

Minutes of the Meeting of Aston Clinton Parish Council, held on 4th February
2015 at 7.30pm
at Aston Clinton Parish Meeting Room

Present

Councillors: -

R Maskell (Chairman)

J Savigar

D Wallis

P Crook

T Winterbottom

C Read

T Kirkland

M Richards

J Hoinville

G Plowman

Clerk: G Merry

27 members of the public

In attendance: Cllr B Chapple (Bucks CC)

15.017 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Watson, Paternoster (AVDC) and Yerby (AVDC)

Due to the confidential nature of item 15.031, the Chairman requested a motion under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the public and press be excluded from those sections of the meeting. A record of voting was requested and votes are recorded as follows: -

PROPOSER – Cllr Winterbottom, SECONDER – Cllr Kirtland

FOR – Cllrs Winterbottom, Kirtland, Richards, Crook and Maskell

AGAINST – Cllrs Read, Hoinville, Savigar, Wallis and Plowman

The Chairman gave his casting vote FOR the motion making that 6 votes and the motion CARRIED.

15.018 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Crook declared his interest in the matter of a letter received from the Aston Clinton branch of the British Legion. Cllr Maskell declared an interest in Agenda item 15.025.

15.019 To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7th January 2015.

The **MOTION** to approve the Minutes were PROPOSED by Cllr Read, SECONDED by Cllr Savigar and AGREED.

15.020 Public Participation

- i. It was asked why Cllr Maskell had not declared his interest in item 15.031. Cllr Maskell replied that it was a procedural matter.
- ii. It was stated that there was evidence of a waste of public money and that Mr Maskell should resign. Cllr Maskell denied this on account of ACPC being a corporate body.
- iii. It was asked why 6 councillors had voted against ratification of the Heads of Agreement in the original boundary dispute between Prof and Mrs Peile and ACPC, in February 2013. Cllr Maskell read out from the minutes of that meeting.
- iv. Cllr Maskell was asked when he was going to apologise. Cllr Maskell then said that he apologised.
- v. It was asked whether ACPC has objected to the planning permission for a development in New Road. Cllr Hoinville confirmed that it had.

- vi. ACPC was asked to contribute towards PACVE's fighting fund.
- vii. It was stated that minutes are not up-to-date on the website. Cllr Plowman responded that he is working on it. It was requested that the minutes be published sooner. Cllr Plowman explained that the Minutes are published after they have been approved and signed off.
- viii. It was asked why there were insufficient chairs for the public at the meeting and Cllr Maskell answered that he used to carry them across from the Pavilion himself.

15.021 Matters Arising

Santa's Float – distributions of monies: The Clerk reported that £294.16 had been donated each to the Scouts, the Guides and to Rennie Grove Hospice Care. Cllr Plowman asked how the cheques had been signed and Cllr Maskell confirmed that he alone had signed them. Cllr Plowman stated that this was against financial regulations and there must be 2 signatures. The Clerk agreed to chase up the matter of the bank mandate, changes to signatories. Cllr Maskell thanked Cllrs Winterbottom, Crook, Watson and Hoinville for helping with the Santa Float.

15.022 Chairman's Report

On 21 January the Chairman had attended the Local Area Forum. The parking on London Road on the Aylesbury side of the Brook Street junction was an agenda item. This hazard has been an issue with the Parish Council and the public for some time. The PC has for some years tried to get BCC to address the situation. However, the Chairman was assured that the situation will now be reviewed and he has discussed with Paul Hodson of BCC how the situation can be addressed. The Chairman was also assured that the parking situation around the village school will be addressed.

At last month's PC meeting a member of the public reported that on 23rd December 2014, AVDC planning had approved outline planning permission for a power plant in College Road North with towers 11.8 m high. An enquiry was made with the company that has an option to develop the land but the proposed development was declined. The company still went ahead and applied for outline planning and got it.

15.023 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported a very busy month in the parish office. There is a new facilities committee who are pro-actively looking after the park, allotments, football club, churchyard and the pavilion. There had been several enquiries re. the future of the Pavilion and there will be a public consultation before decisions are made.

Re. Parish elections in May, the Clerk is currently investigating the time frame and hopes to have information on the website soon. The deadline for delivery of nomination papers is 9th April

The Clerk's workload has increased substantially over the past several weeks and it has become necessary to limit visitors to appointments only. Since the office answer machine does not always record clearly, email is the recommended way of contacting the Clerk.

