taylor reported that:
      - a shed had been broken into in Avon Dasset at the beginning of November.
      - at the latest Community Forum meeting the following three priorities were identified:
        - i) nuisance youths; ii) acquisitive crime; and iii) highways (WCC road maintenance, verges, etc).
      - a police operation is underway to tackle theft from motor vehicles.
 PCSO Taylor asked residents to be mindful of seasonal theft and not to leave presents/valuables on show.  
She recommended that motorists carry out routine winter checks to vehicle tyres, washers, etc.  
PCSO Taylor volunteered to attend local NW meetings.  
Cllr Williams reported that there had been a spate of opportunist crime in Fenny Compton. 'Home Security & Personal Safety Packs' have been issued to the majority of elderly/vulnerable members of our community. L Hope-Frost to deliver a pack to one additional resident. **Action: L Hope-Frost.**

b) Post Office

J Burgess has had a further conversation with the Sub Post Master, however until such time as he makes a decision with regard to continued provision of post office services at the Reading Room, progress cannot be made to organise alternative post office arrangements. It was noted that Steve Sartori has begun to explore the possibility of providing a service from The Avon.

c) Traffic and Roads

J Burgess gave the following update:

- The fixed camera in place near the bus shelter is now operational.
- Statistics sourced from the latest visit by the mobile camera crew are available on the website.
- Repairs have been made to potholes on the C113 Dasset Road (known as Farnborough Lane).
- The poor condition of the path at Church Hill has been reported to County Highways. John Brown suggested that the Parish Council provides a grit bin so that grit can be scattered on the path to reduce the danger to pedestrians posed by the slippery surface. It was agreed to purchase a grit bin. **Action: Clerk.**
- Latest information from County Highways suggests that repairs to the road at the M40 motorway bridge will commence next week.

d) Drainage Issues/Community Flood Prevention Tools

Previous advice given to councillors that the hatch at the Bitham Hall drive was a BT access hatch proved to be incorrect; this is now identified as a drain and has been added to the list of drains requiring attention by County Highways.

In response to a question from A Rutherford, J Burgess provided an update regarding the village drains as follows:

- drains to be jetted and checked on a routine basis.
- a section of drain pipe has been replaced by the Reading Room which has alleviated problems at this site.
- a water bar has been put in place by Poppy Cottage in an attempt to deflect the flow of 'run-off' water from lane leading to The Thatches.
- drain covers to be cleared of compacted silt, then all of the drains in the village system are to be jetted. Only after all of the drains are in working order can we identify how best to mitigate potential flooding problems in the future.
- a number of issues highlighted in Bill Burton's hydrology report should be addressed following completion of the remedial works identified above.

Following a successful grant application, J Burgess has purchased a community pump.

e) Playground

A Rutherford reported that work continues regarding proposals and quotes for play equipment; a more detailed update will be provided at the January meeting. **Action: A Rutherford.**

The remaining new swing seat will be fitted in the near future. **Action: A Rutherford.**

A request to improve the efficiency of the slide was noted by A Rutherford.

f) Reading Room

Painting: J Burgess and the Clerk met with Martyn Dalman from the Warwickshire Probation Service on 28 November. Martyn Dalman committed to provide a list of necessary materials. For budget purposes it was suggested that a conservative estimate of costs would be in the region of £200. The Parish Council agreed that this project should go ahead and that the Reading Room will be closed for business between Wednesday 14 and Saturday 17 January 2009 (inclusive). Parish Council to finalise arrangements for clearing the room and storing the contents at the January meeting. **Action: All.**

Thanks expressed to Steve Mullane for making repairs to an interior light fitting and for replacing the exterior light bulb at the Reading Room.

g) Future uses for St John the Baptist Church

L Hope-Frost reported that arrangements were progressing for the Christmas gathering. Unfortunately the CCT are unable to carry out the first clean of the church so this duty will fall to volunteers from the History Group. No communication has been received from the Probation Service with regard to tidying the church grounds, however Dr Christopher has offered to provide equipment to clear the leaves from the church steps. Flyers detailing arrangements for the Gathering have been produced and will be delivered with the December issue of the Compton Chronicle.

