

AVON DASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held at the Reading Room on Monday 4 June 2007

Present A Fraser; J Burgess; L Hope-Frost; S Richardson; P Wallace;
Cllr C Williams; Cllr D Booth; Clerk

In Attendance J Davies; M Edgington; PC Rod Joy (part attendance); A F Rice;
G J Rice

1. Apologies: -
2. Declaration of Interest:

J Burgess declared an interest in item 4.g) due to her participation in the Parish Plan Steering Group.

A Fraser declared an interest in item 4.d) as a result of his friendship with M Mann who is due to make repairs to the playground.
3. Confirmation of Minutes:

Subject to an amendment to p159 'Funding Opportunities in Warwickshire': L Hope-Frost (not J Burgess) agreed to forward the booklet to A Rice, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as correct by L Hope-Frost and seconded by P Wallace; they were then signed by A Fraser.
4. Matters Arising:
 - a) Community Policing/Neighbourhood Watch (NW) – PC Rod Joy noted that L Hope-Frost would attend the meeting of the PACT panel on 26 June.
Residents should be aware of the seasonal increase in house burglaries and the need to close and lock all downstairs doors and windows (especially at night). PC Joy recommended that car keys be stored safely as they are often the target for opportunist burglars/car thieves.
No progress made reference the proposed 'Smart Water' presentation by Nick Stephens.
 - b) Reading Room Repairs – No progress made. A Fraser to draw up a schedule of works required at the Reading Room; this to be used as the basis for quotes to be sourced from various local contractors. Action A Fraser.
 - c) Traffic Calming – Upon receipt of materials from Chris Fossey, 'CATS' leaflets to be issued to all residents by J Burgess/P Wallace and posters displayed on noticeboards.
'Speed Aware' – no update.
Costs received from Jamie Hickman make the use of beige-coloured tarmac prohibitive. J Burgess to confirm that this measure of traffic calming will not be pursued at this time.
Action J Burgess.
P Wallace proposed that rumble strips should be considered as a traffic calming measure; however, it was noted that noise to residents may be problematic. J Burgess to investigate.
 - d) Playground – Repairs - no progress.
Composting: decision to purchase 2 x 330 litre compost bins at a cost of £19 was made. J Burgess to action.
Playground rental fees: records show that charges of 25p and 15p were made in 1979 and 1983 respectively. The need to draw up a contract for ongoing use of the playground was identified; this should incorporate agreed peppercorn charges, duration of contract period, and the requirement for the land owner to submit invoices for payment by the Parish Council to an agreed timeframe. J Burgess to contact land owner.

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- e) Burial Ground – Review process of the 'Rules for the Avon Dassett Cemetery' – no progress. Copy of Harbury Parish Council's Cemetery Fees document provided by S Richardson. In view of the delays in progressing this item, S Richardson volunteered to undertake the review. Clerk to provide copy of existing 'Rules' to S Richardson.
- f) Parish Website – Content Management System training for J Burgess, S Richardson and Clerk took place at SDC on Monday 4 June at 10.00 am.
J Burgess provided update of training session and informed the meeting of further delays to the project. S Richardson suggested that continued pressure be applied to Balvinder Heran at SDC. Cllr Williams to speak to Balvinder Heran on behalf of the Parish Council.
- g) Parish Plan – J Burgess provided update of proposed timetable:
 - mid June (after arrival of HNS results) final draft of PP to all Steering Group
 - end June copies to Parish Council for approval at July/August Parish Council meeting
 - end August draft of text to SDC for October Agenda
 - September communications with design team reference final presentation
 - October (following SDC approval) approve final design and print
 - distribution hoped before year end.
- h) Allotments – S Richardson had placed a notice in the Compton Chronicle; however this has yet to be issued to all residents at the time of the meeting. Responses will be identified at the July meeting of the Council.
- i) 'Power Cut' Pack – agreement reached that the pack be left in the Reading Room with a note asking if any 'vulnerable' residents would wish the Parish Council to source similar items for use in future power cuts. Item held over to July meeting.
- j) Minimum Wage/Insurance Liability for Non-Insured Contractors – a response had been received from WALC to the effect that:
 i) the minimum wage does not apply to self-employed personnel; however the Parish Council might wish to consider whether payment of less than minimum wage is acceptable.
 ii) the Parish Council is at risk if an accident should occur which involved a third party whilst a non-insured contractor was working on its behalf. WALC recommended the employment of insured contractors only and warned of the potential risks of using non-insured contractors. To this end the following contractors were to be contacted:
 - M Mann and A Sheasby (by A Fraser)
 - J Kipling (by J Burgess)
 - M Harris (M Edgington to liaise with J Burgess)
 to determine if they have public liability insurance. The Council is keen to continue to use local contractors wherever possible and would consider a review of rates in order to facilitate this.
 P Wallace to contact the Post Master to determine his insurance status.
- k) Dog Fouling – Leaflets to be issued to all dog owners. Action J Burgess.
- l) Flag Pole – Following discussion, it was agreed that a bespoke flag for Avon Dassett would not be appropriate. A Fraser to source quotes for a Union Flag and a St George's Flag.

