

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2015 IN THE  
MEETING ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

- 1. Members Present:** Richard Haines (Chairman)  
Jane Everex  
Ben Lings  
John Ordish  
Paul Sparrowhawk  
Jane West (to the end of item 7a)  
Phil West

**In Attendance:** Helen Sandhu – Clerk  
Hilary Fenton, West Oxfordshire District Councillor  
Steve Good, West Oxfordshire District Councillor  
Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Councillor (arriving at item 8)

**Apologies:** None

- 2. Minutes of previous meeting** – on 8 January 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.  
Proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by Phil West.

- 3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**  
None.

**4. Meeting open for public debate**

The Chairman reminded the meeting that District and County Councillors are invited to speak at a designated point of the meeting to provide information, and that they are not able to participate in a debate nor to express an opinion on parish council business.

**5. District Council matters**

Steve Good told the Parish Council that District Councillors have attended what they are hoping is the final workshop on the draft Local Development Framework. The period of time the Framework will cover has been extended to 2031. The Framework will now be subject to further District Council process before it is presented to the Full Council and ultimately submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

**6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

a) *Second community defibrillator*  
Due to be installed in February.

b) *Central Aston post box*  
C/f – no updates yet from Royal Mail.

c) *Sports and Recreation Facilities in Aston – role of Parish Council*  
Richard Haines had circulated a written report of points for the Parish Council to consider in advance of the meeting. It was generally accepted that the proposals by Aston & Cote Community Trust are at an early stage of development, and the Community Trust has a lot more to do before it will be in a position to approach the Parish Council for support. It was further agreed that the timing of any approach, and what form that approach may take, is for the Community Trust to decide.

**Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)**

John Ordish confirmed that the Community Trust has agreed that any approach the Trust may make will come from the Chair, following agreement at a full Community Trust meeting.

*d) BT payphone at entrance to Ham Lane*

The Clerk confirmed that she has contacted Highways with the Parish Council's concerns about the impact of the kiosk on the visual splay at this junction – response awaited.

*e) Pot holes on Ham Lane*

Reported via the online system to Oxfordshire County Council.

*f) Conifer hedge bordering North Street, Aston*

The Clerk advised that she has contacted Highways about the Parish Council concerns that the hedge may be overhanging the road. Highways has advised that the hedge will be inspected, and "if it's overhanging the highway (l) will serve a Notice on the occupier of the farm. It will be their responsibility to manage the vegetation within the property boundary." Comments post inspection awaited.

*g) Anti Social Behaviour*

None

**7. New Business**

*a) Annual Parish Meeting 2015*

It was resolved that the APM will take place on the evening of Tuesday 19 May.

It was agreed that the main focus of the evening should be "Sports Aston" (Community Trust) proposals.

Methods of promoting the meeting were discussed. It was agreed that the Allotments charity should be approached with a request for permission to put a banner on the allotment fencing on Cote Road in Aston. A flyer could be put in an edition of Voices, and notices put on the parish council noticeboard and in the shop window.

Jane West left the meeting

*b) Annual review of the Parish Council's risk assessment*

The draft risk assessment and a report thereon by the Clerk had been circulated in the Briefing Notes. The Clerk advised that she was not proposing any amendments to the existing risk assessment.

After detailed consideration of the risk assessment, it was resolved to approve it as presented – proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

*c) Donation request from Volunteer Link-up*

It was resolved that the Council, in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, would pay a donation of £135 to Volunteer Link-Up. This is, in the opinion of the Council, in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

Proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Jane Everex.

**New Business (continued)**

*d) Cumulative impact of small housing developments*

Richard Haines introduced this item and informed the Parish Council that for developments of fewer than 10 new homes, there is now no requirement for a contribution to affordable housing, and neither is Thames Water required to comment on water supply/sewerage service capacity. However, the cumulative impact of several small developments on a community the size of ours can be significant. He informed the Parish Council that when he had attended the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting in December, District Councillor James Mills had expressed his own concerns about the lack of a requirement to get consultation responses from Thames Water on small developments.

It was resolved to send a letter to the Planning Department of West Oxfordshire District Council (to be copied to the members of the Lowlands Planning Committee), expressing concerns about the cumulative impact of developments of fewer than 10 homes on small communities.

*e) Preferred minor works contractors*

It was resolved that Richard Haines will ask the Voices editorial team if an advertisement can be included in the next edition of Voices seeking self-employed contractors to carry out minor works for the Parish Council.

*f) County Council proposal of unitary government structure for Oxfordshire, and response of the District Councils*

Information placed in the folder for Councillors' reading.

Charles Mathew arrived at the meeting.

**8. County Council matters**

Charles Mathew reported on three matters which have arisen at the County Council over the last month:

- proposal to abolish the post of Chief Executive. Mr Mathew said that it is not yet clear how some of the aspects of the role will be delivered;
- the County Council is planning to increase its co-operation with Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire councils in some operational areas;
- a report on a review of the potential for creating a form of unitary structure in Oxfordshire has been completed by Ernst & Young. Mr Mathew expressed the view that there needs to be some fundamental change in the council structure in Oxfordshire. The County Council is seeing such significant reductions in its funding, whilst remaining committed to high levels of statutory expenditure, that there is a real risk to its future if no changes are made.

**9. Parish Infrastructure**

*a) Replacement of remaining wooden posts on war memorial green*

The posts will be installed in the second week of February. Charles Mathew has funded half of the cost from his community budget.

*b) Repositioning of bench on war memorial green*

In hand – c/f.

*c) Damaged sign at turn of Chimney and Cote*

Reported to Highways.

**Parish Infrastructure (continued)**

- d) *Further damage to kerbing at war memorial green*  
Reported to Highways, and remedial works completed.

**10. PLANNING**

**Planning applications granted**

14/02062/FUL North Street Farm, North Street, Aston  
Residential development including the erection of four dwellings, the conversion of two redundant agricultural buildings to form two dwellings, extensions to the existing farmhouse and associated access, parking, landscaping and demolition

Conditional approval, conditions include:

“No development shall take place until such time as the capacity of the existing sewerage system to accommodate foul water from the site has been investigated and any remedial measures needed to ensure adequate capacity are put in place.”

**11. Finance**

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

Balance on Current Account at 31 January 2015      £ 9,400.76  
Balance on Deposit Account at 31 January 2015      £16,767.48

b) *January invoices presented for approval and payment*

		Statute
Clerk’s salary and working from home allowance	355.80	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk’s expenses – printing – 60 sheets @ 5p, key cutting for cupboard at village hall	11.00	LGA 1972 s111
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in February	20.40	Litter Act 1983
Volunteer Link-up (West Oxon) - donation	135.00	LGA 1972 s137
<b>Total</b>	<b>£522.20</b>	

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

**12. Matters arising since publication of agenda/**

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

The Clerk informed the meeting that The Red Lion public house has been put up for sale at public auction. As it is being sold as a going concern, the provisions under the Community Asset legislation (right to bid) do not come into effect.

**13. Date of next meeting:      Thursday 5 March 2015, 7.30pm**  
Monthly Parish Council Meeting

Signed .....dated.....