

## Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Avon Dassett Parish Council

**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 7.30 pm at The Reading Room.**

### **The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.**

1. APOLOGIES (with acceptance of apologies): Chris Williams, Mike Blakeman (Accepted by the meeting).

Present: Trevor Gill, Alastair Whetstone, Martin Heard, Darrell Muffitt, Helen Hide-Wright (Clerk). Bart Dalla-Mura arrived at the meeting at 8.10pm and departed at 8.30pm.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: None
3. CONFIRM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Minutes were agreed, signed and dated by Trevor Gill.
4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None
5. MATTERS ARISING:

#### Community

- a) Burial Ground: Nothing to report.
- b) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch: Nothing to report
- c) Playground – (including monthly check)
  - i. An estimate has been received to replace 2 fences on the right hand side of the playground and to clear brambles etc from the playground from Dave Hicks for labour £90. It is not proposed to do this until warmer weather. Proposed: Trevor Gill, seconded: Darrell Muffitt.
  - ii. It is estimated that the materials required will be circa £300 inc VAT. The £250 ring fenced funds will be retained to pay for the ground-works that will be required. Proposed: Trevor Gill, seconded: Martin Heard.
  - iii. Authorisation to contact Thelma Griffin at Warwickshire Probation Service to see if resources can be made available to us for groundwork on the playground and painting in the Reading Room. It was decided to make enquiries about using the scheme. **ACTION: Trevor Gill to enquire about Warwickshire Probation Service to undertake work.**
- d) Superfast Broadband: Nothing to report.
- e) Post Office
  - i. The potential agent who was going to take over the running of AD PO has pulled out and another replacement is being sought. In contact with Zoe Hibberd to try to ascertain the present position.
- f) Village Communications
  - i. Village website – Darrell Muffitt gave a short summary of the situation. There had been a request in accordance with our Auditors recommendation that ADPC agree to pay the annual fee for the village website £259.99. Invoice possibly in the name of the History Group for current year so VAT reclaim is lost. ADPC needs an invoice from someone to pay amount due. In future invoices should be sent direct to ADPC from SDC in order that VAT can be reclaimed and the website is clearly funded by ADPC. Going forward any changes in the amounts due or to Finance and changes in the structure etc of the Community website should be agreed with ADPC.

- ii. Communications database – now up and running.
  1. Darrell Muffitt confirmed that the communication facility website has been developed and tested. There have been some complaints about failure to target emails being sent out, double emails when they are going out from other groups also and inappropriate emails. Hard copies need to start to go out. It was agreed that as a solution to the need to be able to target emails Trevor would look into how this can be achieved.
  2. Trevor Gill confirmed the following:
    - a. There are 59 subscribers –
    - b. 55 by email,
    - c. 4 by paper.
  3. There are 2 databases
    - a. Residents.
    - b. Councillors only – this includes ADPC, County and SDC councillors. This could be expanded to include other local Parish Councils so that communications can take place on such issues such as emergency planning.
    - c. Trevor Gill spoke about the possibility of setting up a database of local contacts for such things as street lighting so that all contacts details are in one place. He did not think that this was a Data Protection issue as the addresses relate to services rather than personal addresses.
  4. Outstanding items to progress:
    - a. There are 84 residents who are on the electoral roll who we need to contact to persuade them to join the facility. It was agreed that this work would be split and progressed over the next month. ACTION: Trevor to co-ordinate this work.
    - b. There are 24 properties where one of the occupiers receive emails and it would agreed that we would not progress trying to get the other member of the household to subscribe.
  5. There is now an ADPC facebook page to which copies of all campaigns are sent out from the database and also information which is of interest but does not warrant sending out by email. There is a concern not to fill peoples inbox unnecessarily.
  6. Discussions took place on the type of information that should go out via the database. It was agreed that there is a need to formalise how it is used and the guidelines of what we should and should not be using this for. It was agreed that it is appropriate to send information at the specific request of local clubs and societies but we should not use this facility to promote local businesses. The exception is in the short term the need to support The Avon. Darrell Muffitt outlined the case to support The Avon Pub as it was registered as a community asset and an emerging business. Suggest that we formulate something and then formally adopt it at the May 2016 Annual Meeting. Darrell Muffitt outlined the case to support The Avon Pub as it was registered as a community asset and an emerging business. It was thought worthwhile to consider segmenting the emails. ACTION: Trevor to consider how this can be achieved. Trevor and Darrell to draft an email to subscribers covering how we propose to use this facility.

