

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9TH JANUARY 2014 IN THE
MEETING ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

1. Members Roy Williams (Chairman)

Present: Jane Everex
Richard Haines
Ben Lings
John Ordish
Paul Sparrowhawk
Jane West

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Councillor, arriving at item 7
Hilary Fenton, West Oxfordshire District Councillor
Martin Holland, Leisure Services Manager, West Oxfordshire District Council, for item 2
1 member of the public

Apologies: None

2. Martin Holland – Leisure Services Manager – West Oxfordshire District Council

Mr Holland informed the Parish Council that he is responsible for indoor and outdoor sports facilities in the district. He provided the Parish Council with advice on submitting a request for s106 funding to either improve existing recreational facilities or to provide new ones when a qualifying housing development is proposed in the parish, such as the current application for 38 houses on land at Cote Road. Requests for funding must present a case for the expenditure, reflecting local need. He advised that it is best to ensure that generic headings are used to retain maximum flexibility on the way any funding obtained is ultimately spent.

Councillors expressed concern over whether making a s106 request would be perceived as an agreement to the application, given that the Council has already objected. Mr Holland advised that the objection will have been registered with the District Council and will be taken into account when the committee considers the application, and that he would always recommend ensuring that a local community prepares a s106 request in case the planning committee does ultimately approve the application (or it is granted on appeal).

The Parish Council thanked Mr Holland for attending the meeting, and he left.

The Parish Council discussed the matter further. It was resolved to put a survey in the next edition of Voices, requesting residents to respond to several suggested potential facilities which could be provided in the parish, and also enabling them to make their own suggestions. It was resolved to include the following potential new facilities: outdoor court for tennis, netball and 5-a-side football; adult outdoor gym equipment; outdoor skate & bike park; children's play area nearer the centre of the village; public work of art/sculpture; solar panels on the village hall roof.

Deadline for responses – 27 January 2014, with responses to be returned to either Aston Post Office or Aston Stores.

- 3. Minutes of previous meeting** – on 5 December 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by Jane Everex.

- 4. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**

None.

- 5. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

a) Signage for Aston Pottery

The Clerk advised that Aston Pottery has agreed to pay a 50% contribution towards the cost of the new signs. It was resolved to order the new signs – proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by Richard Haines.

b) Aston website

Ben Lings informed the Parish Council of the further research and detailed considerations he had carried out in relation to a new platform for the website. He advised that there are two options – using a system such as WordPress, which has the advantage of being very flexible, but has the disadvantages of requiring a significant amount of time to set up initially and being harder to transfer the knowledge on how to operate the site; or using a hosted service which can offer less flexibility but would be easier to set up and maintain. Mr Lings told the Parish Council that, of the hosted services he had reviewed, his preferred provider is Weebly. The service costs \$6.63 per month if 24 months are purchased up front. More than one administrator can be set up for this price, and users can be given administration rights for a single page rather than for the whole site.

It was resolved to create a new website using Weebly as the provider – proposed by Ben Lings, seconded by John Ordish.

Mr Lings agreed to do the initial set-up of the site and advised that it would be helpful for other people to be involved so that they could learn how to operate it.

c) Parish “walkabout” with Oxfordshire Highways

To take place on 20 January 2014, with Roy Williams and John Ordish to represent the Parish Council. The Clerk asked Mr Williams and Mr Ordish to provide her with a list of locations to be visited by Monday 13 January so that she can forward it to Oxfordshire Highways.

d) Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War

It was generally agreed that it would be preferable to mark the anniversary of the end of the war in 2018 rather than the beginning of the war. It was also noted that the Aston fete in the summer is going to have a link to this anniversary and it was considered that the Parish Council could provide some support for this event, if appropriate.

e) Anti Social Behaviour

Nothing noted.

- 6. Correspondence sent**

Listed in the Clerk’s Briefing Notes previously circulated to all Councillors.

7. Oxfordshire County Council

Charles Mathew arrived at the meeting. He informed the Parish Council that he has some remaining funds in his councillor community budget which he can use to support community organisations, provided that 50% of the total funding requirement is sourced from elsewhere and that the organisation doesn't hold excess cash in its bank accounts. Mr Mathew was asked whether he could provide any financial support towards replacing the remaining posts on the war memorial green and/or the replacement brackets for the chains around the memorial. Mr Mathew advised that he could look into providing funding for these types of projects as they come under the category of repair/replacement.

8. New Business

a) Post Office services in parish

Mr Williams informed the Parish Council that he is having ongoing discussions with the current sub-postmistress and other potential interested parties as to how some form of post office services could be retained in Aston.

b) Renewal of Clerk's membership of SLCC for 2014

It was resolved to renew this membership at a cost of £101 for 2014 – proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Ben Lings.

c) Free Community-Led Neighbourhood Planning Conference

It was resolved not to send a representative to this conference.

d) WODC Local Plan Consultations

The current consultations on the charging schedule for the new Community Infrastructure Levy (developer funding required to be paid when larger new developments are built), and the approach towards the provision of affordable housing were discussed.

It was resolved to respond to the consultation on affordable housing, with concerns to be expressed about the suitability of the District Council's adoption of fixed percentage requirements for the number of affordable housing units to be included on any development above 6 dwellings and of a fixed split of tenure of affordable housing between homes for rent and homes for shared equity. The use of fixed percentages can provide housing which does not reflect identified local need, with a potential for more affordable units being built than is required for people with a local link, and for an inappropriate mix of tenures for the local people looking for affordable housing.

