

AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held at the Reading Room on Monday 6 April 2009

Present J Burgess; L Hope-Frost; S Richardson; A Rutherford; D Hutt;
Cllr D Booth; Clerk

In Attendance W Sherriff (part attendance); M Walter (part attendance)

1. Apologies: Cllr C Williams

2. Declaration of Interest:
None.

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:

a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch (NW)

There was no representation by Warwickshire Police.

L Hope-Frost reported that all aspects of recorded crime have reduced in the last quarter. In Avon Dassett, suspicious behaviour by two men who claimed to be gravel sellers was reported to the police. The registration number of their black Peugeot car was noted; this vehicle is known to local police.

b) Traffic and Roads

Traffic – no update on next Speed Aware visit.

Roads – J Burgess gave the following update:

- Additional repairs to the road at the M40 bridge have been completed.
- Pot holes on Church Hill and the main road through Avon Dassett have been filled. Pot holes at Bitham Hall drive entrance, outside The Laurels and along road edges at Farnborough Lane have been reported to County Highways; the repair gang are due to visit the area in the near future.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the recent works carried out by the County Council at the triangular green by Lower End. Following damage to kerbing and the green's verge, County Highways have re-set the granite kerb stones and levelled and re-seeded the verge edge. Unfortunately, in an attempt to prevent further erosion of the green by vehicles, County Highways have installed three plastic black & white bollards; these bollards were not requested by the Parish Council. A letter of complaint regarding the bollards had been received from a resident to which the Clerk is asked to respond. **Action: Clerk.** A majority decision was reached that, due to the inappropriate style of this type of road furniture in a Conservation Area village setting, a request be made to County Highways to remove the bollards. **Action: Clerk.**

c) Drainage Issues

All blocked drains on Church Hill have been cleared, however a further underground stream has broken through the road surface; J Burgess has notified County Highways of this.

In response to a question from J Burgess, Cllr Booth agreed to find out when the approved funding will be forthcoming to enable investigation and drain mapping exercises in our village to commence.

d) Playground

The Playground Management Group has asked for a 25 year lease to be established with the landowner. Until such time as a reply is received from the landowner, the Playground Management Group is unable to progress its objective to improve the village playground.

e) Reading Room

Floor: It was agreed to examine the 2009/10 budget to determine if sufficient funds are available to cover the quotation obtained by J Burgess to sand and stain the floor of the Reading Room. **Action: S Richardson.**

f) Future uses for St John the Baptist Church

L Hope-Frost to make further contact with Fiori Musicali regarding a performance at the launch event; after which time it is hoped that a summer programme can be established. The Post Card competition has been advertised in the Compton Chronicle. J Burgess agreed to create posters for display in the village. **Action: J Burgess.** It is hoped that an exhibition of the photographs submitted for the competition will be held coincident with the Open Gardens date.

L Hope-Frost will open St John's at the Easter Bank Holiday.

g) Social Housing

Charles Barlow, Rural Housing Enabler, WRCC was unable to attend the meeting but provided copies of reports regarding both sites from Planners and County Highways. One of the sites has "effectively been discounted"; however he has agreed to contact the landowner of the second site to establish whether he is prepared to locate the proposed three new homes on a different area of that site. **Action: C Barlow.** Until such time as a response is received from the landowner, no further progress can be made.

Clerk to contact Charles Barlow to establish who will be our 'social housing' point of contact at WRCC in the event of Charles's departure from the organisation. **Action: Clerk.**

h) Cemetery

The padlock has been purchased for the shed.

The compost bays have been constructed in the cemetery car park. Thanks are expressed to Pete Wallace.

i) Proposed Bus Shelter by Playground

Some responses have been received following the piece in the April issue of the Compton Chronicle; in order to give residents more opportunity to submit their comments, it was agreed to carry this item forward to the May meeting.

S Richardson enquired whether the morning bus could commence its route at the existing bus shelter, thus negating the need for a second shelter? As Avon Dassett is the start-point of the schedule, there is no requirement to amend the actual bus route. A Rutherford to investigate. **Action: A Rutherford.**

j) Parish Plan

Design Statement: The group is refining its draft statement.

J Burgess listed the Action Points from the Parish Plan that will be considered in the near future. (Anyone wishing to see the complete list, please contact the clerk.) Those items to be progressed following this meeting are:

Youth Provision: 1. Additional provision needed for 11-16s and 17-25s. 3. Pilot activities for young people in the Reading Room. It was noted that since the establishment of the Plan, the number of children/young adults in each age category has changed. S Richardson agreed to survey people of the 11-16 age group. **Action: S Richardson.**

Parking: J Burgess to investigate the possibility of creating a layby opposite Lower End. **Action: J Burgess.**

Sustainable Development: Rather than focus on the merits of a wind turbine, it was proposed that an invitation be extended to agencies to give practical advice regarding 'environmental' issues in Avon Dassett. **Action: S Richardson.**

k) Public Realm Grant:

Benches and Noticeboard: Work to site the benches and noticeboard is planned for Saturday 11 April (weather permitting). **Action: A Rutherford.**

Nature Area: J Burgess requested that the boundary delineating Knights Farm land and County Highways land be marked out so that the site for the nature area can be identified.

