

## ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the above Council held on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

Present: Cllrs. M. Day, A. Green, P. Hetherington, L. French, T. Hill, P. Tinson (In the Chair).

- 1) **APOLOGIES:** Cllr. G. Crossley, D/Cllr Lynn Lloyd.
- 2) **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – *None.*
- 3) **MINUTES** of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016, were approved and signed.
- 4) **MATTERS ARISING** – *None.*
- 5) **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS** - *The District Councillors report is attached to these minutes.*
- 6) **OPEN FORUM** – *3 Members of the public were welcomed to the meeting, two with specific interest in items 7c & 9 and one purely to observe the meeting.*
- 7) **PLANNING**
  - a) **Applications** as follows were confirmed/discussed:
    - P16/S3393/HH** – Erection of detached garage in front of existing dwelling house and window in side wall of dwelling house to match existing windows (window size 1 Mtr X 1 Mtr) and will face existing masonry boundary wall at Icknield Cottage, Butts Way, Aston Rowant. *There was a discussion in view of concerns expressed by a neighbour. Some of these concerns related to possible further development should the application be approved. It was noted that the District Council was responsible for monitoring any approved development and that the Parish Council should only consider the plans placed before them. Recommendation – should be approved, but with these concerns being discussed with the applicant first.*
  - b) **Decisions** of S.O.D.C. as follows were noted:
    - P16/S3391/HH** Erection of a 3-bay car port and change existing double garage into games room at Willowmead, Kingston Stert, OX39 4NL. **GRANTED**
    - P16/S3572/AG** - Erection of general agricultural store for hay and machinery at Parkwood Stud, London Road, Lewknor, OX49 5RZ – **GRANTED - No Formal Application For Planning permission Required.** *Noted.*
  - c) **Neighbourhood Plan** – *A presentation was made to the Council by Jeanette Ewens following the fourth meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December. After the information gathering, boundary confirmation and the end of the 4-week consultation period mentioned in last month's report, AR32 has now been assigned an officer from SODC. He is also responsible for 19 other villages and will be attending the January meeting and signing off the next stage, at which point the allocation of funds would be triggered. All Neighbourhood Plan meeting minutes are to be posted to a separate section of the ARPC web-site along with an invitation for further members to join the group and assist in taking things forward. All Goals and Objectives, along with the Terms of Reference were approved unanimously, and are attached to these minutes.*
- 8) **FINANCE**
  - a) The following payments were noted (Costs include VAT):

	£	p
Clerk October Salary		
Royal British Legion – Remembrance Wreath	50.00	
M Parry (Computer Support – already approved)	75.00	
S. Johns Mileage (February – October)	54.60	
S. Johns Postage	1.10	
T. Lambourne (New Clerk) Purchase wi-fi printer/scanner/copier	74.99	
  - b) The following payments were approved (Costs include VAT):

Clerk November Salary (Inc. Oct not claimed last month)		
S. Johns (training time with new clerk)		
HMRC/PAYE Re: clerk Oct/Nov salary		
G Stevens (Oct Invoice - grass cutting & extra strimming in lanes)	245.00	
MH-P (renewal of domain name astonrowant.org.uk)	19.18	
T. Lambourne – Initial stationery expenses	70.03	
Society of Local Council Clerks subscription renewal	103.00	
SOAV Invoice (Dog-bin emptying) Jul-Sept'16	87.91	

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|----|--|----------|
|    | OALC Training Courses for new clerk (Jan/Feb'17)   | 84.00    |
|    | G Stevens (Nov Invoice – Leaf blowing, grip maintenance & pruning)   | 140.00   |
|    | Diane Malley (Payroll services H2 2016)  | 34.00    |
| c) | Receipts as follows were noted:  |          |
|    | Walks Booklets   | 27.00    |
| d) | The current financial situation as at 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2016:  |          |
|    | Barclays Bank – Community Account  | 17823.10 |
|    | Barclays Bank – Business Saver Account   | 1090.19  |
|    | National Savings   | 11224.62 |
|    | Village Hall Reserve fund  | (690)    |
|    | Play Area Reserve Fund   | (5636)   |
|    | Parish Notes Reserve Fund  | (1000)   |
|    | Trees, Footpaths & Environment Reserve Fund  | (7069)   |
|    | Cash   | 1.19     |
| e) | Budget 2016/2017 v7 – <i>Noted</i>   |          |
| f) | Budget / Precept 2017 / 2018 for review – <i>The Chairman and Clerk have worked on the document to apply for the 2017/18 precept from SODC which was presented to the meeting. Modest increases, if any, have been made mostly in areas where we may have to take on expense previously covered by OCC, following central cut-backs. The single largest increase is an amount of £2,000 that has been included to partly finance the next stage of the traffic calming project (see point 9 below). Concerns were expressed that this would increase the amount being requested from parishioners by something approaching 10% and, whilst this does not look much as a monetary increase, it was felt that this may be too high when quite significant reserves are held. The chairman pointed out that these reserves are largely set aside for specific projects and while they form part of the overall bank balance they give misleading impression. However, it is also intended to draw on reserves to fund traffic calming work. The spends against reserves have been stripped out of the overall figures and listed separately to give a clearer picture. The option of whether to defer a large increase this year, solely use reserves to fund this work now and apply for smaller increases in subsequent years to replenish reserves was balanced by the possibility that there may be a cap introduced at some future date which will restrict any increase that can applied. It was pointed out that our percentage of local precept is actually fairly low compared to other councils. The vote to approve the proposed budget to include a funded spend for traffic calming of £2,000 this year was passed by 4 votes to 1, with Cllr.Green being the sole vote against. As there was a majority, no other options were considered or voted upon. The council will therefore be applying for a total precept figure of £22,500 for the coming financial year, which equates to an increase of 9.76% overall.</i> |          |