h) Social Housing

No update has been received from Charles Barlow. Item to be discussed at the January meeting.

i) Parish Council Surgery/PC Support

Surgery held on Saturday 22 November by J Burgess & S Richardson. The last in this series of surgeries will be held by J Burgess and S Richardson on Tuesday 9 December at 9.00 am (to coincide with PO opening hours).

j) Procedures – Health & Safety Folder

H&S folder now complete.

k) Parish Plan

Welcome Pack: Production of the Welcome Pack continues.

Design Statement: Examples of good design features have been identified and discussed by the group at its November meeting. Ongoing.

Shop: D Hutt reviewed the proposal drafted by Caroline Englefield. Concerns were expressed regarding i) the absence of identified leadership required to drive the project forward and ii) the ability of our small village to provide the number of visitors deemed necessary for the project to be economically viable. Having said this, Steve Sartori has expressed an interest in the possibility of running the shop from The Avon; with this in mind, D Hutt agreed to pass the draft proposal to S Sartori. **Action: D Hutt.**

Thanks expressed to Caroline Englefield for producing the draft proposal.

l) Public Realm Grant

J Burgess was pleased to inform the meeting that the Public Realm Grant application was successful.

- The Noticeboard will be delivered on or around 8 December. Clerk to contact County Highways to confirm location and gain permissions for the siting of the noticeboard next to the bus shelter. **Action: Clerk.**

- The 2 benches will be stored until weather conditions permit installation.

- 'Nature Area project' (by the bus shelter). Martyn Dalman from Warwickshire Probation Service confirmed that his 'volunteers' would be available to undertake certain aspects of this project ie land clearance, creation of a bark-chip footpath and compost bins. However, they would not be able to provide the seating or the bird & bat boxes that are identified as part of this project. It was agreed that grant monies be used to purchase the seating and boxes and that the Probation Service volunteers be utilised to complete the project. J Burgess to contact Ms J Starkey and her land agents (Berry Morris) informing them of our wish to commence this project in late January 2009. **Action: J Burgess.**

m) Budget 2009/10

S Richardson led discussions on the 2008/9 Budget vs Expenditure and the 2009/10 Budget Proposal (spreadsheets previously circulated to all Parish Councillors).

The Parish Council agreed to amend the Clerk's pay in line with the National Association of Local Councils guidelines; this included back-pay from April 2008. This pay alignment and new contract of employment formalises pay and conditions.

The endeavours of the Parish Council have led to the successful application of a number of grants to fund or part-fund community projects and free-up precept monies for further benefit to our community. Projects (many identified within the Parish Plan) such as the provision of community seating, a noticeboard, a pump for use in flooding situations,

production of a welcome pack and the continued improvement of our website have all been made possible as a direct result of Parish Councillor industry in seeking out and applying for grant monies from a variety of sources. These projects will all come to fruition in the next few months. This is, of course, in addition to the grant received by Awards for All that has led to the creation and ongoing maintenance of our website (which is funded at no cost to the community for a 5 year period).

Following review of the budget papers, L Hope-Frost proposed that the precept for 2009/10 be reduced to £7000; this was unanimously agreed by the Parish Council.

#### 5. Council Report:

Cllr Booth stated that:

- he was saddened by the recent announcement of 600 job losses at Aston Martin.
  - with regard to Avon Dassett's drains issues, County Highways will jet drains, however any improvement works identified will be prioritised in terms of danger to house flooding and road safety and will be constrained by limited resources.
  - the County Council schedule 'gully sucking' twice a year; whilst the District Council sweep the roads approximately once every six weeks.
  - discussions with the Primary Care Trust have identified successes in some areas, however improvements to administration and transportation access services need to be made.
- Cllr Williams presented his report – see attached.