15.024 Correspondence Received

- i. Cllr Richards stated that the Chiltern Society have now taken over management of Cobblers Pits on a 99 year lease and there were plans to make it more accessible to people.
- ii. The Clerk stated that she is now adopting the practise recommended by the SLCC, to have a folder of hard copies of correspondence which will be presented to councillors at meetings. Councillors are asked to read the enclosures, complete the tick-box along with any comments (e.g. offers to action) and then pass on to the next member.

15.025 Report and Recommendations from AVDC Standards Hearing Sub-Committee 19/01/15

The Clerk stated that she is required to read the decisions and recommendations from this hearing and that she would be summarising. As follows: -

'The standards hearing sub-committee met on January 19th to consider the findings of an investigation with regard to a complaint brought against Cllr Maskell, by Professor and Mrs Peile, in April of 2013. The complaint detailed activity over an 18-month period, as it related to a Boundary dispute and itemised 37 allegations of unethical conduct by Cllr Maskell. The entire report can be found on the AVDC website, I am only required to read out a summary of the decisions.

It was found that Cllr Maskell had conducted himself in a manner which was likely to bring the Council into dis-repute. There were 5 reasons given for this. It was also found that Cllr Maskell had failed to provide leadership to the Parish Council by personal example; had failed to take decisions for a good or substantial reason and had failed to pay due regard to advice from the Parish Clerk as an officer of the Parish Council. There were 8 reasons given for this.

The Recommendations of the sub-committee are, in summary: -

- 1. That further training in governance and collective responsibility is undertaken by Cllr Maskell.*
- 2. That such training should also be undertaken by all other members of ACPC.*

Councillor Carole Paternoster has further clarified that this would apply only to Councillors that were in office during the 18 months to April 2013'.

Motion: That council notes the recommendations of the AVDC standards Committee. The **MOTION** was PROPOSED By Cllr Plowman, SECONDED By Cllr Winterbottom and was AGREED unanimously. It was stated that the recommendations were noted but not accepted and it was agreed that any training for councillors be deferred until after the May election.

15.026 Report From The Finance and Staff Committee

- i. No F&S Meeting had taken place in January. There was approx. £31,000 in the current account which was better than expected, however there had been an unexpectedly high bill from Thames Water for the Youth Club of £1,648.22. Cllr Maskell stated that there had been a substantial water leak from a manhole at the Pavilion and this could account for the size of the bill. Cllr Read stated that a manhole should be the responsibility of Thames Water not ACPC. The Clerk agreed to look into the matter and report back.
- ii. The monthly payments schedule was as follows: It was proposed to accept the payments minus the invoice from Thames Water. On this proviso the payments were then PROPOSED by Cllr Plowman, SECONDED by Cllr Crook and APPROVED.

Finances to be agreed at the February meeting of ACPC			
Date Paid	To whom	For	Amount
02/01/2015	HMRC	Gill's tax & NI	£339.24
05/01/2015	British Gas	Electricity for Parish Office	£40.00
12/01/2015	EON	Street Lighting	£568.68
14/01/2015	Global Enforcement	Bailiffs re Hub repossession	£780.00
20/01/2015	Ian Rennie Hospice	Share from Christmas float	£294.16
29/01/2015	Gill Merry	January salary	£739.06
	E McGoldrick	Toilet Maintenance - January	£80.00
	E McGoldrick	Litter picking - January	£50.00
	SLCC	On-line training course for Clerk	£118.80
	SLCC	CPD - Agenda & Minutes	£54.24
	Beacon Alarms	Hub alarm	£244.37
	E. Sharp Electrical	Maintenance of street lights - 84 Chapel Drive	£145.98
	British Gas	Electricity for Parish Office	£40.00
	Evetts Agriculture	Oct., Nov, Dec mowing + equipment maintenance	£294.00
	Aylesbury Mains	Removal of lighting column stump	£84.00
	Thames Water	Water supply at Youth Club	£1,648.22
	Inside Out Property maintenance	Youth Club - water leak	£95.00
		Total	£5,615.75
Note (1):-	The following items were on January's approval list; with apologies, I entered the VAT exclusive amounts; the correct figures are shown alongside		
09/01/2015	E. Sharp Electrical	Maintenance of street lights - 126a Weston Road	186.96
		should be	£224.35
09/01/2015	E. Sharp Electrical	Parish Council offices - lighting failure	39.95
		should be	£47.94
09/01/2015	Total Garden Care	Churtyard - 12th November	240
		should be	£288.00
Note (2):-	The invoice for £1,648.22 from Thames Water requires further investigation.		
Note (3):-	There is a complication over the payment of the invoice for £47.94 (see Note (1) above) to Sharp Electrical which will hopefully be resolved imminently.		

a.

