

Minutes of the Meeting of Aston Clinton Parish Council - held on 7th December  
2016 at 7.30pm,  
at Aston Clinton Parish Meeting Room

**Present:**

Councillors: -  
C Read – Chair  
R Stewart  
J Eggesfield  
L Ronson  
M Mason

T Comerford  
M Osborn  
P Wyatt  
P Hughes

Clerks: G Merry (recording), E Barry

3 Members of the public

**16.111 Apologies:**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Tubb

**16.112 Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr Hughes declared an interest in 16.119 as he uses the All Weather Pitch.

**16.113 To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd November 2016.**

The minutes were PROPOSED by Cllr Comerford, SECONDED by Cllr Ronson, AGREED and SIGNED.

**16.114 Public Participation**

- i Concern was expressed that although energy providers are statutory consultees for new developments, broadband providers are not, yet the impact on the village was likely to be significant, given that there is only one BT exchange. Cllr Comerford responded that the council could suggest to the planning authority that they should carry out such consultations for new developments. Cllr Hughes added an increase in capacity will most likely happen naturally as a result of increased demand and competition from providers.

**16.115 Council**

- i **Councillor Vacancy:** 2 tentative enquiries had not resulted in an application. The clerk asked again for councillors and members of the public to 'network' the vacancy.
- ii **Social Media Policy:** The clerk had circulated both the NALC Guidance and the SLCC template policy to councillors. Cllr Read expressed his disagreement with any wording limiting a citizen's right to offend, as an infringement of free speech. This was discussed and it was pointed out that the template policy states only to avoid saying anything offensive about a colleague. Cllr Hughes pointed out that all communication should be posted by the clerk, to avoid any libellous statements. It was agreed that these were purely guidelines and it would be prudent to get Cllr Tubb's advice before re-visiting the matter.
- iii **Links to external Organisations:**
  - AVALC: Cllr Mason reported that herself and Cllr Tubb had attended the AVALC AGM and were now on the committee. It is a useful association of local councils and the next meeting is on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Cllr Tubb will attend.
  - Councillor Training: Cllrs Ronson and Osborne had attended a BALC Finance Training course and found it extremely useful, especially in respect of budget planning. It was advised that parish councils should develop 1, 3 and 5 year plans for short and long-term projects, along with the appropriate financial scheduling. It had been advised to retain capital funds for identified large-scale projects.

### 16.116 Clerk's Report

"2016 has been a productive year, with the parish council achieving almost everything it set out to achieve, chiefly the improvements to the park, improvements to accessibility, the bulk of the NHP work done and a more open and transparent approach. As we approach the end of the year, we find ourselves in a less comfortable position. The village is subject to many developments and the very nature of the village could be set to change in the years to come.

As a parish council, it may be necessary to look at different ways of running things in the village. More resources will be needed to run what may become a large village, small town or suburb of Aylesbury. There are threats of cuts to our services from the larger authorities and the PC may need to run services itself. Looking at how best to provide for this growing and changing community, one of our first large-scale projects is our plan to build a community centre that is fit for purpose for the Aston Clinton of the future. The committee has raised over half the cost of this, in pledged funding and is about to launch the project by a submitting planning application. It is important now to have the support of the community and feedback is welcomed from plans which are currently exhibited in the cafe. The exhibition will remain up for another week and following that, will be on the website. To finance the shortfall in funding, it may be necessary to build a capital reserve, to avoid the disastrous outcome of having a white elephant building that is started but not finished.

Alongside planning for a growing village, the PC will fight as best it can against the flood of housing developments. It continues to believe in the NHP as the best weapon against uncontrolled building and in addition, next year's budget is likely to include money set aside to help develop traffic schemes, fight developers and build capital reserves for the future. Funding for leisure and recreation is likely to come from S106 money that developers legally have to assign to the community. If this funding is not accepted and allocated, it will not be given. In the meantime, we must all continue to enjoy this village and the parish council is committed to the residents for as long as it is here".

### 16.117 Finance and Staff Committee

- i **Financial Situation Nov '16:** The Clerk presented the month-end accounts for November. These showed a total income for the year to-date as £283,934 and the total expenditure as £162,814. Cllr Read queried the outstanding balance on the mortgage and the clerk agreed to forward a recent statement. However, Cllr Osborn confirmed the interest rate charged was extremely low compared with the commercial sector. The increasing EON bill for street lighting was also queried and Cllr Comerford confirmed he is looking at provider-comparisons with a view to possibly switching.
- ii **Payments to be agreed:** The clerk had circulated the list of outstanding invoices as follows:

Date	Company	For	Amount £	Vat £	Total £
18/07/2016	Gravity Engineering	Skate Ramp	8000?	2000?	10000.00
02/11/2016	Osprey Company	Additional slats for park sign	352.00	70.40	422.40
04/11/2016	E Sharp Electrical	5 x new Lights	366.98	73.40	440.38
08/11/2016	Buckland Landscapes	Monthly Site Maintenance - Oct	1176.08	235.22	1411.30
08/11/2016	Your Cafe in the Park	Cleaning costs - Eamonn (12 months)	1275.00	0.00	1275.00
13/11/2016	Aston Clinton RBL	Donation for wreath (minimum)	20.00	0.00	20.00
15/11/2016	R.B. Tree Care	Pollarding in churchyard	530.00	0.00	530.00
30/11/2016	E McGoldrick	Bins and Toilets - Nov.	130.00	0.00	130.00
30/11/2016	SLCC	Membership renewals x 2	314.00	0.00	314.00

30/11/2016	Camiers Skip Hire	Skip for skate park	210.00	0.00	210.00
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**DD's**

18/11/2016	AVDC	Wheelie Bins - 2nd quarter	667.00	0.00	667.00
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The balance to Gravity skateparks would continue to be withheld until the ramp had been inspected by ROSPA, deemed fit for purpose by the council and signed off. It was noted the Colts football club had thanked the PC for inclusion in the new signage at the park entrance.

