

AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting held at the Reading Room on
Monday 7 December 2009

Present: L Hope-Frost; S Richardson; A Rutherford; D Hutt, Cllr C Williams; Clerk

In attendance (part meeting) Sarah Rutherford

1. Apologies: J Burgess due to ill health. Sarah Richardson Chaired the meeting
2. Declaration of Interest: Andy Rutherford: Playground.
3. Confirmation of Minutes: Councillor Williams asked for an addendum to the previous minutes by way of a clarification: the statement that "Most of the travellers are located at Ryton" is withdrawn. The minutes were then approved and signed by S Richardson.

4. **MATTERS ARISING:**

Presentation on Climate Change by Jacky Lawrence, Strategic energy Manager, WCC.

Jacky made a full presentation on the subject and provided the ADPC with written materials for circulation. In summary there are several group operating across the County who are actively reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions as well as seeking alternative, renewable energy sources.

The PC resolved to put information on village website.

Action SR/JB

Jacky advised that whatever ADPC do in the future should be kept simple to give a greater chance of success. She gave examples of energy monitors in the home where families are encouraged to look at their usage and then compare it to savings when items are switched off. Encouraging people to switch off appliances rather than keeping them on standby can make immediate savings.

The Local Area Agreement has set targets for climate change and the environment across the County. Monthly bulletins are issued and there are regular meeting of the various interest groups where new ideas and existing projects are discussed.

Ringstar Homes Ltd in Henley undertook a questionnaire to establish people's attitudes to saving energy in the home.

HHW to obtain findings if available

Jacky stated that funding is available for climate change initiatives.

The Renewable energy Club meets on 1st Saturday of each months and ADPC can go if they wish.

Community

a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch: Lily H-F had nothing to report.

Roads

b) Traffic, Roads and Drains

Councillor Williams stated that there were no drainage grants and that the road would be re-profiled in February 2010.

SR read out an email from JB. It was as follows:

Traffic: Awaiting update on proposed site assessment for Mobile Camera Enforcement Unit.

Drains: 1. Work in February with regard to profiling and mapping the village drains. Outcomes of this exercise will determine what work is required to be done to the road and or the drains to ensure drains work more efficiently.

2. A drain found in the Nature Area is completely silted up. Patch Byrne has made a site visit and a request has been made for digging out and making good. When cleared it should make a difference to the amount of surface water ending up at Lower End.

Ditches around Lower field (the fete field) have not been cleaned out for some years. They are already full of water. Could we make contact with the Worrall family to ask if they could get them cleared? This would reduce the amount of water running down the road down the road towards Yew Tree Farm.

ACTION: Andy Rutherford: contact Worrall family re: drainage ditches

Roads: Run off ruts on Farnborough Lane have been filled.

Hole by The Laurels has been reported again,

Some holes on Church Hill have been patched.

Cleaning of road signs should take place soon.

Damage to single track road to Mollington/Warmington has been reported.

Once all leaves have been removed from Church hill, the pavement will be inspected and repaired as necessary.

We are making good progress with our Road and Drains repairs list.

If anyone has any further concerns about roads, footpaths or drains, please report to JB

SR went on to read out a list of potholes reported and sent on to the Council via JB. They are: Outside Home Farm house, At the Junction with Farnborough road/The Dasset Road (close to the Playground). At the junction with the B4100 as you exit the village – pothole on the left hand side of the carriageway.

In addition a pothole on Park Close was mentioned.

ACTION: JB Reporting potholes

Environment/Maintenance

c) Playground: AR reported that a quotation is due for the drawing up of a lease

A proposal was put forward by Sarah Rutherford regarding Playground grants – please see item 8a below.

ADPC decided to hear what the Playground Group, represented by Sarah Rutherford, proposed when she joined the meeting. The Pc decided to defer the decision until a later ADPC meeting.

d) St John's: A further £30k is currently being invested on the South Chancel Roof and therefore LHF is not opening the church at weekends for the time being.