5. Procedures:

S Richardson provided an overview of the paper she had issued. A Fraser commented that he had visited some local Parish Council meetings to determine how other villages conduct their meetings.

S Richardson to consider purchase of photocopier for Parish Council use.

Parish Councillors to advise S Richardson of their suggestions to improve procedures, after which S Richardson and Clerk to consider revised processes and report back to July meeting.

6. Council Report:

Cllr Williams presented his report – attached.

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Cllr Booth reported that the County Council AGM had taken place.

He supported the Dasset School's initiative for the provision of seat belts on all school buses.

Transport to senior schools: the decision to cut some services has been postponed for one year; however there will be a future reorganisation of school bus services.

In order to make service improvements the County Council will need to identify savings for next year. The County Council is considering sharing facilities with other authorities in order to adopt more efficient practices.

7. Correspondence:

Community Environmental Action Projects – letter from James Gamble offering free consultation; not taken up.

Planning Training – training sessions arranged by SDC on Thursday 7 June 2007 for all Parish Councillors. A Fraser can no longer attend this session; A Fraser to contact Sue Nash direct to re-arrange his planning training.

Stratford-on-Avon District Local Development Framework: Core Strategy – Issues & Options – Report issued; consultation period ends 22 June 2007. S Richardson and J Burgess to respond on behalf of Parish Council.

Stratford-on-Avon District Local Development Framework: Sustainability Appraisal – Scoping Report – report available on SDC website; consultation period ends 22 June.

Closure of Warwickshire Fire Control Room – statement from Cllr David Hinton, Chair, West Midlands Region FiReControl Project Board.

Hallmark – An Achievement Award for Village & Community Halls – national scheme rolled out locally by WRCC.

Traffic Lights on Church Hill – e-mail from G Rice read to the meeting highlighting the need for suitably positioned notices to warn large vehicles of the narrow single lane road created by the contractors undertaking repairs to St John the Baptist Church.

It was understood that County Highways are deliberating on the appropriate wording and placement of warning notices to deter large vehicles from negotiating this narrow road.

The Parish Council had not been informed of these works and were not, therefore, in a position to notify villagers of the works in advance.

Cllr Booth to investigate why County Highways and/or the Church Commissioners did not inform the Parish Council in advance of works to be carried out and to request an apology from the relevant party that could be posted on village noticeboards and in the Compton Chronicle.

Code of Conduct 2007 – letter from Liam Nevin, Monitoring Officer. An obligation of the new Code is that local newspaper confirmation of the adoption of the Code is published. Mr Nevin proposes to place a single advertisement on behalf of the District Council and all Parish Councils who wish to be included. Councils wishing to take advantage of this facility should contact Mr Nevin's assistant. Clerk to action.

M40 Overbridge on C35 – e-mail from Gez Romano at County Highways confirmed that measures will be taken to repair subsidence to the carriageway on either side of the motorway bridge.

Planning – provisional planning meeting set for Thursday 21 June 2007 at 7.30 pm.

Consent for arboricultural work at The Avon was given to Mr D Nash.

