

ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the above Council held on Wednesday, 14th February 2018 in Kingston Blount Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs. M. Day, L. French, P. Hetherington, S. Sowerby, P. Tinson (Chair) and M. Wodzynski. D/Cllr. L. Lloyd.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. T. Hill, C/Cllr. J. Matelot

- 1) **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – *None.*
- 2) **MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on 10th January 2018, were approved and signed.**
- 3) **MATTERS ARISING:** *Register of Members Interests received from new councillor, for recording into public record.*
- 4) **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS** – *Circulated to all councillors by email – no matters arising.*
- 5) **OPEN FORUM** – *14 members of the public attended with specific interest in planning applications P17/S4443/FUL & P18/S0001/FUL as below.*

Regarding the St John Homes application: there was general consternation that this was being considered for approval, given refusal was recommended on the recent Rectory Homes application where the same principles apply. Most concerns surrounded road safety, light pollution, effect on water courses, wildlife habitat and contravention of several SODCs own planning policies. Most concerning was that the application had been made knowing that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan was not yet complete. Residents were advised that all these points had been considered when councillors reached their individual decisions, and that they should also make their points individually on the SODC planning portal in addition to the council's eventual recommendation.

Regarding the Cherry Tree application: representation was made on behalf of the owners of Tantivy Cottage (TC), The Old Post Office (TOPO) and Vine House (VH), whose properties are in immediate proximity to the pub building. They are concerned at the inaccuracy of the initial application plans/area of ownership (since revised), inaccuracies regarding the number of existing letting rooms stated (particularly, previous use for the pub landlord & family being regarded as commercially let out), over-statement of parking availability and access and particularly for TOPO, loss of light and overlooking concerns on the proposed first floor extension and conservatory at the back. The new owners have the right to request removal of the "Asset of Community Value" order, and the council received notification from SODC of such a request (on the day of this meeting) and their agreement to this. More worrying is the potential increase in traffic exiting onto the B4009 via a blind corner, in an area where 3 accidents have occurred in the last 15 months. While this was always a consideration when the pub was open, this application would concentrate movements to within peak traffic times, on a road where usage has changed in recent years and volume of traffic increased considerably and is set to increase further with all the new developments in Chinnor and Princes Risborough.

6) **PLANNING**

- i. **Applications** as follows were confirmed/discussed:

P17/S2719/O – Land at Paddock House, Church Lane, Aston Rowant. Amended plans for entrance to proposed new property showing improved vision-splay onto Church Lane. Our original decision should stand as nothing has been done to address the issue of an increase in traffic down a narrow, un-adopted, country lane and inappropriate development on the edge of the village, extending beyond the village boundary and into open countryside. **SHOULD BE REFUSED.**

P17/S4443/FUL – The Cherry Tree, Park Lane, Kingston Blount – amended plans showing reduced boundary to plot and clarification on existing parking spaces. Some of our original concerns have been addressed regarding the accuracy of the plot area, but concerns remain over available parking and impact on neighbouring properties with regards to privacy, loss of light and air pollution. Overall the positive aspects outweigh these, and we should be seen to support a thriving business concern with possibility of local employment and other community benefits. If we refuse and the application goes to appeal, we lose the right to interact and influence the eventual outcome. A further vote on the night confirmed 5/0 that this application **SHOULD BE APPROVED**, with proviso for the points raised in Open Forum.

P18/S0001/FUL – Land at the junction of Aston Rowant Road and Chinnor Road Aston Rowant. Erection of six detached dwellings and four apartments, together with access, highway alterations, parking, landscaping, drainage and amenity space by St John Homes (Thames Valley) Ltd.

A mixed range of views have already been expressed online, both against and in support and the site has been identified by many during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process as a possible development area. While the NP is not complete, we are bound by when landowners decide to sell and when applications are received and must decide based on the situation before us now. Taking comments from drainage assessment and ecology experts on board as well as the range of views already expressed and concerns over highway safety, a vote was taken and agreed unanimously that the application **SHOULD BE APPROVED**, with reservations about site drainage and access to B4009. A full drainage assessment for the numerous springs which drain across the site and possible pollution effects should be a condition of approval.

