

## ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of a meeting of the above Council held on Wednesday, 8th November 2017 in Kingston Blount Village Hall.**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. M. Day, P Hetherington (in the chair), T. Hill & S Sowerby and one member of public specifically to observe the meeting with a view to being co-opted onto the parish council and filling our final vacancy.

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. L French, P Tinson & D/Cllr. Lynn Lloyd.

- 1) **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – *None.*
- 2) **MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th October 2017, were approved and signed.**
- 3) **MATTERS ARISING:** *Cllr. Hetherington wished to remind everyone present that comments on the SODC Local Plan were still open until 22/Nov and urged everyone to partake in the survey before then.*
- 4) **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS** - *No reports received from either prior to publication of the agenda, and no updates available in the absence of either from the meeting.*
- 5) **OPEN FORUM** – *Several members of public were present for a further pre-application presentation by St John Homes (Thames Valley) for 10 homes in the first paddock to the right entering Aston Rowant on the village road. Clarification was given on the number and type of properties proposed and amendments to the site access on the advice of OCC who have refused an entrance/exit directly on to the B4009. Confirmation was given that CIL money would be provided which may not only pay for existing traffic calming in Kingston Blount, but also provide measures for Aston Rowant. A short Q & A session followed chiefly concerning the site access and criteria applied by OCC when making their assessment of impact from the extra traffic. Cllr. Day is meeting Highway engineers during the w/c 13/Nov and will discuss these issues further, along with possible issues regarding spring water and potential for flooding. A full application is expected in early 2018. A few members of public then remained for the rest of the meeting.*

### 6) PLANNING

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

**P17/S3661/FUL** - Land at Aston Rowant Road, Aston Rowant – a development of 5 two-storey, 4-bedroom residences by Rectory Homes. A discussion was deferred on this matter until after the public meeting to be held on 16th November.

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

**P17-S2497-FUL** – Revised plans for Queens Gate Bungalow, Butts Way, Aston Rowant – planning permission granted after the original plans were amended.

### 7) FINANCE

- i. *The following payments were noted (Costs include VAT):*

	£ p
Clerk September Salary	
HMRC/P.A.Y.E re: clerk September salary	
T Lambourne – Mileage, stamps, expenses	104.84
Mh-p Internet (Annual Plan Fee)	828.00
Buryhook Countryside Management	20107.20
Chinnor United Benefice (2017 GRANT)	896.00
Thame & District CAB (2017 GRANT)	115.00
Chinnor Village Centre (2017 GRANT)	555.00
Thames Valley Air Ambulance (2017 GRANT)	110.00
Be Free Young Carers (2017 GRANT)	58.00
M40 CEG (2017 GRANT)	200.00
SODC (Dog Bin Emptying)	87.91
Complete Weed Control	240.00

- ii. *Receipts as follows to be noted:*

Walks Booklets	70.00
SODC (Neighbourhood Plan Grant)	5000.00

- iii. *The following payments were approved (Costs include VAT):*

Clerk October Salary

HMRC/P.A.Y.E re: clerk October salary	
MK Watts (Grass Cutting, October – extra as approved at October meeting)	154.28
Robyn Leinster (Litter, October)	31.65
Mh-p Internet (Upload Parish Notes to Web-Site)	18.00
Royal British Legion (R/Day Wreath)	50.00
T Lambourne (Printer Inks)	<b>NOT ON AGENDA</b> 50.63
Hillwerke Trust (Hire of V/Hall for NP Meetings)	<b>NOT ON AGENDA</b> 51.00

iv. The current financial situation as at 31st October 2017:

Barclays Bank – Community Account	25946.79
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	(6636)

v. Budget 2017/8 v7. Noted.

vi. 2018 Grants to be decided at the December meeting – at end of September the Retail Price Index (RPI) was standing at 3% and it is anticipated most expenditure within the Precept will be increased accordingly.

**8) HIGHWAYS: -**

- i. Cllr. Day reported on results of the Public Consultation for the proposed traffic calming chicanes in Kingston Blount. 21 responses were logged, of which 19 were in support of the new measures with 2 objections, chiefly regarding conflict with existing calming measures and Vehicle Activated Signage. Suggestions were made as to the re-siting of the VAS at the western approach, and an extra speed slowing pad at the B4009/Pleck Lane junction to combat vehicles straying across the wrong side of the road at its narrowest point (heavy goods vehicles) and cars cutting the corner. It would also prevent vehicles speeding up once through the double bends heading towards Chinnor past the entrance to Icknield Close which has always been difficult to exit.
- ii. As well as objections raised in the survey, further concern was raised by members of the public present at the meeting to the effect that when the new measures are finally in place, the temptation for drivers who have been held up in Kingston Blount will be to put their foot down and speed through Aston Rowant, making traffic calming there more of a priority because of the proposed developments. Further consultation is now necessary to address those points (attracting a further fee) and it will be at least January/early 2018 before this will now occur.

**9) HILLWERKE TRUST: -** It was noted that a replacement liaison officer for Cllr. Crossey is still required and Cllr. Sowerby has volunteered to fill this post.

