

AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held at the Reading Room on Monday 2 February 2009

- Present J Burgess; D Hutt; S Richardson;
Cllr D Booth; Clerk
- In Attendance J D Davies
1. Apologies: L Hope-Frost; A Rutherford; Cllr C Williams; PCSO K Taylor
 2. Declaration of Interest:
None.
 3. Confirmation of Minutes:
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as correct by S Richardson and seconded by D Hutt; they were then signed by J Burgess.
 4. Matters Arising:
 - a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch (NW)
No representation was made by Warwickshire Police – apologies issued (see above).
J Burgess will attend a NW meeting in Fenny Compton on 11 February.
The next PACT meeting will be held prior to the Community Forum session on 19 February.
 - b) Post Office
The sub post master will continue to provide a service at Avon Dasset Post Office for the foreseeable future. Should he decide to cease trading at the post office in the future, he will provide one week's notice of his decision.
Preliminary investigations by the landlord suggest that it will not be economically viable to run a post office service from The Avon in the current economic climate.
 - c) Traffic and Roads
Traffic – no update.
Roads – J Burgess gave the following update:
 - Recent repairs to the road at the M40 motorway bridge are beginning to break up; this has been reported to County Highways.
 - The pot hole in the pavement outside Meadow Cottage has been repaired.
 - Church Hill footpath – Stratford East Joint Committee has not approved the scheme to extend the footpath at Church Hill; costs would have been in excess of £30,000.
 - d) Drainage Issues
In response to a letter from J Burgess, John Brown (County Highways) has committed to investigate the drains/gully outside St Anne's Cottage and the drainage hatch at Bitham Hall drive.
 - e) Playground
Proposals: In light of A Rutherford's absence, this item will be held over to the March meeting. **Action: A Rutherford.**
Inspection Report: As above. **Action: A Rutherford.**
Playground and Cemetery Grass Cutting Contract 2009/10: It was agreed to offer the 2009/10 contract to John Glover. Clerk instructed to inform applicants. **Action: Clerk.**
 - f) Reading Room
Painting: The Reading Room has been decorated to a satisfactory standard. J Burgess commented that the Reading Room floor required attention; timing for floor repairs to be determined.

Electricity Charges: A 12 month fixed rate contract has been agreed with Npower.
 Letter Box: Thanks to Pete Wallace for installing the letter box at the Reading Room. The Parish Council's postal address is now: The Reading Room, Avon Dasset, Southam, Warwickshire CV47 2AL. The Clerk may be contacted at the following email address: avondasset.clerk@googlemail.com.

g) Future uses for St John the Baptist Church

S Richardson will prepare a notice for the Compton Chronicle and committed to liaise with L Hope-Frost with regard to the detail of the launch event. **Action: S Richardson/L Hope-Frost.**

h) Social Housing

No update. Item to be discussed at the March meeting.

i) Parish Plan

Welcome Pack: The Welcome Pack has been issued to all residents. Parish Council to write to Sandra Rice and Mary Edgington to express its thanks for their hard work in producing the pack. **Action: Clerk/J Burgess.**

Design Statement: Progress being made. The team aims to hold a consultation event by Easter – details to be confirmed.

Shop: Preliminary investigations by the landlord suggest that it will not be economically viable to open a shop at The Avon. The Parish Council has explored various avenues, however it seems unlikely that Avon Dasset will have a village shop in the current economic climate. It was agreed to write to Caroline Englefield to inform her of the Parish Council's findings. **Action: Clerk/J Burgess.**

j) Public Realm Grant: 'Nature Area Project'

J Burgess had written to Berry Morris (copied to Ms J Starkey) informing them of our wish to create a nature area on the land behind the bus shelter. If no objections are raised from them, it is hoped to commence this project in the near future.

5. Council Report:

Cllr Williams provided a written report – see attached.

Cllr Booth stated that:

- the County Council's budget will be finalised on 3 February.
- the road gritting programme is ongoing.
- whilst the Church Hill footpath scheme was not supported by WCC, the following programmes will be undertaken in Avon Dasset: a) road profiling to reduce/eliminate property flooding (£25,000); and b) jet pump and use of cameras to produce a map of the village drainage system (£4,000). Official notification of these programmes will be given in due course.