#### 6. Correspondence:

Mobile Library Service 2009 Timetable – information to be advertised on noticeboards and included in the Compton Chronicle.

Change to highway maintenance contract – the contact for all highways enquiries/complaints is now Mr John Brown. Contact email: [wellesbourneroutinemaint@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:wellesbourneroutinemaint@warwickshire.gov.uk) or tel: 01789 840486.

Stratford-on-Avon District Local Development Framework – Draft Core Strategy. Copy of document and comments form available from the Parish Clerk or by visiting the SDC website ([www.stratford-dc.gov.uk](http://www.stratford-dc.gov.uk)). Consultation period ends 9 January 2009.

Freedom of Information – fulfilling your obligation to disclose information – schedule to be completed. **Action: J Burgess/Clerk.**

PPG17 Open Spaces Assessment – questionnaire to be completed by 19 December. **Action: S Richardson.**

WALC Newsletter (October 2008).

Grass cutting quotation – a quote had been received from M Mann. For comparison purposes, Clerk to obtain quotes from alternative suppliers for 2009/10 contract. **Action: Clerk.**

Concrete Bins Stands – L Hope-Frost offered to make enquiries in response to a request from SDC to establish if these bins are still being used or require removal. **Action: L Hope-Frost.**

Unfilled sandbags – unfilled bags available from WCC. It was agreed that sufficient unfilled bags are available in Avon Dassett. Clerk to respond to WCC. **Action: Clerk.**

Primary Gritting Routes – copies of this year's winter gritting programme are held in the Reading Room.

Revised register of Electors – document available for viewing; please contact the Clerk.

Planning – no provisional meeting was set for December.

Unauthorised advertising banners at The Avon: Mr Steve Sartori presented a letter he had received from the Planning Enforcement Officer in which, due to contravention of planning regulations, he was instructed to remove the unauthorised banners from the exterior of The Avon pub. S Sartori was upset by this letter and felt that the matter was dealt with in a "heavy-handed way". (Background: An investigation was launched following an enquiry made by the Parish Council and complaints made by individuals directly to the Planning Enforcement

Department, culminating in the notification letter issued to Mr Sartori.)

S Richardson drew the meeting's attention to the District Council's Planning Enforcement webpage (<http://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning/planning-622.cfm>) which sets out the enforcement policy; this states that the display of advertisements in conservation areas is not permitted and is treated as a District Council planning enforcement priority. S Richardson urged householders and businesses to first check with the appropriate planning authorities before proceeding with matters that may require planning permission.

Once a case is under investigation all communications between the Enforcement Department and the party about whom the enquiry/complaint is made are confidential and no up-dates are made during the investigation to those individuals (or councils) who instigate the enquiry. In this case the banners were found to be in breach of planning regulations and have now been removed.

Discussion ensued regarding A Rutherford's suggestion that the Parish Council should intervene in future planning disputes/enquiries prior to our making formal enquiries to the Enforcement authority. However no consensus was reached on how to progress future planning enforcement issues brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

The following applications were considered:

- Ref: 08/02893/LBC - proposal to install 2 ties to front elevation at Knights Farm for Mrs Gina Forsythe. No representation was made.
- Ref: 08/02714/FUL – proposal for first floor and 2 storey rear extension and new chimney at Nursery House for Mr A Walter. No representation was made.

The following notices of decisions were given:

- Ref: 08/02581/FUL – retrospective application for 2.15m boundary fence at The Old Pump House for Mr Jeremy Davies. Permission refused.
- Ref: 08/02359/FUL – proposed alterations and additions to boundary garden wall at Church Cottage for Mr J Glasspool . Permission with conditions granted.
- Ref: 08/01393/LDE – use of the annexe as a single dwelling house at Post Box Cottage for Ms Caroline Englefield. Certificate of lawful existing use or development refused.
- Ref: 08/02351/TREE – tree works at The Coach House for Mr Graham Rice. No objections, consent with conditions granted.
- Ref: 08/02456/FUL – 2 storey extension, demolish front wall to rebuild with gate at Honeysuckle Cottage for Mr Phillip John Worrall. Permission with conditions granted.

