

ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the above Council held on Wednesday, 12th July 2017 in Aston Rowant church.

PRESENT: Cllrs. M. Day, T. Hill, S.Sowerby & P. Tinson (In the Chair), D/Cllr Lynn Lloyd, C/Cllr Jeanette Matelot

APOLOGIES: Cllrs L.French & P.Hetherington.

- 1) **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – *None.*
- 2) **CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR AND ASSOCIATED PAPERWORK** – *The Chairman welcomed Steven Sowerby to the meeting, having been co-opted onto the council following the recent Casual Vacancy Notice. The Acceptance of Office was signed in the presence of the Clerk, and Register of Members Interests received for recording into public record.*
- 3) **MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th June 2017, were approved and signed.**
- 4) **MATTERS ARISING:** - *None.*
- 5) **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS** - *The District Councillors report (Chinnor Ward) was circulated to all Councillors by email and a copy is attached to these minutes. The County Councillors report was only received on the night, and is also attached. Attention was drawn to paragraph 1, detailing a new “Communities Fund” which has been set up to provide small grants for community schemes, matched by funding from the community themselves.*
- 6) **OPEN FORUM** – *12 members of the public were present initially with a specific interest in a presentation given to the council by David Jacobs from St John Homes (Thames Valley) regarding a possible future planning application for a development of 10 or so high-quality houses on a site adjacent to the B4009 and the Aston Rowant Village road. The proposal would be for a mix of 2-storey houses and possibly a small number of 1-2 bed apartments, in a self-contained cul-de-sac development, with access to the B4009 via an exit onto the village road initially and then to the junction opposite Woodway Farm. Questions were raised about:*
 - i. *Whether these proposed dwellings would count towards the eventual Neighbourhood Plan quota (yes).*
 - ii. *The volume of traffic at an already busy junction at peak school/work traffic flow.*
 - iii. *The suitability of the village road as an exit, given it is not very wide and existing difficulty on exiting to the B4009.*
 - iv. *The possibility of an exit directly onto the B4009 further towards Kingston Blount was raised although it was noted that the location of the 30/50 mph signs would need to be examined and that there were already existing problems with traffic at that point.*
 - v. *Whether funding would be available via the Community Infrastructure Levy (C.I.L) to assist with traffic-calming, specifically for Aston Rowant as opposed to the current plans solely for Kingston Blount (yes).*
 - vi. *Why this was even being considered before the Neighbourhood Plan is complete.*
 - vii. *Unrest over rumours of other areas within Aston Rowant which were also being discussed with developers, and a feeling of “secrecy” surrounding the whole topic of future development.*

The Planning Officer stressed at this point that no application had yet been made, but if/when we were presented with an application or applications, all these points would be fully considered. He also stressed that whatever the Parish Councils recommendation, we have no say in the actual decision, which is purely down to SODC. Comparisons were made with Chinnor, and how all the current development there was going ahead despite Chinnor PCs refusal recommendations. C/Cllr Matelot wished it to be recorded that SODC refused all current developments, but these decisions were all over turned on appeal, and stressed the need for the community to get behind the formulation of our Neighbourhood Plan to prevent the same thing happening in our Parish. It should also be noted that neither landowners nor developers have any obligation to discuss their intentions until an actual planning application is made, and most discussions are bound by some form of confidentiality clause as several developers may be interested in the same land. The Open Forum ended with David Jacobs advising he is happy to discuss any aspects of this possible proposal with concerned parishioners. He lives in Aston Rowant, and previously in Kingston Blount, so is fully aware of local issues and concerns. He can be contacted via email at: djacobs@stjohnhomestv.co.uk or by phone on 07714 136618.

7) PLANNING

- i. **Applications as follows were confirmed/discussed:**
P17/S2119/HH Tiled lean-to extension at Field House, Chinnor Road, Aston Rowant. **Should be approved.**

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

P17/S1633/A External signage and lighting at The Lambert Arms Hotel, London Road, Lewknor. **REFUSED.**

P17/S1669/HH Single storey rear and side extension at 1 Aston Park, Aston Rowant. **GRANTED.**

8) FINANCE

	£	p
i. The following payments were noted (Costs include VAT):		
Clerk May Salary		
HMRC/P.A.Y.E re: clerk May salary		
Green Gardens (Chq 101456 from 2015/16 re-issued)	60.00	
T.Lambourne (Amazon, printer inks)	22.39	
T.Lambourne (Mileage/Expenses)	78.58	
Vice-Chairman's Annual Allowance	80.00	
Compete Weed Control (May)	240.00	
Robyn Leinster (Litter, May)	25.32	
George Stevens (Hedge Maintenance/Grass Cutting)	230.00	
Chairman's Annual Allowance	95.00	
ii. Receipts as follows to be noted:		
Anonymous donation towards Moors Footpath Upgrade	150.00	
Hillwerke Trust (Grant re: Moors Footpath Upgrade)	6600.00	
iii. The following payments were approved (Costs include VAT):		
Clerk June Salary		
HMRC/P.A.Y.E re: clerk June salary		
O.A.L.C (Good Councillors Guide Booklets x 5)	20.00	
MK Watts (Grass Cutting, June)	308.56	
Robyn Leinster (Litter, June)	25.32	
mh-p Internet	18.00	
iv. The current financial situation as at 30th June 2017:		
Barclays Bank – Community Account	30682.95	
Barclays Bank – Business Saver Account	1090.47	
National Savings	11224.62	
Village Hall Reserve fund	(690)	
Play Area Reserve Fund	(5636)	
Parish Notes Reserve Fund	(1000)	
Trees, Footpaths & Environment Reserve Fund	(8069)	
v. Budget 2017/2018 v3 – Noted.		
vi. 2017 Grants/Donations to local organisations – deferred.		