Hilary Fenton left the meeting.

9. Parish Infrastructure

a) Village maintenance

Various matters, relating to highways maintenance in particular, were discussed.

b) Block work and kerbing around the war memorial

It was noted that the temporary repair has been done (although not all the loose kerbstones have been removed).

The Clerk advised that she is continuing, without success, to seek some advice from Oxfordshire Highways on the suitability of the more permanent solution to the problems at this location proposed by Southern Construction. Charles Mathew suggested that the Clerk contact Mark Kemp at the County Council direct.

Parish Infrastructure (continued)

c) *Wooden posts around the war memorial – chain fixings*

The two quotations received were considered.

It was resolved to accept the quotation from WR Hall & Son (Burford) for 16 bespoke plates, 14 with eyes, 2 with hooks, painted black, at a cost of £280 + VAT.

Proposed by Richard Haines, seconded by Jane West.

d) *Proposed vehicle activated sign (VAS) for Bampton Road*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Oxfordshire County Council has confirmed that it should be feasible to put a VAS on the electricity pole on the village end of Kingsway Cottages (opposite the entrance to Westfield House), at an estimated cost of £4-£5k, with the funding to be sourced by the Parish Council. The Parish Council agreed that the installation of a VAS would be beneficial in principle, but considered that the cost presented a barrier to its provision. It was noted that the price seems to be very high, particularly as no trenching would be required – the Clerk was asked to query this.

Charles Mathew said that he may be able to contribute 50% of the funding from the budget which he controls and suggested that the Parish Council contact Hilary Fenton to ask if she could provide any funding.

Charles Mathew left the meeting.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would pay 50% of the cost of the VAS at the quoted price provided the remaining 50% could be sourced from elsewhere (Mr Mathew/Mrs Fenton) - proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

e) *Grounds maintenance at Cote Chapel*

An information letter received from Historic Chapels Trust was put in the folder for Councillors' information.

10. PLANNING

Planning applications granted

13/1410/P/FP 41 Saxel Close, Aston
Conversion of existing garage to enlarge kitchen/dining room

New planning applications

13/1709/P/FP 49 Cote Road, Aston
Erection of single storey rear extension
No comments.

11. Finance

a) *Account Balances – circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes*

Balance on Current Account at 31 December 2013 £ 4,750.69

Balance on Deposit Account at 31 December 2013 £16,611.86

b) *Receipts & payments account to 31 December 2013 - noted*

Finance (continued)

c) Budget and setting of Parish Council precept for 2014/15

A second draft of the budget and accompanying report had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

It was resolved to incorporate the following amendments in the circulated draft:

- £5,000 for repairs to the blockwork and kerbing at the war memorial;
- £1,000 for the replacement of the posts alongside the footpath over the war memorial green;
- £250 grant towards Aston fete for 2014.

It was resolved to approve the budget after the incorporation of these amendments – proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by Jane Everex.

It was further resolved to increase the precept for 2014/15 by 2% - proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by John Ordish.

d) December invoices presented for approval and payment

		Statute
Clerk's salary and working from home allowance	346.00	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing – 106 sheets @ 5p & calls to mobile phones for quarter to end Oct 2013 - £2.33	7.63	LGA 1972 s111
Margaret Johnson Ltd – stationery & photocopying	42.27	LGA 1972 s111
West Oxfordshire District Council – winter planting	223.68	HA 1980, s116
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in December	19.91	Litter Act 1983
The Society of Local Council Clerks (Membership for 2014)	101.00	LGA 1972 s111
Total	£740.49	

It was resolved to make the above payments, proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Richard Haines. The cheques were signed by Roy Williams and Richard Haines.

12. Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting

John Ordish informed the Parish Council that he had attended the meeting of the Flood Prevention Working Group in Bampton on 12 December 2013. The meeting was attended by representatives from the usual parish councils, the District Council and the Environment Agency. Mr Ordish told the Parish Council that local farmer John Hook had also attended the meeting to provide input on behalf of Aston & Cote Drainage Board. Minutes of the meeting were put in the folder for councillors' information.

Mr Ordish also informed the Parish Council that the Environment Agency has issued new flood maps and that flood zones are now analysed in four categories – very low, low, medium and high.

13. Matters arising since publication of agenda/

Matters which Councillors wish to raise for inclusion on next agenda (for discussion only)

a) Closure of Red Lion public house

It was noted that the Red Lion public house in Aston has closed. The possibility of nominating the pub as a Community Asset was discussed and it was resolved to ask the District Council officer responsible for providing local communities with advice to attend the next parish council meeting to outline the issues and implications.

It was noted that useful information can be found on the website "The Pub is the Hub."

Matters arising since publication of agenda/

**Matters which Councillors wish to raise for inclusion on next agenda
(for discussion only)**

b) Requested "information point" signage in Cote

Jane Everex informed the Parish Council that she has been approached by residents of Cote asking whether it would be possible to install a sign on the Cote crossroads indicating that information about Cote, and the location of specific properties in particular, can be obtained in the red phone box. The Clerk will contact Oxfordshire County Council.

14. Date of next meeting: Thursday 6 February 2014, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....