There will be a bell ringing session on the 1st May 2010. LHF sought support from ADPC to provide a budget for refreshments at the event. It was agreed that ADPC would fund refreshments and that a donation plate would be left out for people to use. LHF estimated around 50 villagers and 50 bell ringers could be in attendance. The budget will be firmed up nearer to the time.

ACTION: ADPC to confirm budget

e) Upkeep of 'green areas': SR read a comment from JB: Should we monitor spending on village maintenance more closely? After a short debate LHF proposed that the councillors should walk through the village and undertake an audit of what needs to be done. The tasks will then be listed and sent out to tender each year. It was agreed that upkeep of green areas was a major expenditure of ADPC and that mowing would have to be limited to certain months in order to contain costs. **ACTION: HHW to contact John, Mick and Alan to stop mowing and the PC will be in touch with them regarding the tendering process for 2010-11.**

ACTION: Councillors to agree a date to undertake an audit of tasks.

f) Social Housing- update: Nothing to report. The items will be taken off the agenda until Charlie and Phil Ward have spoken with AR

Communication/Administration

g) 1. Budget Review. SR: Outlined that for the coming year income was likely to be less than outgoings. This was due, in the main, to a fall in grant income. However, with the carry forward from this year, the shortfall should be covered, especially if expenses are monitored and contained.

The proposed budget was accepted unanimously.

1a. Approval of budget 2010-2011: **Unanimously accepted and approved.**

2. Proposals for Spending 2010: **Unanimously accepted and approved. The simpler format was also praised by the Councillors.**

h) Parish Plan- update: An email from JB was read:

Nature Area: Stage one complete! The Probation Service workers did an excellent job on 18th

November. Many thanks to Pete Wallace for making the table and seats, bat and bird boxes.

Thanks to all villagers who gave their time on Saturday 28th and for the donations of seeds and plants.

The nature area will be a work in progress for a time. An owl box and hedgehog nest will be added shortly and hellebores and primroses will be planted. If anyone has any ideas for further development, please let JB know. The grant needs to be claimed before the end of March 2010. Our receipts need to be sent to SDC.

Village Design Statement: An email from Jilly McLean was read out: Last few additions to text are being made then it will be sent to SDC. We plan to see what the printed copy from Steve Mullan's source looks like and if acceptable will be far cheaper than going out to a printer. Once we have this info and costing we can look at funding,

i) Rateable Value of Reading Rooms: HHW confirmed that we receive a discount on the rates payable.

5. COUNCIL REPORTS: **County Councillor's Report**

1. **Budget** - The setting of the 2010/11 Budget and Medium Financial Plan is progressing well. The choices when balancing a budget equate between pressures and resources. Clearly, efficiency savings, charging fees, a cut in some services and an increase in Council Tax are all possible sources of revenue. The pressures are fundamentally the services we supply and can only be cut by reducing funding. The indications at the moment are that the Council Tax will be in the region of an increase 2.5%. The government has just announced that Council Tax for this year must not exceed 3%. Previously, this was capped at 5%. The government also expects to see a fall in the level of Council Tax over the next four years.

I do not expect that the impact of this year's savings will affect front line services. Undoubtedly, some familiar 'nice to have but not essential' services will be reduced but overall, I believe, the public will accept, in this present climate of financial restraint, that a limited reduction in services is preferable to an increase in taxation. The setting of the Council Tax will happen at a special meeting of the County Council in early February.

2. **Fire Consultation** – The Public Consultation has now been completed and the final date for receiving comments on the proposals is 8th December 2009. The Public Consultation has been very valuable inasmuch as local concerns have been demonstrably brought to the Fire Service's attention. In our own area, the Group campaigning for the retention of the Fenny Compton Fire Station put together a very comprehensive response document and even went as far as making a representation to the Fire Chief and Senior Management at Warwickshire's Fire and Rescue Service.

When the Consultation finishes, a new proposal incorporating points raised in the Consultation will be presented to the County Council for approval in early February.

