

Minutes of Avon Dassett Parish Council

Monday 4th March 2013

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm

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1. APOLOGIES: David Hutt, Trevor Gill

Present at Meeting: Alastair Whetstone, Daniel Robertson, Chris Campbell, Councillor Williams, Clerk
Alastair Whetstone gave an official welcome to Chris Campbell on joining Avon Dassett Parish Council.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: None

3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Signed and dated by Alastair Whetstone.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

Community

- a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch: Alastair Whetstone confirmed that there was no new report from Neighbourhood Watch.

Councillor Chris Williams gave an update following on from the incident reported at the meeting in February 2013: The bicycle that had been used during the disturbance was taken away for DNA investigation. There was no outcome to report from this.

Car number plate anti-theft fixings have been received by ADPC following a recent spate of thefts. They will be handed to Jennie Sheriff for distribution at the next Coffee morning. Further supplies are also available from the Fenny Compton Co-op and the Merrie Lion.

Alastair Whetstone highlighted two reports that had come to his attention of a garden strimmer and a bicycle that had been stolen.

Residents are encouraged to report all crimes to the Police in order that they can track what is taking place and be in a better position to resolve issues. Residents are also reminded of the existence of Neighbourhood Watch within the village, and are encouraged to join the scheme. For information on these matters please contact Daniel Robertson.

- b) Playground: The Clerk confirmed that the playground safety inspection has been booked and has recently been confirmed as taking place in March.

Alastair Whetstone relayed a report that some of the play equipment is not moving as freely as it should. **ACTION: Daniel Robertson to investigate play equipment, resolve if possible or report back to the Parish council for further action.**

- c) Dassett Country Show: Corrected date: 27th July 2013. Councillors had looked at the DCS website and remarked on its quality, congratulating the organisers for what they have achieved in such a short time and wishing them success in their endeavours.

Roads

Traffic, Roads and Drains: The Clerk read an email from Trevor Gill: "The leak on the hill - I understand from Patch Byrne that Severn Trent Water has now agreed to fix this as they now agree that it is a leak and that the problem is not attributable to the water table. Severn Trent has been out once on the basis that it is a one day job but they cannot find the problem and in fact have made it worse. I have written to Patch asking for an update but so far have received no reply to my email. I will chase this further next week when I get back. In addition I have made Patch aware that there are still blocked drains near the church and this is not helping the situation. Good news however, the potholes have been filled."

Environment/Maintenance

- d) St John's: An invoice has been sent to ADPC relating to the heating of St John's Church for the Community event at Christmas. The invoice for £30 will be paid from the St John's fund within its desire to encourage the use of the building by the community.
- e) War Memorial: The Parish Council had received an email from a resident reporting damage to the stone work of the memorial. It was decided to retrieve the stones and investigate what repairs would be needed. **ACTION: Alastair Whetstone to retrieve loose stones from War Memorial and store them ready for potential repairs to the monument. Councillors to consider what repairs are necessary to the memorial.**

f) ADPC documents held at bank: The Clerk confirmed that she and Trevor Gill had attended the bank and withdrawn the documents previously held in the deposit box. The documents are being reviewed by Trevor Gill prior to their storage at the County Archives.

g) New Councillor: Bank Mandate: The Bank mandate was completed in order that Chris Campbell could be added as a signatory.

The Clerk confirmed that the updated online bank access was progressing.