7. Trevor Gill suggested the drafting of a Standing Order to deal with communications and added to the existing SO's at the May Annual meeting..  
**ACTION: Trevor Gill and Darrell Muffitt.**

- g) Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations
- i. The clerk confirmed that she is aware that there are plans to light the Beacon and will send out further information when it is known.
  - ii. Meeting at Farnborough tonight report back when more is known.
  - iii. Fenny Compton are holding a street party near The Merrie Lion.
  - iv. Clean For The Queen.
    1. This Saturday 12 March 2016 – 9.30am – 12.30pm.
      - a. Clear leaves on the hill.
      - b. Burn the rubbish near the Church.
      - c. Pick up litter.
      - d. Clear the brambles near the bus stop.
      - e. Replace the grit bin near the playground.
      - f. Need a few notices around the village and also an email asking for help via the communications database. **ACTION: Trevor Gill.**

#### Roads: Traffic, Roads and Drains

Trevor Gill gave an update on Western Powers activities in the village and some of this work has now been completed. Agreed to meet up with local contracts manager in early April to discuss the completion of the work to put the cables underground at the top of the village.

#### Environment/Maintenance

- h) Green areas (including condition of verges)
- i. Trevor Gill has contacted Patch Byrne re verges and is awaiting a meeting. Trevor will contact Chris Williams to see if he can help.
- i) Reading Room maintenance
- i. Trevor Gill confirmed in writing the acceptance of the quote for the replacement window – due to start mid March hopefully finished by the end of April
  - ii. Trevor Gill outlined that he had sent an email out on 3 February re rubbish and old equipment in the Reading Room. Darrell Muffitt recommended searching the drives to ensure there is no data on it and then dispose of it. It was agreed to dispose of the computer, printers and table (if anyone wants any of these items, to contact the Clerk by the end of March).

#### Communication/Administration

j) Administration – Insurance renewal. It was decided to stay with Zurich on their latest quotation on the basis of a minimum of 3 years, possibly for 5, depending on the costings.

## 5. COUNCIL REPORTS

### **Avon Dasset Parish Council – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 County Councillor's Report**

1. **County Council Budget** – After a nine hour debate on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February, the Council set the Budget for next year's expenditure. This year calculations were not as straight forward as normal. The Chancellor's statement regarding the Budget settlement figure was the cause of

the lengthy debate. WCC has to find an extra £12 million from reserves over the next 2 years. By using £5 million of reserves, this year's Budget will remain more or less as planned. However, next year we will have to find the full £12 million. (Our total budget is in the order of £350 million.) Most of the budget (over 50%) goes on providing Adult Social

Care. The government has agreed that a special year on year levy of 2% on the Council Tax can be raised to help towards the cost of Adult Social Care. This will hardly cover the new Minimum Working Wage and leaves the additional pressures of increasing numbers to be funded. We are also working with the Health Authorities to maximise savings and efficiency through more joint working especially with respect to Hospital discharges and subsequent care in the community. Following the meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February a further Budget setting meeting was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. This meeting was to decide how additional funds of £6 million would be allocated over the next two years. After a meaningful four hour debate it was decided that £2 million would be used to supplement our depleted reserves and the remainder would be used to maintain services over the next two years..

There is also continued pressure on the Children's Services and the establishment of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as the number of reported child abuse cases continues to increase. These cases now have to be investigated immediately regardless of their credibility. (More time, more Staff, more money). The overall outcome is that 2016/17 Budget will be tight but manageable with a total Council Tax rise of 3.9% with further cuts a real prospect for 2017/18.

2. **Combined Authority** - Warwickshire County Council is still opposing joining any form of Combined Authority with Birmingham and the West Midland Metropolitan Authorities. I can see no advantage in joining one and although not being sold as a political union, like the EU, I believe it will be seen as one eventually. An Elected Mayor seems to be a prerequisite. I do not believe our not joining would lead to less capital investment in Warwickshire but has the potential for more housing as the Metropolitan areas, Birmingham and Coventry try to meet their housing targets.