Further applications were discussed:

- Retention of boundary fence with trellising inserted at Eva's Cottage. It is understood that objections have been raised by WCC.
- Wooden fence at Knights Farm. Enforcement enquiry raised.

## 7. Financial Statement:

Balances at close of business on Monday 1 December 2008:

Current account	£310.93 credit
Deposit account	£9,098.59 credit

Cheques issued:

a) M Maughan (Clerk's pay, back pay & expenses)	£356.64
b) J Burgess (Pump & hose, Christmas card envelopes)	£106.20
c) M Mann (Mowing)	£165.00
d) J Sherriff (Coffee morning)	£12.19

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

8. Any Other Business:

- a) Thanks expressed to Sandra Rice for cleaning the Reading Room curtains.
- b) In an attempt to find cheaper electricity charges for the Reading Room, the Clerk asked for permissions to use the Council's business details in a price-comparison website. Permission granted. **Action: Clerk.**
- c) In response to a question from L Hope-Frost, Cllr Williams stated that once food waste is incorporated in the green waste collection the general waste bins will be collected every fortnight.
- d) J Burgess asked if the Council would consider employing a part-time handyman to carry out small jobs on an ad hoc basis? It was agreed that A Rutherford contact Pete Wallace to ask if he would consider this proposal. **Action: A Rutherford.**
- e) POST MEETING NOTE: L Hope-Frost reported that this year's village Poppy Appeal raised in excess of £190.

9. Questions from the Public:

None.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

The next Meeting will be held on Monday 5 January 2009 at 7.30 pm in the Reading Room.

Meeting closed at 10.30 pm.

**Avon Dassett Parish Council 01.12.08.  
District Councillor's Report**

**1. Core Strategy** – The District Council is currently preparing a Core Strategy for Stratford-on-Avon District which will have a major bearing on how and where development takes place over the next twenty years. This is the first and most critical part of the Local Development Framework which will eventually replace the District Local Plan. It is a means whereby the aspirations of the Community Plan for the District can be achieved. In essence, the Draft Core Strategy suggests :-

- (a) An overall strategy for how and where development should take place
- (b) Locations for new houses, jobs and services in larger towns and villages across the district.
- (c) How smaller communities can meet their own needs for housing and development

The Core Strategy will result in changes to the places where you live, work and visit so please take this chance to be involved and tell us what you think. You would like to have your views about the Draft Core Strategy by 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and we will then look at all the comments received together with further information and research about the local area. We will use this information to prepare a version of the Core Strategy which will be published for formal consultation. The nearest direct impact to the village is the proposed development of two hundred additional houses in Southam and some twenty-five additional houses in Kineton on the footprint of the existing school.

Finally, the important role of Parish Plans is recognised and supports the local initiatives that come from the Parish Planning process.

**2. Financial Matters** – The District Council was congratulating itself for not investing in Icelandic Banks (more by luck than judgement, I suspect) but this euphoria was short lived with the announcement that interest rates are to be reduced by 1.5%, and possibly more. With this reduction our income from interest from our reserves will be reduced by £800,000 with the prospect of further interest cuts. The situation can only get worse, not better.. The money we receive from government which normally increases year on year with inflation, this year is to be increased by a mere 0.5%. This has meant that the budget setting process is extremely difficult and undoubtedly unpopular decisions will have to be taken. However, there is an unreserved commitment to ensure that there will be no disinvestment from front line services. You may have read in the papers that there was suggestion to consider imposing parking charges in car parks outside of Stratford. The decision has now been taken not to proceed with this concept but the District Council still has to find some £250,000 for the maintenance of these eleven car parks. Quite how we are to balance the books, I am not sure at this moment in time but the District Council's problems are not as difficult as other authorities who are facing horrendous problems.