Action: A Rutherford. A plan of this area will be issued to both County Highways and Berry Morris (land agents). **Action: J Burgess.** The design for the nature area presented by J Burgess was approved by the Council.

l) Internet Bank Account

Lloyds TSB require further information to be completed by J Burgess. Once this is received and returned, it is anticipated that the internet account will be established promptly.

m) Budget vs Expenditure – 2008/9 Financial Year-end Update

The Council reviewed information provided by the Clerk.

5. Council Report:

Cllr Williams issued a written report – attached.

Cllr Booth reported as follows:

- County Council elections will take place on 4 June (to coincide with the European Parliament elections).

- revisions to the County Council's vehicle restriction policy at the county's 9 Household Waste Recycling Centres came into force on 30 March 2009. Details are available at

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/vehiclerestrictions.

- possible weight restrictions for vehicles entering the Burton Dassett Hills are being explored; no agreement has yet been reached.

- the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will investigate the 11th hour withdrawal by the company contracted to provide the system for direct payments for Adult Social Services.

- the new green waste regime commences next week (for Avon Dassett). The Ufton facility should be open by July, until which time the county's green waste will be disposed of in Gloucester.

6. Correspondence:

Best Village Competition – information from WRCC announcing this year's competition. This will follow the same format as last year, however a 'Best Kept' section has been reintroduced within the 'Environment' category. L Hope-Frost to contact WRCC regarding Avon Dassett's application for Best Kept Village category. **Action: L Hope-Frost.** In order to encourage participation by community groups in the overall competition, S Richardson agreed to produce an article for submission in the Compton Chronicle. **Action: S Richardson.**

WALC Membership – it was agreed to renew subscription to WALC. **Action: Clerk.**

Bus Service Improvements – Consultation 2009 – in response to WCC's consultation process it was agreed that the Council should register its desire to maintain the existing service. **Action: Clerk.**

European Parliamentary Election – the Reading Room will act as a Polling Station for the election on Thursday 4 June 2009.

Evidence required re number of elected and co-opted members – WALC survey to be completed. **Action: Clerk.**

Notice of the Annual Audit for the year ending 31st March 2009 – papers received from the external auditor heralding the commencement of the year-end audit process. **Action: Clerk.**

Voluntary Registration of the Council's Land – Clerk to establish if the Reading Room and Cemetery are registered with the Land Registry and what the cost of registration would be.

Action: Clerk.

BT Community Connections – applications for a free laptop and a year's broadband connection are invited. S Richardson to investigate. **Action: S Richardson.**

Planning – none.

7. Financial Statement:

Balances at close of business on Monday 6 April 2009:

Current account	£196.44 credit
Deposit account	£4,380.00 credit

Cheques issued:

a) M Maughan (Clerk's pay)	£132.00
b) S Harris (Reading Room cleaning)	£10.00
c) J Sherriff (Coffee morning)	£9.08
d) P Wallace (Compost bays at cemetery)	£30.00
e) SDC (Reading Room rates)	£206.83
f) WALC (Membership subscription)	£83.00

The payment of cheques was proposed by L Hope-Frost and seconded by A Rutherford.

8. Any Other Business:

- a) S Richardson reported that she was working with SDC to ensure that the conflict between the newly adopted remote access software and the website laptop's Vista operating system will be corrected asap. **Action: S Richardson.**
- b) The Post Card photographic competition has been advertised in the April Compton Chronicle. In order to encourage participation by local photographers it was agreed to promote this on the website and on noticeboards. **Action: S Richardson/J Burgess.** (See item 4.f) above.)
- c) L Hope-Frost issued her apologies for next month's AGM and Ordinary meeting.
- d) The Clerk has resigned from the Parish Council. She will remain in post until the audit process is complete, after which a replacement needs to be found. S Richardson agreed to advertise this post in the next issue of the Compton Chronicle. **Action: S Richardson.**

9. Questions from the Public:

None.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 11 May 2009 at 7.30 pm in the Reading Room; the next Ordinary Meeting will immediately follow the AGM.

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

**Avon Dassett Parish Council 06.04.09.
District Councillor's Report**

1. Due to the current low demand for planning applications to be determined by committee, it has been decided to conduct a trial for one year where all planning applications that were previously referred to the Eastern Area Planning Committee will now be administered by one committee meeting in Stratford itself. As a matter of interest the March meeting of the East APC has been cancelled due to lack of applications.
2. **Corporate Strategy Consultation** – 2009 is going to be a challenging year for many organisations. We are trying to meet these challenges head on and are setting ourselves taxing but achievable targets.

Like most of the national and local economy, the District Council faced some tough decisions as it prepared this year's budget. In order to balance the books, savings of over £2 million were found. We would not have contemplated these savings in normal circumstances, but these are not normal times.

The economic landscape has radically changed and the Council is not immune to the current economic problems. Investment income is down, rental income in down, parking and planning income has reduced and the level of government support has increased by less than inflation. All of these reductions placed extra financial burden on the Council.

That is why we are revisiting our Corporate Strategy. The District Council made it a priority to improve and to focus on the issues that mattered most to its residents. We now need to re-look at these priorities in the current economic climate. We have to look at different ways of delivering our services:-

- Aim 1 – a district where everyone shares in a improved quality of life.
- Aim 2 – a clean and green district.
- Aim 3 – a district where business and enterprise can flourish.
- Aim 4 – an excellent council that is well managed and respected by the community.

I am sure with everyone's help we will achieve these objectives.

**Cllr Chris Williams
05.04.09.**