

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 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 8f
2 members of the public

Apologies: None

2. Minutes of previous meeting – on 9 January 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by Jane West.

3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

John Ordish, as a trustee of Aston & Cote Community Trust, the requested donation towards the maintenance of the playground – non-pecuniary interest – item 8a.

4. Open session for public debate

One of the members of the public present observed that only one of the holes on the footpath outside the Post Office garage has been marked up for repair. She was advised that Oxfordshire Highways has said that the County is not responsible for the land where the smaller hole is; the larger hole will be repaired when the weather conditions are better (when the hole is not full of water!).

The other member of the public present told the Parish Council that he was the author of the letter about the proposal for a Social Club to be based at the Village Hall. He said that he had nothing further to add to the letter, but would be interested in hearing the views of the Parish Council at that agenda item.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Signage for Aston Pottery

Oxfordshire County Council requires payment for the new signs before the order can be confirmed; invoice included in the payments list.

b) Aston website

Ben Lings told the Parish Council that he has made a start on the creation of the new Weebly-based website. He is now working on setting up all the base pages on the free platform, and once he is happy that the site works suitably, he will arrange for payment of a two-year fee to be made, which will increase the functions which can be used. Mr Lings said that he will send councillors a link to the new site so that they can review it as he develops it.

Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

c) S106 developer funding if the Cote Road planning application is approved

A report on the results of the amenities survey circulated in the Jan/Feb edition of Voices had been included in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

The three most popular options of those suggested by the Parish Council were: a multi-use games court, a skate/bike park, and solar panels at the village hall. Several other suggestions had been put forward by people completing the survey, but none of these received more votes than the three items listed.

As all three of the most popular options would need to be located at the Village Hall, the proposals would need to be discussed with Aston & Cote Community Trust before they could be proceeded with. John Ordish said that he would ensure that discussion of this issue would be included on the agenda for the meeting of the Community Trust on 19 February.

It was noted that none of the items would be able to be delivered with s106 funding solely, with varying levels of "top-up funding" needed, depending on which option is pursued. The Clerk was asked to contact Martin Holland (WODC officer) to clarify the wording required for the bid and to check whether any funding received can be held whilst top-up funding is sourced.

d) Parish "walkabout" with Oxfordshire Highways

Roy Williams provided a verbal report on the "walkabout" which took place on 20 January. Several holes were marked up for repair during the visit. They went out to Chimney and the Highways staff agreed that the condition of the road is poor, particularly in certain sections – they will return to mark up any holes which meet the criteria for repair when the weather has improved.

e) Post Office services in the parish

Roy Williams advised that he has spoken to the Postmistress who told him that she has written to the Post Office with a suggestion that a service is provided in a local business premises, with the Post Office staff to be supplied by a local sub-postmaster, but has received no reply.

It was resolved that Roy Williams will speak to the Postmistress to ask her if she would like the Parish Council to write to David Cameron to express concern about the lack of response from the Post Office.

f) Anti Social Behaviour

Part of the dry stone wall at Cote Chapel has fallen down, although the cause is unknown. Richard Haines advised that he has informed the local contractor.

6. Correspondence sent

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

7. Parish Council Twitter account

Ben Lings was asked to post a tweet on the three most popular options for s106 funding voted for in the survey and to advise that the Parish Council will now be contacting the District Council to finalise the bid for the funding.

8. New Business

a) Donation to Aston & Cote Community Trust for playground maintenance

It was resolved to give a donation of £630 – proposed by Richard Haines, seconded by Paul Sparrowhawk.

New Business (continued)

b) 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 West.

c) Date of Annual Parish Meeting 2014

Preferred date – Tuesday 17 June 2014. The Clerk will contact the bookings clerk for the Village Hall to see if this date is available.

d) Proposal from a member of the public for the Parish Council's support in the creation of a social club at the village hall

The letter outlining the proposal had been circulated by email in advance of the meeting.

The proposal was discussed at length and it was agreed that there are a lot of issues to consider.

Councillors said that two of the key points to consider were the potential impact on the Red Lion (should the pub reopen) and the acceptability of the proposal to the Community Trust (as the Social Club would be based at the Village Hall). It was suggested that the member of the public could form a working group to look into all the issues and to make an assessment of the feasibility and financial viability of the proposal.

John Ordish agreed to ensure that the issue is discussed at the Community Trust meeting on 19 February.

e) The Red Lion Pub, Aston – potential listing as an Asset of Community Value

Information on the procedure for listing an asset and matters to consider in advance of deciding to request a listing had been received from West Oxfordshire District Council and circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting. Information about the protection afforded to local assets by the District Council's Planning Policy had also been received and circulated.

The matter was discussed, and it was resolved to request a listing for the Red Lion. The Clerk was authorised to sign and submit the nomination on behalf of the Parish Council. Proposed by Paul Sparrowhawk, seconded by John Ordish.

