

ASTON CLINTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Meeting Room, Aston Clinton Park, London Road, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire, HP22 5HL

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✉: parishcouncil@astonclinton.org

Minutes of the Aston Clinton Parish Council Meeting Held at the Parish Meeting Room, 2 July 2014 at 7.30pm

Councillors present:

Cllr R Maskell (Chairman), Cllr M Watson (Vice Chairman), Cllr T Kirtland, Cllr J Hoinville, Cllr M Richards
Cllr D Wallis, Cllr T Winterbottom, Cllr B Harrison, Cllr G Plowman, Cllr J Savigar & Cllr Carole Paternoster (AVDC)

Clerk: Angela Casey

Members of the Public in attendance: 28

14.082 Declarations of interests

None given

14.083 Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 4 June 2014 were RESOLVED as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

14.084 Chairman's report

The Chairman welcomed our newest Councillor, Jean Savigar, to the Parish Council and Cllr Savigar gave a few words of acceptance to the Council and Parishioners in attendance.

The Chairman thanked Dave Wall and the Scouts for the time they spent clearing undergrowth and bushes in the churchyard as part of their community service.

Culvert

The Chairman informed the Council that a meeting will take place later in July with the landowners where the culvert runs, together with a representative from the Parish Council to agree the way forward with regard to the culvert and its future maintenance.

Devolution

The Devolution Proposals of Bucks County Council (BCC) were circulated to members; this mainly involved the Parish Council taking over the responsibility for grass cutting in the parish within the 30mph limit. The Parish Council are expected to reply by September if the Council wishes to undertake this work together with its budget. It was agreed to appoint a working party to examine what is involved. Cllrs Watson, Plowman, Winterbottom and Maskell agreed to form the committee.

Cllr Paternoster (AVDC) informed the Council that until two years ago AVDC carried out all the grass cutting in the Vale, including the highway verges for BCC. Two years ago BCC refused to renew their contract with AVDC, thinking it would be cheaper for them to do the work themselves, it would appear that they have not been able to do this. Several parishes in Aylesbury Vale have asked AVDC if they would take over the grass cutting again on behalf of the Parishes. AVDC has advised BCC of this request and once they have ascertained that BCC will permit this, they will be asking all Parishes in the Vale if they wish AVDC to take over grass cutting on their behalf. When AVDC know the number of Parishes who wish to be included, they will then ask their contractors for the costing. The contract with AVDC's grass cutting contractor runs until 2020.

College Road South

The Parish Council have not officially replied to the proposal from BCC to install a gate 150 metres from the last house in College Road South and so restrict vehicle access to the road and prevent illegal camping.

14.085 Clerks Report

Items arising from June's meeting

The Clerk confirmed that all contractors currently undertaking work for the Council have current Public Liability Insurance and copies are on file in the Parish office.

Clerk has reported water leak that appeared to have returned on London Road – Cllr Kirtland confirmed that this is still an issue, Clerk to report again.

Clerk has reported again the overhanging tree that was obscuring the traffic lights in Stablebridge Road – Cllr Richards confirmed that the tree had not been addressed, Clerk to report again.

Playground in Aston Park

Older children have been seen in the park misusing the play equipment. Clerk can confirm that one piece of equipment now needs repair.

Clerk received a report of a child falling off the play equipment, who was fortunately not hurt - recorded in accident book.

The rubbish in bin inside the playground without a lid seems to be getting raided by wildlife at night. The Clerk has had to undertake the picking up of rubbish herself. The Clerk asked if the bin could either be removed or replaced. It was agreed that the bin be removed as it was in a poor state of repair and be replaced if necessary.

The Clerk reported that the Kubota ride on mower has a cracked cylinder. The Council agreed that the mower should be repaired rather than be replaced, Clerk to arrange for a quote.

14.086 Responses to items of correspondence received

No responses required

14.087 Finances

Finances for June and July 2014 were APPROVED for payment by the Council.

Direct debits	Service	Total
Eon	Street lighting	£ 568.68
British Gas	New Car park lighting	£ 31.31
British Gas	Parish Office electricity - payment plan	£ 40.00
	Direct debits total	£ 639.99
Invoices		
E Sharp Electrical	Repair to light 93, Rothchild Avenue	£ 76.27
BAS Associates	Accountancy services - Internal Audit	£ 480.00
AVDC	Repositioning of dog bin - Longplough	£ 144.00
HMRC	Employers payslip	£ 111.55
Salary	June Salary	£ 943.05
Eventbrite	Online booking for BALC course	£ 62.15
Charlotte Watson	Litter pick/bin empty	£ 112.50
Evett Agriculture	Mowing and other works in the park	£ 464.00
DAS Law	Settlement (min ref 14.077)	£ 3,500.00
Bucks County Council	Legal fees for Period 3	£ 1,393.20
	Invoices total	£ 7,286.72
	Total payments for July 2014	£ 7,926.71
Receipts		
Aylesbury Vale Caravan Club (cash 100371)	Four night stay on Meadow Pitch	£ 228.00
Widow Turpin (100372)	Reimbursement for works carried out in College Rd	£ 183.32
Tony Winterbottom (100370)	Hire of car park	£ 50.00
The Hub (cash 100371)	Hub rent	£ 215.00
Aston Clinton Football Club (BACS)	April & May 2014	£ 264.00
	Total receipts in June	£ 940.32

Re-siting of a lamppost in Chestnut Close and ensuing invoice for £1,167.72 – it is still unclear who gave authorisation for this work and the Chairman stated that he did not authorise this work. Cllr Wallis asked if a letter could be sent to the previous Clerk in order to ascertain. Clerk to write letter.