5. COUNCIL REPORTS: County and District Councillor's Report

1. **District and County Council Budgets** – As I predicted last month, both authorities have approved a nil increase in Council Tax for the year 2013-2014. There is some good news from the County Council inasmuch that this year we have allocated an additional £500,000 to road maintenance, £500,000 to improving the speed up to Broadband as well as an additional £600,000 to Children's Centres. Interestingly, a proposal from the LibDems was that we should suspend any investment in expanding Broadband whilst the Labour Party proposed that each Borough and District should have only one waste recycling depot. In our district that someone from Shipston having to travel to the other side of Stratford. Both these proposals were rejected.
2. **Southam and Feldon Community Forum – The next meeting of the Forum will be on** Wednesday 20th March at Ufton Village Hall commencing at 6.30 p.m. Details of the agenda will be made available in the next two weeks. The Police priorities will be decided in advance depending upon responses received from Parish Councils.
3. **Windfarm at Knightcote** – The East Area Planning Committee decided on Tuesday 12th February to refuse the application to erect and operate four wind turbines at a location between Knightcote and Bishops Itchington. The principal reasons for refusal were based on its impact on the landscape, loss of amenity value and, importantly, objections from Coventry Airport that the siting of these wind turbines would significantly affect high frequency transmissions between incoming aircraft and the airport.
4. **Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service** - The proposed Strategic Alliance between Northamptonshire and Warwickshire Fire Services will not now proceed. Northamptonshire have decided to combine their Police and Fire Services under one umbrella and it would not be appropriate to form a Strategic Alliance with Warwickshire Fire Service. It was proposed to share a Fire Chief between the two authorities. With the imminent retirement of Graeme Smith of Warwickshire Fire Service, a new appointment will be made for a Fire Chief exclusively for Warwickshire.

6. CORRESPONDENCE – Paper copies circulated at meeting. Electronic mail circulated prior to meeting.

The following emails from residents were read to the meeting:

A resident had reported dead livestock to Trading Standards (01926-414040, tradingstandards@warwickshire.gov.uk) and had successfully got the carcass removed. Residents are therefore encouraged to go through this agency if similar issues arise.

Further reports of littering issues have been sent to the Parish Council including pictorial evidence of a plastic bag with a green leaf on the outside, found in the bus-stop area. The Clerk asked if Councillor Williams could request a police presence in the village, particularly at the bus stop, in order to try to tackle this concerning development and the ongoing littering problem. The pictorial evidence was given to Chris Williams for possible submission to the Police. **ACTION: Clerk to provide update to resident.**

A resident has requested the use of the cemetery car-park on the 14th July 2013 for the open Gardens Event. This was approved by the Councillors. **ACTION: Clerk to notify the Cemetery Warden that the car park will be open for public use on the 14th July 2013.**

7. PLANNING (Declarations of interests): There were no declarations of interest.

Notice of Decision: 12/00330/FUL Starbold Wind Farm, Knightcote: Decision: Refusal.

Application: 12/01500/FUL Application to install Wind Turbines, Wormleighton. Councillor Williams was able to describe the location of the site and provide some background information to the application.

Comment for submission to website:

1. The proposed development would have a severely intrusive impact on a historic landscape. The general architecture and size of the wind turbines would be inappropriate to the rural landscape in which they are planned to be located, having a devastating adverse impact on a beautiful area of countryside.
2. The height and movement of the wind turbines would adversely impact on the views from surrounding areas of natural beauty and Conservation areas, such as the Burton Dassett Hills, affecting the enjoyment of those visiting these areas, as well as those resident in them.
Due to their height and quantity, the lighting up of these obstacles would only further harm the view of the landscape from these surrounding areas.
3. The development would have an adverse effect upon local tourism and the number of visitors coming to the area, upon which a number of our residents' livelihoods depends.
4. The development represents a danger to native and migratory wildlife, some of which is protected. E.g. Raptors and other birds, Bats.
The infrastructure that would be built not only for the construction of the wind turbines themselves, but to manage and transport the energy delivered, would add to the already recognised intrusion on the landscape.

Application: 13/00425/TREE: Western Red Cedar: Fell. Paperwork was examined. Councillors were not familiar with the site and decided to visit the site prior to submitting a comment. Councillor Williams advised that the Parish Council should consider the impact on the street scene. **ACTION: Parish Councillors to visit the site of the cedar trees and submit their planning comment to the Clerk by Monday 11th March 2013.** Comment: No Response.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Clerk read the financial statement and explained to Chris Campbell that the Parish Council dealt with public monies and had a duty to ensure that all expenditure, including grant applications, were presented to and approved within public meetings before it was spent. No-one should commit the Parish Council to any expenditure outside of meetings without prior approval from the Parish Council within a meeting.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT March 2013: Avon Dassett Parish Council

Balance at close of business 28/2/13

Current Account	£ 4,727.44
Savings Account	£ 1,079.62 *

This figure represents ring fenced funds for ADPC plus any interest received into the account.