- iii. Mowing: Cllr Plowman stated that there would be a shortfall in the funds allocated by BCC for mowing. Cllr Maskell stated that it had already been agreed to go along with AVDC paying for the mowing. Cllr Plowman stated that this had only been in principle.
- iv. Cllr Plowman reported that the Clerk's hours had increased and this had generated overtime costs. There was general agreement that this was necessary.
- v. Cllr Plowman had not got anywhere with the refund from last year's internal auditor but he would chase this up. The Clerk agreed to chase up the matter of an overdue VAT refund.
- vi. Cllr Plowman verified that a payment to Evetts agriculture for £294 had been authorised and included winter checks on the tractor.

15.27 Report From The Planning Committee

- i. Cllr Read reported on the recent planning committee meeting. (Minutes available on website). He explained how the P.C. does not have much sway but they are not in favour of the many recent developments planned. He further reported that we now have to request plans from AVDC.
- ii. The chimneys for the proposed power plant at Arla will be 15-20m high and set apart from the main compound. Cllr Paternoster has objected and ACPC will too.
- iii. Brook St/College Road development – unfortunately this was approved by a 5 to 4 vote despite strong local opposition. PACVE reported they are investigating whether the meeting had been conducted correctly and had invited recollections from those who had attended.

- iv. The Neighbourhood Development Plan is underway and a steering committee had been formed comprising: - Colin Read – ACPC, John Watson ACPC (co-opted), Liz Blake – lawyer, Colin Lane – builder, Mr Mason – landowner and Alec Just – editor of Village Life. This team do not make the final recommendations. Local opinions would then be sought.

15.27 Report From The Facilities Committee

The inaugural meeting of the facilities committee had been held (see website for minutes) on January 4th. Cllr Savigar had been elected Chair and Cllr Read as Vice Chair. There were 2 sub-committees: Grounds Maintenance and Sport and Recreation.

- A. **Grounds Maintenance**: comprising Cllrs Wallis, Hoinville and Read, and Alan Mooney (co-opted).
 - i. Footpaths: A review had been completed.
 - ii. A comprehensive specification had been circulated to members. Tenders are to be invited and adverts would be going out this week. Cllr Winterbottom expressed concern that car park maintenance should be included.

MOTION: To agree the proposed course of action to identify a preferred supplier for grounds maintenance – PROPOSED by Cllr Savigar, SECONDED by Cllr Winterbottom and AGREED.

- iii. Litter Picking: A short term solution has been in place however the longer term would be to approach the ranger scouts in exchange for a regular donation. Cllr Hoinville had made initial enquiries. Concern was expressed that this may not be legal however, the ranger scouts are 15 years+, have their own insurance and would carry out their own health and safety and risk assessment.

MOTION: To agree the proposed course of action for litter picking in the park – PROPOSED by Cllr Read, SECONDED by Cllr Plowman and AGREED.

- B. **Sport and Recreation**: comprising Cllrs Wallis and Savigar and Leslie Ronson (co-opted). Cllrs Kirtland and Winterbottom were asked to join.
 - i. The Pavilion had been peacefully re-possessed and an inventory is being prepared to determine what is there and what may belong to 3rd parties. This process is being advised by lawyers. The options thereafter would be:
 - Do nothing and leave it closed
 - Manage the venue internally by the PC
 - Have it managed externally again by a leaseholder
 - A hybrid option where some functions are managed by 3rd parties and some e.g. lettings, by the PC.

There had already been several expressions of interest and a public consultation would be undertaken to engage with local people. Concern was expressed that canvassing too many opinions would hamper the speed of re-opening and there was concern the venue should be open by the spring. Cllr Savigar stated that a facilities meeting was scheduled for the following week where planning would start in earnest, whilst the inventory and other legalities were finalised. There was also a plan to invite a food/beverage van to operate at weekends as an interim measure, once an agreement was in place.

MOTION: to agree the proposed course of action to determine the way forward for the Pavilion – PROPOSED by Cllr Savigar, SECONDED by Cllr Plowman and AGREED.