District Councillor's Report

1. Community Forums and Police involvement. As a direct result of Sgt. Fretwell's decision to disengage members of the Police from visiting Parish Councils, I have requested to Sgt. Fretwell that he makes arrangements to visit each Parish Council in the Dasset area to explain, in person, the philosophy that he has adopted. He believes that it is better use of Community Policing time to be on the beat rather than communicating with Parish Councils. His view is not shared by either the District or County Council.
2. Community Forums will become an important part of the engagement by Parish Councils in the administration of the district. Whilst they are only held quarterly it would be helpful if the Parish Council would consider putting items on their regular agenda that they believe have merit for discussion at the next Community Forum. This would overcome the rather vague session of deciding community priorities which at the moment appear to be similar, namely, speeding in villages, antisocial behavior and youth activities.

3. The District Council, like Parish Councils, is currently considering their budget requirements for 2010/11. Clearly, with the current economic climate there is a need for the Council to change the way it works. An example could be enhanced partnership working with Warwick District Council. Rugby and Nuneaton Borough Councils have gone as far as proposing a strategic alliance between the two areas with only one Chief Executive, a smaller number of staff and less councilors. Whether such drastic action would be appropriate for such a large geographical area as Stratford/Warwick remains to be seen. This year the government has indicated that the amount of tax increase cannot exceed 3%. In previous years this has been capped at 5%. This year there are conscious efforts to limit the amount of increase to less than 1% - hopefully better.

6. CORRESPONDENCE: Was distributed at the meeting. DH commented on the volume of correspondence being received.

7. PLANNING: No new applications have been received.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance at close of business 05/12/09

Current Account	£433.25
Savings Account	£6,992.49

Cheques issued

		Cheque No
Warks CC (Woodchipping)	14.68	979
P. Wallace (Nature area furniture)	230.00	980
Banbury Farm & General supplies Ltd	62.14	981
As Above	28.32	982
As Above	17.94	983
As Above	18.75	984
Warks CC Probation Service Fee for work done	120.00	985
J. Burgess (Nature Area refunds)	69.32	986
Alan Sheasby (3xMows Church)	120.75	987
W. Sherriff (coffee morning – Oct)	6.86	988
W. Sherriff (coffee morning - Nov)	6.86	989
H. Hide-Wright (Clerk's Pay)	233.71	990
W Sherriff (coffee morning – Dec)	6.30	991 *
J. Glover (2 Mows Playground, 3x cem, maint. RR, Playarea, churchyard cutting and pruning)	146.00	992
Sue Harris (Cleaning Nov)	10.00	993
Cheques raised by request – paperwork needed *		
Mick Harris	84.00	994

8 a. Avon Dasset Charities: Sarah Rutherford addressed ADPC with an update on the charities. She confirmed that the charities own three fields which are currently rented out. New Trustees have been appointed and they are looking to develop the properties by connecting water in the hope of financial gain to the beneficiaries of the charities. The PC thanked the Avon Dasset Charities Trustees for their work on the charities this year and were supportive of their plans.

Sarah Rutherford then spoke about The Playground Group. They would like to put their grant cheques through the ADPC's accounts. However SR outlined the problems this would cause to the council in terms of costs of administration. It was decided that Sarah Rutherford would look into what other groups have done and ADPC would defer a decision until at least their next meeting on 4th January 2010. The PC thanked Sarah Rutherford and the Playground committee for their work to date.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: HHW outlined a new set of tariffs for the RR if ADPC sign up to a 2 year contract. It was unanimously agreed to move forward with this proposal.

ACTION: HHW

Remembrance service was well attended and the poppy collection was well supported.

Christmas cards have sold well with £106.20 taken so far. The PC thanked Bill Heath for his help with the printing.

A reminder was issued that the decision on the Warmington Travellers Appeal is due on 6th January 2010.

10. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING –Monday 4th January 2010, 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm (started at 7.30pm)