**Unitary Authority** – The current financial position with central government significantly reducing settlement allowances to authorities does mean that the County Council is having to re-evaluate the cost savings produced by having a Unitary Authority for Warwickshire. A cross-party group of Members will carry out this evaluation and report back to the Council at the end of the summer. The Labour Party is proposing two Unitary Authorities for Warwickshire, one in the north and one in the south. The Conservative and LibDems do not support this proposal since the size of each authority would not reach minimum sizes of population. The guide line at present for Unitary Authorities requires a minimum population of 500,000. I will keep the Parish Council advised of any developments that take place.

Bart Dalla-Mura: Ongoing discussions about the unitary authority issue.

Decision to disband the Chief Executive post. Paul Lankaster has been in office for 12 years, council posts have been reduced by one-third. The new structure has the two primary officers still in place, reporting to the Cabinet.

Council tax has been voted upon. District Council tax has gone up by 3.9%, equating to a £5 increase in a Band D property.

7. CORRESPONDENCE – Paper copies circulated at meeting. Emails circulated prior to meeting.

8. PLANNING (Declarations of interests) – Lime Cottage planning: The appeal was turned down.

## 9. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### Balance at close of business 29.2.16

Current Account	£ 7,157.80
Savings Account	£ 9,004.56* Ring fenced funds and interest received.

### Bank Transactions

<u>Current Account</u>	<u>Chq/SO/DD</u>	<u>In</u>	<u>Out</u>
5 Feb N Power	DD		£ 23.00
8 Feb SDC	Credit (Grass cutting)	£274.00	
8 Feb	1361		£ 9.30
8 Feb	1362		£111.17
23 Feb	Transfer		£226.30

<u>Deposit Account</u>	<u>In</u>	<u>Out</u>
9 Feb Interest	£0.36	

<u>Cheques issued from mtg</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>	<u>Amount</u>
7.3.16 T. Gill (Refund for Laptop)	1363	£244.99
7.3.16 J. Sherriff (Coffee Feb)	1364	£ 8.45
7.3.16 J. Sherriff (Coffee March)	1365	£ 7.41
7.3.16 H. Hide-Wright (Expenses Feb)	1364	£ 9.30

**Total Cheques** **£270.15**

### New Balances for Ring Fenced Funds:

Neighbourhood Watch	£ 185.00
<b>St John's Steps appeal Funds</b>	<b>£ 359.13</b>
Community Grant Fund (Laptop)	£ 10.07
Interest Received	£ 0.36
Play area lease grant from AD Fete Committee	£ 200.00
RR Maintenance (From Fete Committee)	£ 1,000.00
Playground (from fete committee)	£ 250.00
Ring fenced RR Maintenance	£ 5,000.00
Ring fenced Parish Plan/RR Refurbishment	£ 2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 9,004.56</b>

Audit Arrangements. After discussions, it was confirmed that the PC will stay with existing arrangements. However so that we are nearer to full implementation of the Transparency arrangements starting from the beginning of the next Financial year we will add a copy of all invoices to the back of the minutes of the meeting in which they we authorised for payment.

Clerk to make an appointment with Internal Auditor in April.

NALC Financial Regulations: The alterations to the financial regulations will be added to the existing.

Return of £2,338.05 to SDC for their erroneous credit payment (arrived to ADPC account 7/2/16). It was agreed that if a cheque is needed to make the payment, it will be issued prior to the next meeting.

10. MEMBER REPORTS

Compton Chronicle closing date is 12<sup>th</sup> March. It was decided that Darrell will produce the report for the CC.

Open Gardens have put in a request to use the Cemetery Car Park for July.

Dog fouling signs are going up on Wednesday of this week at the playground.

Reported litter on the Farnborough road to SDC.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS for 2016: 4<sup>th</sup> April, 9<sup>nd</sup> May, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 4<sup>th</sup> July, 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug, 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct, 7<sup>th</sup> Nov, 5<sup>th</sup> Dec.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.