- ii. Allotments: Cllr Kirtland stated that tenants who fail to maintain their allotments up to standard should be evicted. LR confirmed that this process is up-to-date.
- iii. Play Inspections: The annual play inspection had not taken place in 2014 but had now been booked. There was a need for correct signage with the equipment.
- iv. Dog Fouling: There have been increasing reports of dog fouling and the Clerk has leaflets and stickers from AVDC. Any offenders that can be caught on camera can be reported to AVDC's dog warden and fined. The school are also doing their own campaign.
- v. British Legion: The British Legion had requested use of the parish room for their meetings and offered to pay a fee of £1.50 per person attending. Cllr Winterbottom highlighted the need for an agreement to be in place. Cllr Crook offered 3 responsible key holders, including himself and could guarantee building security. There was concern that this would set a precedent and it was agreed that any subsequent requests would be considered individually on their own merit.

MOTION: to agree to allow the B.L. use of the meeting room subject to the conditions outlined, PROPOSED by Cllr Richards, SECONDED by Cllr Kirtland and AGREED.

- vi. Culvert: Cllr Wallis pointed out that at the November meeting, it had only been agreed to have the proposed site of the culvert pegged out, yet the plan had been activated without this happening and a planning application submitted. Concerns were expressed about the location of the culvert in relation to the Meadow pitch. The plans were looked at again and both Cllrs Read and Wallis stated that these were free-hand drawings and as such had no dimensions on the drawing or distances measured. Cllr Winterbottom stated that the planning application could always be objected to.

MOTION: to agree to request BCC peg out the area so that it can be agreed to before work begins – PROPOSED by Cllr Crook, SECONDED by Cllr Wallis and AGREED.

- vii. Lamppost: a lamppost on the Icknield Way had been damaged by fire/vandalism. It would cost approx. £500 to repair plus the cost of any work necessary by UK Power to make safe the supply. The Clerk agreed to check the insurance situation and contact UK Power.

15.28 Business for the next meeting

There was no business to be recorded for the next meeting

15.29 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th March at 7.30pm

9.40pm - Members of the public left the meeting. Cllr Kirtland left the meeting.

15.031 Ongoing Defamation Suit (closed session)

There had been a significant development just prior to the meeting in the form of an email from the insurance company. As a result, the 2 motions were withdrawn due to Aviva confirming they would not be proceeding on ACPC's behalf.

There being no further business of the Council, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.55pm.

Signed _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 1: MEETING NOTES

04/02/14 - 7pm Amanda Foister of Adventure Learning Foundation attended to discuss with council a S106 funding application for Green Park

Present: Cllrs Maskell, Hoinville, Wallis, Savigar, Crook, Plowman, Winterbottom, Read

Recording: G Merry

13 members of the public

- AF explained that ALF is mainly interested in activities but had also inherited the conference facilities at Green Park. They use this to underwrite the cost of activities for local young people. There is a need to refurbish the meeting rooms and this will bring in revenue.
- They are promoting outdoor activities such as archery, climbing wall etc. but there is a need for more lighting for security. They would also like to make more use of the canal by dredging it for canoeing, paddle boats etc.
- It is hoped that AVDC's S106 money will support their leisure plans and that BCC will assist cost of refurbishments. AVDC had indicated S106 would cover the lighting and the canal.
- £190,000 was estimated for the lighting and the cost was high due to the trees having protection orders and the cabling having to be routed underground.
- The canal needed to be dug out, water tested for toxins and landscaped. Estimated at £100,000 if not toxic and £150,000 if toxic.

There followed questions from the public – answers as follows: -

- Not clear whether they would dig out the tar lining of the canal but the plan is to widen not deepen.
- Public is more likely to have free access to the park at weekends due to child protection issues during school days/school usage. AF is happy to look at open access but ALF is a charity with no funding and they must make charges to fund charitable work.
- If free access were a condition of obtaining S106 money this would be all the better to spread the word.
- The lease from BCC is 25 years, although AF plans to apply to Sports England for funding so would then negotiate with BCC to extend the lease.
- Local people are not using the facility enough but it is being encouraged.
- ALF is not certain their plans would qualify for S106 money but can only try. GM reported that Cllr Chapple is looking into the issue of the public no longer having access to the public footpath through the park
- The section of canal to be dredged is from Stablebridge Road down Harebridge Rd
- AF stated it would be useful to know how much is in the S106 fund. However, the parish usually has first call on S106 money
- The pool should re-open in March if funds become available to fix the filter. BCC have been asked to fund this. The pool is a huge drain on finances though.

Conclusions:

ACPC approves in principle but we need to know how much is available. Also whether the Stablebridge development qualifies for S106. AF was advised to also talk to other parishes that abut Green Park. TW suggested no decision be made tonight as there were other projects on the go. It should go back to the Facilities Committee.

GM 7/2/15