Bank Transactions December 2012

Current Account	Chq/SO/DD	In	Out
5 Feb n Power	DD		27.00
11 Feb 1217	Chq		10.24
11 Feb 1216	Chq		8.62
13 Feb 1219	Chq		103.25
22 Feb Douglas Tonks	DD		214.06

Deposit Account

	In	Out
11 Feb 13 Bank Interest	0.05	

Cheques issued from mtg	Cheque No	Amount
H Hide-Wright (clerk expenses Feb)	1221	£ 16.60
J Sherriff (Feb Coffee Morning)	1222	£ 6.58
Zurich Insurance	1223	£802.71
Total cheques		£823.18
Fletchers Flooring	1224	£ 30.00 **

** To be refunded to current account from St Johns Steps Fund ring fenced monies

Balances for Ring Fenced Funds held in Deposit Account from December 2012:

Neighbourhood Watch	£ 185.00
St John's Steps appeal Funds	£ 433.40
Community Grant Fund (Laptop)	£ 431.00
Total	£ 1,049.40

Cheques were signed by Alastair Whetstone and Daniel Robertson.

Trevor Gill submitted an email request for authorisation to purchase 2 replacement fire extinguishers for the Reading Room to the value of £75. Alastair Whetstone explained that this was a further effort to reduce the operating overheads of the Parish Council by exiting from an ongoing contract. Proposed: Alastair Whetstone, Seconded: Daniel Robertson, Unanimous.

Trevor Gill submitted an email with an update on green areas. After meetings with Matt Austin it has been confirmed that the County Council is responsible for most of the green areas and which have been maintained by ADPC. The County Council had previously offered a financial rebate if the Parish Council maintained some areas. After discussion Trevor Gill has contacted Matt Austin to quantify the level of rebate. This would then be compared with the costs of extending the green areas currently being maintained by the Parish Council. If the rebate is greater than the additional costs, it is likely to be accepted. It was hoped figures would be available for consideration at the next meeting. Therefore authorisation was sought, in principle, to increase green area maintenance expenditure by ADPC if required. Proposed: Alastair Whetstone, Seconded: Daniel Robertson, unanimous.

The Parish Councillors commented on the work undertaken by Trevor Gill to reduce costs for the Parish Council and he was greatly thanked for his efforts.

Budget update

March 2013 4th Quarter budget update (including expenses up to 4th February 2013)

Areas of overspend/concern are highlighted in red

	<u>Budget £</u>	<u>Spend to date £</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Expenditure	9,120		
VAT	250	640	256 higher than expected
REFUND DUE			
RR Ins	750	790.24	105
RR Rates	100	0	0
RR Clean	150	98.43	65.6
RR Maintenance	380	247.12	65
Clerk Pay	2,500	2102.80	84
Admin	350	391.21	111
PC Training	300	0	0
WALC	100	88.00	88
Xmas Cards	0	0	0
Elec supply RR	450	310	69
Street Light Supply	1,000	424.67	42.5
Other: Street Light replacement	450	1134.4	252
Playground Rental	10	0	0
Website	0	0	0
Playground	140	343	245
Other	0	248.64	*
Mowing	1,710	1488	87
Audit Fees	190	210	111
Safe Fees	20	7.50	37.5
Coffee Morning	120	79.69	66
Election Fees	400	0	0

Notes on Overspend/Concern

- *1 VAT refund higher than anticipated
- *2 Admin slightly high. Payroll costs go into this section of accounts.
- *3 4 lights replaced – costs higher than anticipated
- *4 Playground least legal bills paid but not anticipated
- *5 £24 to Community links, £224 to Mr Elsmore for his erroneous credit, therefore this is over spent by £24 only

9. MEMBER REPORTS: Alastair Whetstone reported that there are moles in a small section of the cemetery. He will monitor the situation and report to the Parish Council if further action is required.

The responsibilities of councillors was discussed. Chris Campbell agreed to take on the roles of planning and St John's but recognised that in the absence of the other two councillors, there may need to be a reallocation of tasks at a later date. **ACTION: Clerk to confirm Councillor responsibilities for inclusion on the Website.**

10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 8th April 2013, 13th May 2013, 3rd June 2013, 1st July 2013, 5th Aug 2013, 2nd Sept 2013, 7th Oct 2013, 4th Nov 2013, 2nd Dec 2013

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.