## 9) HIGHWAYS

Traffic Calming – *Following recent news coverage, 2 parishioners have been in touch to express concern at possible deterioration in air quality if speed bumps were to be installed. A study has shown that air quality can suffer where vehicles slow down for the bumps, but speed up again between them, rather than maintaining a steady speed, but it was felt that this was not really an issue in a rural area where air quality is not already compromised as was possible in more urban areas. Cllr Day advised on the need to obtain feedback on the initial proposals discussed, namely a chicane with speed bumps and/or a mobile speed camera, used by trained villagers. Several people are keen on the latter, but there could be possible drawbacks if abuse is experienced from motorists. There needs to be a general acceptance on what can be done to address other concerns about speed bumps, namely damage to vehicles or noise from vehicles travelling over them. A member of the public wished it to be noted that the B4009 was not the only road in the villages affected by excessive speeds. Pleck Lane and the Stert Road are also affected in Kingston Blount. As all the investigations and costings thus far have only applied to the B4009 where the main problem is, it was felt that these other areas could not now be included, but a couple of possible alternative solutions were put forward. It was noted that other villages had stickers on wheelie bins advising the correct speed limit. It has been suggested that residents park cars along these roads to form chicanes but that possible damage to vehicles would negate the benefits. The key concern is the speed of vehicles entering Kingston Blount down the hill past the cricket club, but there is no*

*effective way to deter motorists from speeding as there is no lay-by for a temporary Police speed van to park. It was agreed to speak to local landowners to see if the possibility of creating a lay-by on their land could be explored, or open a dialogue with the cricket club to use their entrance, although the speed limit applicable there is still 50mph.*

- 10) HILLWERKE TRUST** – *No report, but it was noted that there was a very successful Christmas Fair held in the village hall on 1<sup>st</sup> December which was attended by many villagers.*
- 11) KINGSTON BLOUNT PLAYGROUND** – *Still no contact from the Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company. The clerk is to re-establish contact to drive this forward in the New Year.*
- 12) ASTON ROWANT SCHOOL** – *No report received this month.*
- 13) GRASS CUTTING & GENERAL PARISH MAINTENANCE** – *Further to last month’s minutes where it was recorded that Cllr. Green would pass responsibility for Grass Cutting to Cllr. Hill, this has not yet been achieved as both parties have been away at different points during the month. However, the other general maintenance jobs have been done - clearing the grips on Aston Hill, pruning and tidying the shrubs on the Junction at the end of the Stert Road and clearing dead or damaged branches from the cherry trees on the B4009 at Aston Rowant.*
- 14) ASTON ROWANT CRICKET CLUB (ARCC)** – *Cllr. Tinson attended the cricket club AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> December. Little was said with regard to the stalled planning application for new club facilities, other than the indication of a possible re-submission of the plans in the near future. Cllr. Green wished to re-engage with the club and hoped they will consult with the community on the way forward, everyone is in agreement that the club desperately needs new facilities, but this would need to be done on a formal basis so there is full transparency in the discussions.*
- 15) FOOTPATHS AND AMENITIES GROUP (FAAG) -**  
Report from Cllr. P. Hetherington:
  - I. Approval was sought and gained for the purchase of a bottle of wine to acknowledge the work undertaken by Simon Coulon in providing the flowering tubs throughout the villages, free of charge.*
  - II. New Litter-Picker – it was confirmed that the new litter picker was now in place upon completion of the permits and permissions required and that she has already been seen working around the villages.*
  - III. Further works at Fiveways, as approved at the November meeting – going ahead on 15<sup>th</sup> December. Additionally, another 100 plants and bulbs are to be planted in the next few weeks.*
  - IV. Moors footpath – Cllr Hetherington is in discussion with both landowners regarding what contribution they would be prepared to give – physically in clearing leaves, laying paving etc. The subject of horses using the path was also raised and discussions are being held regarding what would be the best surface to use to avoid the path becoming chewed-up and overly muddy.*
- 16) CLERK’S REPORT** – *A new bank mandate was signed by Cllrs. Tinson & Hetherington so that the statement address can be changed to go to the new clerk – to be presented to the Barclays with the necessary ID. The £1.19 “cash” holding in the budget/accounts has been used to purchase 1 x 1<sup>st</sup> class and 1 x 2<sup>nd</sup> class postage stamps, and will no longer appear in the accounts. A discussion was held regarding the state of the parish noticeboard. Only one is lockable and there is no control over what is posted. Additionally, in certain weather conditions, items are unreadable due to condensation and damp. The clerk undertook to investigate and collate information on possible replacement costs and what funds may be available.*
- 17) CORESPONDENCE** – *Email received requesting product and location information for the defibrillator, plus an update on contact details, the clerk to respond accordingly. SODC have advised the end of the moratorium period on the Cherry Tree pub and it was confirmed that no further action is necessary by the council. Emails received advising the removal of the public payphones in Kingston Blount and Aston Rowant – no proposals were put forward to “adopt” the phone boxes and therefore their removal will not be opposed.*
- 18) WEBSITE** – *The Neighbourhood plan details are to be uploaded to a new tab on the main PC web-site, but the cost is not included in our current plan of one amendment and basic information uploads each month (agenda/minutes etc.). The NP committee has funds available that could be used, but the clerk is also to investigate our current plan and what exactly is covered and how long the contract with Mh-p has to run.*
- 19) OTHER URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman** – *None.*
- 20) DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at Kingston Blount Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

## **CHAIRMAN**