6. Correspondence:

Refuse & Recycling – announcement of final service developments. The green waste collection will return w/c 6 April 2009; from this time kitchen waste may be mixed with green waste. Please see noticeboards, website and Compton Chronicle for details. A full explanation (including collection calendar) will be issued with Council Tax bills at the end of March.

Litter Bins – the new 'litter bin position statement' for Stratford District Council.

Community Forum – poster advertising the next Southam Forum meeting (19 February) has been placed on village noticeboards.

Royal Garden Party Nominations 2009 – it was agreed that this information be passed to L Hope-Frost. **Action: Clerk/L Hope-Frost.**

Emergency Planning – the process has commenced to review the generic template Parish Council Community Emergency Plan with a view to launch a new-style plan in May 2009.

Street Lighting Maintenance 2009/10 – it was agreed to continue WCC's maintenance of the village street lights. Clerk to write to WCC accepting the new conditions. **Action: Clerk.**

WALC Newsletter – it was suggested that the new councillors might benefit from attending the WALC annual briefing seminar. Clerk to pass information to A Rutherford. **Action: Clerk.**

Planning – provisional meeting set for Wednesday 18 February 2009.

The following application was discussed:

- Ref: 09/00024/LBC - proposal to replace garage door & change ensuite bathroom from double to single room at Knights Farm for Mrs Gina Forsythe. No representation was made.

7. Financial Statement:

Balances at close of business on Monday 2 February 2009:

Current account	£275.38 credit
Deposit account	£6,072.12 credit

Cheques issued:

a) M Maughan (Clerk's pay)	£132.00
b) J Sherriff (Coffee morning)	£7.76
c) M Harris (Leaf clearance)	£63.00
d) J Burgess (Expenses for Reading Room decoration)	£67.71
e) Npower (Street light electricity)	£17.46
f) Warwickshire County Council (Street light maintenance)	£265.93
g) Npower (Reading Room electricity charges)	£22.44
h) P Wallace (Letter box at Reading Room)	£15.00
i) S Harris (Reading Room Cleaning)	£15.00

The payment of cheques was proposed by D Hutt and seconded by S Richardson.

8. Any Other Business:

- a) The Clerk reminded Councillors that they should submit invoices prior to the March meeting for annual expenses incurred on Parish Council business. **Action: All.**
- b) The Clerk requested permission to set up a view-only internet banking account for the Parish Council. Permission granted. **Action: Clerk.**

9. Questions from the Public:

None.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

The next Meeting will be held on Monday 2 March 2009 at 7.30 pm in the Reading Room.

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Avon Dassett Parish Council 02.02.09.
District Councillor's Report

1. Things have been very quiet as far as legislation for Avon Dassett is concerned since we last met. This does not mean that the District Council has been inactive. The main thrust of our work has been to prepare a budget which this year, not only means figures for the next year but also the subsequent two years. This year, along with most Councils, we are having to take difficult decisions to balance our books. With the current level of bank interest predicted for next year, ranging from 0% - ½% the interest on our reserves will fall by more than £1 million. Coupled with the lack of fees for planning applications, nobody seems to be building anything at the moment, together with the virtual halting of land charges where people request information for searches when completing house purchases, means that this year we are having to fill a gap of some £2 million which grow over the next three years to at least £5 million unless prudent action is taken at this stage.

2. There will, of course, be efficiency savings, disinvestment and we are suspending for one year both our revenue and capital grants. We were one of the few authorities who were making capital grants but hopefully we can re-introduce this service next year. An effort has been made to invite those members of staff, who want to, to apply for early retirement and the Council will not be extending any of those staff on temporary contracts of employment.

3. I think it is unlikely that we will be able to match last year's low Council Tax increase but we are all conscious of the impact Council Tax has on those people on fixed incomes, such as pensioners. I am sure much soul searching will be taken before the final figure is decided by the full Council on 23rd February. I am sure that when we come out of the recession, Stratford District Council, will be in a better position than many authorities and it is worth remembering that our Council Tax base is still the lowest in the County and one of the lowest in the Country. I am confident that this state of affairs will be maintained.

Cllr Chris Williams
01.02.09.