8) HIGHWAYS: - Traffic Calming. *One member of the public remained for this agenda item and Cllr Day outlined steps taken and progress so far for their benefit. The possibility of future projects specific to Aston Rowant have been covered in item 6. Cllr Day is to investigate the possibility of further funding for current and future projects, in liaison with C/Cllr Matelot in light of the comments within her report.*

9) HILLWERKE TRUST: - No report in Cllr. Hetherington's absence.

10) NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Cllr. Tinson reported that the meeting due to take place on 11th July had been postponed to the following Tuesday – 18th July, with a report to follow. Some confusion was expressed during the Open Forum discussion (see item 6) of exactly how updates on the NP progress could be obtained and it was agreed the Cllr Tinson would ensure full reports are placed in each future edition of the Parish Notes as well as on the Council's web-site. It should be noted that the specific NP area of the web-site is to be found under the "Planning" heading. Approval was granted to accept the Terms & Conditions for receipt of a £5,000 grant from SODC to be used solely for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk is to sign and return the paperwork to SODC to facilitate receipt of this grant and the Chairman and Clerk are to arrange a meeting with members of the NP committee to discuss to discuss budgeting and managing of the NP funds.

11) KINGSTON BLOUNT PLAYGROUND

- i. *Following a plea on the KBAR Facebook site, several people have offered to become inspectors. There is currently only one month not covered so the Clerk is to keep a record of these volunteers and on compiling the new rota in 2018, hopefully, a full rota can then be achieved.*
- ii. *The Clerk is still awaiting quotes from two sources for minor repairs to play equipment, fences and general maintenance. The annual RoSPA inspection will take place during July, so quotes can be finalised and hopefully approved in September once the extent of any deficiencies is known.*

12) ASTON ROWANT SCHOOL – *The final Newsletter for the academic year received and circulated to councillors by email.*

13) GRASS CUTTING & GENERAL PARISH MAINTENANCE – *As reported last month, the raised verge has now been cut to allow safe passage on foot to Crowell. Further discussion was had regarding the possibility of a proper footpath but as it is the owner of the adjacent field who is responsible for the verge, right to the tarmac road (not the County council) should the option of a path proceed and someone were to injure themselves while using it, the land-owner would be responsible and thus, would not be keen to proceed. This would be the main objection to going ahead, rather than the cost which could be raised in a number of ways including donations or an application for funding as detailed in point 5 above.*

14) ASTON ROWANT CRICKET CLUB – *No report and, so far, no revised planning application seen. The club are to be congratulated on reaching the Quarter-Finals of the Village Knock-Out competition and a large crowd was present at the club on Sunday 9th July to see them achieve this. The next round is at home to Ynystawe CC at 1pm on Sunday July 23rd, with an exciting prospect of a semi-final against local rivals Bledlow if both teams are successful.*

15) FOOTPATHS AND AMENITIES GROUP (FAAG): - *No report due to Cllr Hetherington's absence.*

Approval was sought to pay upfront for the materials needed to start work on the Moors Footpath upgrade (due to start w/c: 24/July). Some concern was expressed about paying upfront, but Cllr Hetherington has given his assurance that Bury Hook Countryside Management are a 100 % reputable company. They are an accredited contractor to OCC Countryside Services and have done a lot of footpath construction work for ARPC previously. A cheque was therefore issued and payment of the pro-forma invoice for £5,150.40 in favour of Filcris Ltd will be posted 1st class to ensure the contractor can collect the goods in time to start work as agreed.

16) OTHER MATTERS & WRITTEN REPORTS - *The chairman reported that there is still one further vacancy on the council and efforts are ongoing to try and fill the position over the summer.*

17) CLERK'S REPORT – *In view of the two new councillors this year, the Clerk highlighted the OALC training session in September on the Roles & Responsibilities of Councillors, with a suggestion that both attend.*

18) CORRESPONDENCE –

- i. *A copy of an email complaint to SODC has been received regarding excessive late-night noise from the Lambert Hotel, in breach of conditions of the planning permission granted on extending the hotel. It was agreed that the Clerk will also follow up with a letter to the hotel reminding them of this.*
- ii. *An emailed complaint was also received concerning the council's decision to mark a recent planning application "should be approved" when, in fact, the neighbours had serious objections. The complainant was advised that as no planning rules were breached by the application, there was no reason for us not to mark SBA. Any objections should (and have been) directed to the appropriate section of the SODC web-site, and no matter what our recommendation, they will take any objections into account when making their decision.*
- iii. *(NOT ON AGENDA). Letter received on the day of the meeting regarding objections to usage of the Moors Footpath by horses and riders. The letter noted that an occasional "manure" incident should not preclude riders using a path that has been used in this way for many years. The Clerk is to reply advising that any objection would be on the grounds of damage to the newly refurbished surface, the funding for which has been raised locally at great effort, and we would not wish to see the surface ruined or cut up by horses. Nothing has been decided yet, but the position will be monitored.*

19) WEBSITE – *Nothing to report, other than to highlight the Neighbourhood Planning section as detailed in point 10.*

20) OTHER URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman – *None.*

21) DATE OF NEXT MEETING – **Wednesday 13th September 2017 in Kingston Blount Village Hall at 7.30pm. There will be no meeting in August.**

CHAIRMAN