County Councillor Charles Mathew arrived at the meeting.

f) OCC Flood Forum on Saturday 1 March

It was resolved not to send a representative to the forum.

g) Lower Windrush Valley Project (LWVP)

A request for a meeting from Jane Bowley, project officer for the LWVP, was discussed. It was resolved to suggest that Ms Bowley attend the Annual Parish Meeting, as the LWVP will be of interest to local residents generally.

h) Oxfordshire County Council consultation on its draft Rights of Way Management Plan (RoWMP)

It was resolved to request a paper copy of the consultation document in order for the Parish Council to decide at a future meeting whether to submit a response (response deadline 18 April).

9. Parish Infrastructure

a) *Village maintenance*

The fencing around the back of the bench at the bend of the lane running from Bull Street towards Cote/Chimney will be installed in the spring.

b) *Block work and kerbing around the war memorial*

The Clerk read from the email received from Oxfordshire Highways, which did not provide any clear view on the likelihood of the proposed repair work providing a permanent solution to the problems which have been experienced at the location, although the Highways officer notes that "The specification would appear to be sufficient for use." Oxfordshire Highways currently requires contractors working on the highway to provide a two year warranty. The Clerk was asked to inform Southern Construction that this will be required as a condition imposed by Oxfordshire Highways. It was resolved that the Clerk would contact Gordon Hill & Sons to request that they provide a specification and quotation for work at the site.

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

Charles Mathew is hoping that he will be able to cover the cost of this work from one of the budgets he has control over.

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

Charles Mathew has advised that he has been advised that he cannot contribute any funds towards a new sign; his Highways budget can be used for maintenance only, and the sign is a new capital item.

Given the high cost of the sign and that there are no external funds available, it was resolved that the Parish Council would not be able to proceed with this project

e) *Cote village information sign*

The officer at Highways responsible for signs has proposed that an "i" sticker could be put on the directional sign at the crossroads on the B4449, with a matching sticker on the 'phone box. The Parish Council would need to meet the cost of the stickers; further information on the design and cost from Oxfordshire Highways awaited.

10. PLANNING

New planning applications

14/0025/P/FP 3 Home Farm Cottages, Back Lane, Aston
Change of use of land from agricultural to domestic garden
No comments.

Follow-up to previous planning applications

13/1494/P/OP Land between Saxel Close and Village Hall, Cote Road, Aston
Further documentation relating to a repeated infiltration test on 20 November 2013 and additional flood mitigation measures proposed both for the Bull Street end of the site and the Village Hall had been received from West Waddy ADP and circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not comment on the additional information supplied.

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had asked the Planning Officer if Thames Water had been consulted on the application. This hadn't been done as part of the original consultation round, but Thames Water had now been informed, with a response awaited.

PLANNING (continued)

Planning application in neighbouring parish with potential impact on our parish

13/1465/P/OP Land to north of New Road, Bampton
 Erection of residential development of up to 160 dwellings
 The Parish Council had been sent information on the drainage proposals and flood assessments for this application.
 It was resolved that the Parish Council would comment on this proposal to say that, as the flood and drainage reports state that further work is required to complete the assessments and proposed mitigation measures in relation to flood prevention and drainage management, the District Council should ensure that this is carried out before a final decision is made on this application.

11. Finance

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

Balance on Current Account at 31 January 2014 £ 4,010.20
 Balance on Deposit Account at 31 January 2014 £16,625.97

b) *Bank reconciliations at 31 December 2013 - noted*

c) *January invoices presented for approval and payment*

		Statute
Clerk’s salary and working from home allowance	346.00	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk’s expenses – printing – 134 sheets @ 5p	6.70	LGA 1972 s111
Southern Construction & Surfacing Ltd – temporary repair at war memorial	300.00	LGA 1972 s137
Oxfordshire County Council – Tourism signs for Aston Pottery	352.49	LGA 1972, s144
West Oxfordshire District Council – emptying of dog bin in January	19.91	Litter Act 1983
Aston & Cote Community Trust – donation towards playground maintenance	630.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Volunteer Link-Up (West Oxon) - donation	135.00	LGA 1972 s137
Total	£1,790.10	

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

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

Richard Haines reported on his attendance at the RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Working Group on 20 January.

He had been contacted by a local resident in advance of the meeting concerned about the issue of over-flying. Richard Haines said that he had raised this at the meeting and been told that over-flying of villages and residential areas is avoided as far as possible, but does happen if operationally necessary. People can have a false perception of the position of aircraft from the ground due to the height/angle at which they are looking.

During the meeting there had been a presentation on the recent humanitarian work carried out by RAF crew, supported from Brize Norton, including deliveries of aid to the Philippines and the evacuation of UK nationals from the South Sudanese capital. Mr Haines said that this had clearly illustrated the essential value of what the RAF does.

Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting (continued)

On the issue of ground engine running noise, recent data analysis shows that the base is within guideline limits during the daytime, but is still slightly above the limit during the night. The RAF is continuing to look into the idea of an enclosed structure for engine maintenance, but given that this would only be for the Hercules which goes out of service in 2022, and taking into account the time it would take for the full studies to be carried out, a design agreed and the building completed, and bearing in mind the very high cost, it would appear that this project is unlikely to pass a feasibility assessment.

13. Matters arising since publication of agenda/

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

a) Road closed signs (due to flooding) – Great Brook Road

To discuss how Highways can be better informed that the road is impassable due to flooding and who should be responsible for putting the signs up.

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

Signeddated.....