14.088 Finance & Staff (F&S) Committee Meeting Report

A report was received by from the F&S Committee which was read in advance by the Council.

The Clerk had concerns over the interruptions by Councillors to her working day. The F&S Committee recommended to the full Council that all Councillors book an appointment to meet with the Clerk. The Clerk has no problem with Parishioners wishing to come into the office to discuss their issues or to ask questions.

Other items from the report to be included in closed session.

14.089 Temporary removal of parish accounts for 2013/2014

It was AGREED that, if required, the accounts be taken home by Cllr Hoinville for him to cross check items for payment and any associated minutes confirming authorisation for work.

14.090 To receive a report regarding The Hub

The Councillors who visited The Hub can find no evidence that the premises are being used for residential purposes and that the property is being well kept. There are possibly some works required by the Council to the building and to be discussed at a future date.

14.091 Footpath works

Clerk instructed to contact three contractors with a view to obtaining quotes for footpath works as per Cllr Wallis's recommendations. Cllr Wallis happy to show contractors the work required and discuss the requirements of the Council.

14.092 Football

The Clerk had to date, not received all the necessary documents from Aston Clinton Colts as required by the Parish Council for holding a commercial event in Aston Park. The Clerk informed the Council that it was her responsibility to ensure that this documentation was provided. The Council confirmed that the event could go ahead without the required documentation.

The Council requested that a letter be sent to the residents of Park View informing them of the event – Clerk to write letter.

The Clerk had received an enquiry from an Aylesbury Football Club to ask if they could use the Parks facilities for the coming season. The Council need to check the current football lease – Clerk to inform the enquirer.

14.093 To discuss the use of volunteers

It was discussed that volunteers and Councillors could be used for certain tasks in the village, however, a full description of work, risk assessment, training, if necessary, appropriate PPE and approval by the Council to carry out the work. It was APPROVED that Cllr Maskell could carry out strimming and spraying works within the park and the village.

14.094 Planning applications

Applications for June have been considered and responses sent to AVDC
All plans are available to view at the parish office during working hours

14.095 New business for August's Agenda

None received

14.096 Public participation

Comments and questions included the following:

- A Parishioner provided a helpful website for assistance with risk assessments
- A query was raised regarding invoices that had been paid by the Council in particular invoices for legal expenses
- Cllr Paternoster gave an update on Brook Street and Bucks CC contractors
- Fly tipping had been occurring in New Road, Buckland, Cllr Paternoster gave parishioner advice
- Aston Clinton Colts day to take place on Sunday 6th July 9am-5pm
- Query re precept rise – parishioner still waiting for full response from the Council
- Update on planning application for Brook Street
- Surveyors seen on the land either side of Aylesbury Road
- Several footpaths backing onto private residencies have been subjected to fly tipping
- Enquiries from parishioners regarding The Hub were raised
- Complaint received regarding the election and the decision by the Council not to use polling cards

14.097 Exclusion of public and press

It was APPROVED that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

To discuss issues from the Staff and Finance Meeting and the wording of a Statement

Minutes of closed session:

A request from a current Council lessee to use £1,200 originally paid towards arrears of a former lessee be used as a payment of rent. This was APPROVED by the full Council following recommendation from the Finance and Staff Committee. A letter detailing the Councils approval and conditions to be drafted by the Clerk.

Issues from the Clerk were discussed following the F&S Committee meeting. It was APPROVED that the Clerk could change her working week to the following hours: 08.30 – 13.30 Monday to Thursday. It was AGREED that Councillors would make an appointment to see the Clerk to avoid too many interruptions during her working day. It was AGREED that two members of the finance committee would approve the Clerks wage slip in advance of the last Friday of the month. It was agreed that all cheques should have two signatures. Signatories to be R Maskell, M Watson, G Plowman and the Clerk. Other issues that the Clerk raised would need further investigation by the Clerk and report back to the Council.

Legal costs over a boundary dispute were discussed and an approach to our solicitors was APPROVED. It was AGREED that the Council would make an offer in full and final settlement of up to £36,000. An interim payment of £10,000 was APPROVED. Clerk to liaise with the Council’s solicitor to negotiate on their behalf.

The following statement and conditions to statement were discussed and APPROVED by the Council:

Statement for correction of defamation

Statements made by the Chairman at the 2nd April 2014 council meeting implied that the owners of Old Rectory Farm, Professor and Mrs Peile, had claimed land which is not rightfully theirs and that they had acted improperly or unreasonably in their legal action against the Council.

Aston Clinton Parish Council wishes to set the record straight and to acknowledge that Professor and Mrs Peile have acted properly in defending (against claims made by this Council) the title to their property, Old Rectory Farm, which they bought in good faith in 2005.

The council accepts responsibility for their handling of this dispute, including missing opportunities to settle the dispute amicably. Councillors initially advanced the Council’s claim to the stream in the belief that it was public property. The Council now accepts this is not the case and the Council have renounced all claims to the property in their out-of-court settlement, which includes payment of £10,000 in damages to Professor and Mrs Peile and payment of their legal costs.

We apologise to the Peiles for publicly claiming that the disputed area of land and stream belonged to the Council, and for the distress caused to them by the way that the matter was handled by the Council.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.00

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6th August 2014 in the Parish Meeting Room, Aston Clinton Park, London Road, Aston Clinton at 7.30pm.

Signed by.....

Date.....