8. Financial Statement:

Balances at close of business on Monday 4 June 2007:

Current account	£219.75 credit
Deposit account	£12,986.82 credit

Cheques to be issued:

a) M Maughan (Clerk's pay & expenses)	£107.18
b) J Kipling (Cleaning)	£16.00

£107.18
£16.00

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c) M Harris (Mowing verges & planting tubs)	£37.00
d) M Edgington (purchase of bedding plants)	£33.75
e) Npower (street lighting)	£5.09
f) Warwickshire, Solihull & Birmingham Training Partnership (Induction Course for S Richardson)	£25.00
g) M Maughan ('bonus' payment for AGM/audit work)*	£105.00

*L Hope-Frost proposed that the Clerk be awarded an additional payment for the work carried out in support of the 2007 AGM and the 2006/7 Audit; this was agreed by the Council.

The payment of cheques was proposed by J Burgess and seconded by L Hope-Frost.

A payment of £200.00 had been received from SDC for hire of the Reading Room for the May elections.

9. Any Other Business:

- a) L Hope-Frost expressed the Council's appreciation for the work carried out by Mary Edgington and Mick Harris in support of this year's Best Kept Village competition and wished this to be noted in the Compton Chronicle. Clerk to action.
- b) L Hope-Frost reported that the overhanging Philadelphus belonged to Honeywood House (not Hillside Farm as stated at last month's meeting) and that this would be pruned after flowering.
- c) L Hope-Frost reported that she had contacted Marek Reichman at Spinney Bank and that he had confirmed that measures were being taken to implement the landscaping required as part of the conditions of consent for planning permissions for the wooden 'chalet' on his land.
- d) L Hope-Frost confirmed that the churchyard would be excluded from the Best Kept Village judging.
- e) P Wallace notified the Council that the hedge causing an obstruction by the Post Box had been removed.
- f) J Burgess requested that the Council consider whether expenses could be claimed by Councillors for administration costs incurred on Council business? Cllr Williams confirmed that Councillors are entitled to have 'legitimate' expenses reimbursed. It was suggested that consideration be given to adopting new rules/guidelines for administrative expenses and that this should be included on the agenda for the July meeting.
- g) J Burgess stated that the repairs undertaken by County Highways to potholes at the edges of the C113 Dasset Road were not satisfactory. Clerk to contact Gez Romano.

10. Questions from the Public:

None

11. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Monday 2 July at 7.30 pm in the Reading Room.

Meeting closed at 9.55 pm.

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**Avon Dassett Parish Council Meeting 04.06.07.
District Councillor's Report**

1. As you may be aware the government have now issued the new model code of conduct that all councils are obliged to adopt. I cannot emphasise too strongly that all members of the Parish Council should the training that is being provided by the District Council. The Standards and Ethics Committee, at their meeting to be held on 13th June 2007, will appoint a sub-committee for a Local Determination of the Allegations made by a Member of the Public against Cllr Martin. It is anticipated that this meeting will be held in mid-July.
2. A study is being conducted into probity issues regarding Parish Councils' involvement in the planning process. One of the issues is that Parish Councillors should only comment on planning applications after they have received some planning training. As with the Code of Conduct, I do hope that as many councillors as possible will take advantage of the offer for planning training.
3. Planning for next year's budgets has already started. SDC is currently facing a shortfall of £600,000. If we are to maintain our status as being the lowest tax district council in Warwickshire, significant savings must be identified. One area where the Council has received an accolade is in our recycling efforts. Currently, we are at more than 40% and it is those councils with low recycling figures, some below 10%, who face fiscal penalties which ultimately mean that the taxpayer will have to pay more. SDC has no intention of initiating fortnightly collections of waste unless ordered to do so by central government. A new waste collection contractor is currently being negotiated to come into force in August 2008. Undoubtedly, one advantage will be changing to wheelie bins for refuse collection rather than using black sacks. Black sacks currently cost £100,000 per year. We are hoping to increase material that can be collected for recycling, such as plastic and polythene.
4. The government White Paper on Local Government at the end of last year provided councils with a variety of options to improve efficiency. The route chosen by Stratford was to enhance our Partnership Working with other local authorities. The perception is that there is much duplication and Stratford, along with other authorities, is working to minimise this duplication. I will keep you informed of the progress of this project.