**10) NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- i. Cllr. Sowerby reported that as this month's NP meeting had not occurred before the PC meeting as usual so there was no official update, but the November meeting will be likely to discuss feedback from the 30+ sites put forward for possible development during the public consultations in the summer in time to present the findings to the PC in December. Additionally, it was confirmed that despite recent planning issues in Aston Rowant, the timetable for development of the plan has not, and will not, change. If the correct process is not followed and the plan is rushed through, we could be tripped up in the future by appeals and it is likely the plan would be rejected entirely.
- ii. The clerk reported the £5,000 grant for preparation of the plan has now been received (see budget v7) and payment has now been made to the Hillwerke Trust for use of the Village Hall for all meetings to date.

**11) KINGSTON BLOUNT PLAYGROUND -** Work to undertake minor repairs to various pieces of equipment has yet to start however the over-hanging hedge boundary with farmers field on the N.E. boundary **has** been cut back as promised previously.

**12) ASTON ROWANT SCHOOL –** No report received, and liaison Cllr. absent from meeting.

**13) GRASS CUTTING & GENERAL PARISH MAINTENANCE: –** An extra (unbudgeted) cut was approved in October due to the exceptionally mild Autumn, but with the first couple of frosts in the past week it was agreed that no further cuts would be necessary until Spring 2018.

- 14) ASTON ROWANT CRICKET CLUB** – *No report received. Cllr. Sowerby contacted the club Chairman after the last PC meeting but, to date, has received no response. The AGM is taking place this month, so it is hoped a report will follow for next month.*
- 15) FOOTPATHS AND AMENITIES GROUP (FAAG)** - *Cllr. Hetherington reported:*
- i. Julian Knight has resigned from FAAG and thanks were given for his many years of service.*
  - ii. The new section of the Moors Path was officially opened on Friday 3/November with representatives present from the PC, FAAG, OCC and organisations who gave generously by way of grants and financial support, particularly The Trust for Oxfordshire Environment and the Weston Foundation. A large contingent from Aston Rowant school attended and Garth Weston cut the ribbon provided by Peter & Maggie Gibbons. A further batch of planings will be put down on the unrenovated part of the path, nearer the Stud Farm. Tea & biscuits were provided in Aston Rowant church and Cllr. Hetherington proposed a donation of £50 to the church which was seconded by Cllr. Day.*
  - iii. Unfortunately, damage is already occurring to the path by horses. Discussions with local landowners bordering the path will continue, but most are on board with the reasoning and it appears to be predominantly riders from outside the parish. The damage is such, that this could now become a safety issue with the considerable holes being made and the prospect of ankles being turned or a fall occurring on the uneven surface. Although the PC did all the fundraising and organised the work, and several landowners border the path, ultimately OCC own the actual path and an outright ban may be the final recourse.*
  - iv. Public Rights of Way Records – details have been received of workshops during November to ensure any historic footpaths/rights of way or ancient lanes that are not on the County Council’s Definitive Maps are not lost forever. Cllr. Hetherington recalled an instance some 10 years ago where a similar exercise was proposed and eventually nothing came of it due to lack of funds at County level. This will not become an issue until at least 2026 so no further action is proposed.*
  - v. Graffiti has occurred on signage at the nature Reserve and Cllr. Hetherington sought retrospective approval for expenditure of £20 +VAT to purchase a product that will remove black lacquer paint from the signs – proposed by Cllr. Sowerby, seconded by Cllr. Hill and agreed unanimously.*
- 16) CORESPONDENCE:** - *Letter received from Blue Cedar Homes enquiring about the need for retirement living homes in our parish. After a short discussion, it was agreed the Clerk will reply stating that there is no need for such properties in this area, particularly given the lack of amenities and public transport.*
- 17) OTHER MATTERS & WRITTEN REPORTS**
- i. A replacement officer for the Hillwerke Trust liaison has been agreed (see point 9), but there is still a vacancy for Transport liaison.*
  - ii. A new councillor could be co-opted for December’s meeting subject to discussions with the person concerned.*
  - iii. The clerk reported on finding it difficult to keep up with the volume of emails received, being unable to log-on during the day while at work so much time is spent in the evenings dealing with emails and running out of time for other work. Agreement was sought for a “Pay As You Go” SIM card to be purchased for an old phone so emails can be directed to that – proposed by Cllr. Day, seconded by Cllr. Hill and agreed unanimously.*
  - iv. A point was raised by a member of public regarding communication between the Parish Council and parishioners. The November agenda was not on the web-site (a glitch in the email to our Web-Master), and past minutes and agendas have not posted within legal timescales. Consequently, despite increasing reliance on communication via KBAR Facebook site (which not everyone uses), other present agreed they were unaware of items due for discussion other than the planning issues in Open Forum. It was acknowledged that, while the noticeboards were correct, more care would be taken in future to ensure timely postings on the web-site. Social Media is used mainly by younger parishioners which was felt to be an equally important tool to engage with all parishioners and KBAR postings would continue.*
- 18) OTHER URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman** – *None.*
- 19) DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – **Wednesday 13th December 2017 in Kingston Blount Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

## CHAIRMAN