P18/S0150/HH - New first floor side extension at 2 The Rise Kingston Blount. **SHOULD BE APPROVED.**

P18/S0163/HH - Two storey side/rear extension to existing dwelling, replacing existing single storey element at 9 Icknield Close Kingston Blount. **SHOULD BE APPROVED**

ii. **Decisions** of S.O.D.C. as follows were noted:

P17/S4277/HH – Demolition of existing single-storey side extension, construction of new single-storey rear extension at Beacon Cottage, Aston Hill, Aston Rowant - **GRANTED.**

iii. **SODC Planning Committee** Rectory Homes application (P17/S3661/FUL). Cllr. Day reported that this issue was not on the agenda for the meeting on 28th February, so we do not know when this will be discussed or decided.

7) FINANCE

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i. The following payments were noted (Costs include VAT):		
Clerk December Salary		
HMRC/P.A.Y.E re: clerk December salary		
Robyn Leinster (Litter November)		25.32
DM Payroll Services (H2 17/18)		40.50
SLCC 2018 Annual Subscription		100.00
ALCC 2018 Annual Subscription		30.00
Robyn Leinster (Litter Aug/Sept) ORIGINAL CHQ LOST		50.64
Robyn Leinster (Litter December)		31.65
P Hetherington (S.Coulon Xmas)		11.20
Shelly Signs		24.00
Stopped Cheque Fee (101619, R Leinster Aug/Sep)		12.50
ii. Receipts as follows to be noted:		
Walks Booklets		87.00
HMRC - VAT reclaim (1/Feb/17 – 31/Dec/17)		5025.57
iii. The following payments were approved (Costs include VAT):		
Clerk January Salary		
HMRC/P.A.Y.E re: clerk January salary		
Robyn Leinster (Litter January)		25.32
Mh-p Internet (PC Hosting, Annual Invoice)		108.00
SODC (Dog-Bins Oct,Nov,Dec) Reimburse clerk for payment on card		87.91
Hillwerke Trust (NP Meetings Dec-Mar)	NOT ON AGENDA	68.00
S Sowerby (Blanchfords) Salt Bin refill	NOT ON AGENDA	31.87
iv. The current financial situation as at 31st January 2018:		
Barclays Bank – Community Account	28156.05	
Barclays Bank – Business Saver Account	1090.66	
National Savings	11224.62	
Village Hall Reserve fund	(690)	

Play Area Reserve Fund	(56)
Parish Notes Reserve Fund	(1000)
Neighbourhood Plan Reserve	(4685)
Traffic Calming	(1840)
Trees, Footpaths & Environment Reserve Fund	(2140)

v. Budget 2017/8 v10. Noted.

9) HIGHWAYS: - Cllr. Day reported.

- i. A trial for the proposed double chicane at the western approach to Kingston Blount was undertaken in January with temporary road markings and coned areas representing where the pinch-points would be. This proved successful and did slow traffic down. Regarding objections raised after the public consultation, a meeting with the OCC engineer concluded that as you approach the village from Aston Rowant/M40 direction cars in the dip at the Stert Road junction are fully visible to those negotiating the chicane so would not pose a hazard. Additionally, the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) for speed reduction is triggered so far back and away from the chicane to render moving it unnecessary and it should remain in situ. Cllr Day to confirm with those who raised the objections that they would be happy with these findings and would remove their objection and enable the measures to proceed.
- ii. Reports received that the VAS at the eastern approach to Aston Rowant is currently not working, but there is uncertainty as to who is responsible for its maintenance, OCC or the parish. Cllr. Tinson to take this forward after reference to parish personnel in place at the time of installation.
- iii. Following yet another accident in Kingston Blount High Street on the night of 3rd February (the third in the last 15 months) questions were asked as to how confident the council were that the chicanes at either end of the village would actually slow the traffic flow in the place where it is obviously needed. Research has shown that a double chicane forces traffic to slow down to negotiate them and stops drivers "chancing it" and speeding up to get through ahead of on-coming traffic, whereupon they do not lose their speed through the village. The only other option would have been speed bumps, but at the outset of the process residents were against this option on the grounds of noise and vibration due to the proximity of properties to the road in the narrowest part of the village.
- iv. M40 Chilterns Environmental Group – notice received of their AGM on Wednesday 7th March at Lane End Community Centre. It was hoped someone would attend as we provide an annual grant to the group, but no councillors are available on that date. The clerk will post details to our web-site, KBAR and the noticeboards for any interested parishioner(s) who may wish to attend.

10) HILLWERKE TRUST – Cllr. Sowerby reported that following notice that a couple of Trustees intend to stand down and the death of another last year, the Trust is now desperately short of personnel, and struggling to conduct business. There are vacancies for Secretary and Chairman and the creation of a new role of Site Manager, responsible for general day-to-day maintenance of the Village Hall and playing field. Notices are to be placed on the parish noticeboards and our web-site and KBAR page to encourage parishioners to come forward and fill these roles.

11) NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - Andy Green (NPSG member) reported on the meeting held on 13th February:

- i. Draft Site Assessment Criteria and Green Sites (for comment) yellow consultation sheets were hand-delivered to each household in November and details posted to the parish noticeboards, with a total of 32 emailed and 4 hand delivered responses (roughly 10%) received.
- ii. When commented, 11 were supportive of the criteria applied with 5 responses suggesting a different weighting or additional criteria. Several detailed responses were received & appropriate replies sent by the NPSG Chairman. The focus of public response was on the green sites (21 responses), mainly requests to upgrade some sites from Green 3 to Green 2 and especially Red 2, 4 & 5. It was agreed that there was no justification, based on Govt. criteria, for changing the status of the sites identified. Full results to be available by April.
- iii. Mr Green took issue with comments made in December about the lack of minutes and uptake of an offer to speed up the NP process. It was explained that the comments were made mainly to seek clarification and the explanations provided had reassured all concerned. D/Cllr. Lloyd explained that (particularly) the posting of minutes was important to prove that the correct process had been followed so there would be no reason to dispute

or negate the final Neighbourhood Plan submission. This issue has now been addressed and minutes will be posted when due in future.

- 12) KINGSTON BLOUNT PLAYGROUND** - 2018 rota now in place however, one long-standing inspector has now stood down. The rota has been reshuffled to ensure the vacant month (December) can be filled in time and the Clerk will attend to this and contact the list of possible volunteers who came forward after an appeal last year.
- 13) ASTON ROWANT SCHOOL** – Head-Teachers report received and circulated to all councillors. No matters arising.
- 14) GRASS CUTTING & GENERAL PARISH MAINTENANCE:** – Quote received from Complete Weed Control for 2018-19. The same as last year (2 X £220 +VAT) although it was noted that they only charged us 2 X £200 +VAT during 2017. Approved unanimously, clerk to respond and accept.
- 15) ASTON ROWANT CRICKET CLUB** – Cllr. Tinson reported that he had spoken to ARCC Chairman Paul Humphreys following the latest rejection of amendment 5 to the plans P16/S0894/FUL and expressing our frustration at the lack of progress in resolving this issue, SODC not having come to a decision to crystallise the situation. We acknowledge that if the application is rejected by SODC, the club will go to appeal and we will lose all control and have no input to the final outcome. Because of high feelings on both sides, we are actively trying to broker a mutually acceptable solution and will continue to do so by engaging in dialogue with ARCC at all stages of the process.
- 16) FOOTPATHS AND AMENITIES GROUP (FAAG)** - Cllr. Hetherington reported:
- i. The potential permissive footpath to Crowell will definitely go ahead as agreement has now been reached with the land-owner. TOE2 are amenable to providing a grant to achieve this and an application will be made shortly to cover the cost once we decide on the most appropriate surface. A “horse-proof” surface is essential, plus one able to withstand farm machinery essential for hedge cutting etc. and we are still assessing options.
 - ii. The parish will be taking part in the Great Spring Litter Pick and we have chosen Saturday 3rd March to do this from the lay-by at the top of Aston Hill, down Kingston Hill (including the lay-by opposite Kingston House) and into Kingston Blount. All other areas are covered by the village litter picker and will not be included. Volunteers to assist will be sought via web-site, KBAR and notice boards as usual.
 - iii. Several posts on the green in Aston Rowant have fallen and as the parish paid for these to be installed in the first place, we will arrange to replace or repair. Cllr. Hetherington to investigate & action.
- 17) CORESPONDENCE:** -
- i. Thanks received from Jenny Flynn, Aston Rowant Churchwarden, for £50 donation towards teas provided after Moors Footpath re-opening in November. Noted.
 - ii. Letter from Bank confirming stop on cheque 101619, per January minute ref: 8iv, £12.50 fee. Noted.
 - iii. Letter from Chairman of SODC re: charity dinner to raise funds for Homeless Oxfordshire. Noted.
 - iv. Request from organisers of KB Street Fayre re: insurance cover for the event on our policy. Confirmed by Insurers - £73 policy premium to be applied, to be covered by ARPC. Noted.
- 18) OTHER MATTERS & WRITTEN REPORTS:** – None.
- 19) OTHER URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman** – None.
- 20) DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – Wednesday 14th March 2018 in Kingston Blount Village Hall at 7.30pm.

CHAIRMAN