**MOTION:** To approve the payment of the invoices, PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson, SECONDED by Cllr Stewart and APPROVED.

- iii **Budget Forecasting – Remainder of Year:** The clerk had circulated a budget forecasting report to councillors predicting likely receipts and payments to year-end. Although some budgets would over-spend, most would slightly under-spend meaning the council could now carry out some of the projects it has been considering.
- iv **Budget Proposal and Precept 2017-18:** Cllr Hughes reported that the F&S committee had met and discussed the proposed budget circulated by the clerk. This had included £45,000 to reach planning application and submission stage for the community centre. An increase of 5% on the current precept had been felt to cover costs without needing to depend on income which could not be guaranteed. Since then however, Cllr Osborn had attended the finance training and had presented the case that due to the predicted shortfall in funding for the new centre, it may be necessary to increase the precept more than 5%, to build a long-term capital reserve. Cllr Osborn reiterated that it would be remiss of the council not to address how to build-up the necessary funding. Cllr Comerford stated that the £45k necessary to fund phase 1 was already budgeted for and covered by the planned 5% increase. A discussion followed as to how best to approach this challenging decision i.e. whether the F&S Committee should meet again to agree a different recommendation, or the full council. It was decided that despite busy schedules at this time of year, it would be necessary for the full council to meet and decide on this matter. The clerk agreed to organise this as soon as was practicable. The MOTION to agree the budget was set aside
- v **Staffing Sub-Committee:** Cllr Stewart reported from the recent Finance and Staffing meeting, that the assistant clerk's overtime had increased substantially due to work on the NHP and the workload of the Planning Committee. It had been suggested to increase the assistant clerk's hours to 20 per week and she had agreed, providing this was a temporary arrangement until March 2017 when the NHP was due to be completed.

**MOTION:** To agree to increase the assistant clerk's hours to 20 per week until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson, SECONDED by Cllr Osborn and AGREED.

**16.118 Planning Committee:**

- i Cllr Read reported from the last planning meeting as follows: -
  - Small-Scale Applications:
  - 16/03931/APP – Green Park Activities & Training Centre Stablebridge Road – No objection
  - 16/03985/APP – 48 Rosebery Road – Retention of single storey side extension - No objection
  - 16/04072/APP – 98 Weston Road – Proposed New Dwelling and ancillary - In support
  - Large Scale Applications:
  - 16/04000/AOP – Land Off Chapel Drive – Outline planning application with access to be considered and all other matters reserved for the for the erection of up to 250 dwellings - Objection on multiple grounds including coalescence, infrastructure, intrusion into open

countryside, scale of development, emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local plan and Aston Clinton Neighbourhood plan and 5 year land supply.

It had also been noted: the Parish council had not been sent notice inviting them to comment on this application and that there had been no public notices; there was confusion on when the deadlines for posting both public and consultee comments were; the application is contrary to the neighbouring Parish Council of Buckland's 'made' Neighbourhood Plan as it would create coalescence between the two parishes; there is a loss in confidence in the decision making at the local planning authority by both the Parish council and the residents of Aston Clinton. Also, a concern that AVDC are approving developments, in part, out of a fear that a refusal could be overturned at appeal and the costs associated with this; the use of misleading photographs within the application documents for Green End Street, depicting a street with very little on-street parking which did not reflect the reality; The 'interim' 5 year housing supply as published in October 2016 was discussed and that the new plan had taken account of a 20% buffer; Cllr Tubb had reported that PACVE would be launching a campaign against this application.

MOD Land at RAF Halton: Cllr Read had reported that the Airfield is due to be sold from 2020 onwards and has been proposed by the MOD as surplus to requirements. Cllr Paternoster had updated the committee as follows: Only the footprint of the existing buildings can be built on. The listed building must remain. The Barracks are a listed building and can only be converted and not taken down. The MOD had bought themselves out of the original covenants on the land. The site of the trenches is a heritage site.

Plots 1 - 4 Brook Farm Brook Street - unlawful development: the applicant had put in a retrospective planning application. It had been agreed to write to the enforcement department at AVDC

- ii **NHP:** Cllr Read reported the final consultation before the Plan is written had been held and all comments were currently being collated. The event had received good attendance and meetings with the consultants were planned for January.
- iii **Traffic Survey:** This had been displayed at the NHP event and had received conflicting comments which would now be analysed. Buckland Parish had been asked for a nominal contribution towards developing a scheme to re-prioritise the turn-off to Wendover (Upper Icknield Way). The state of roads suffering from current developments was discussed, in particular Weston Road and Brook Street. It was confirmed that the developers must keep the roads clean and infringements should be reported.
- iv **Street naming** – Chapel Drive Phase 2: AVDC had asked for suggested names and in keeping with the policy of taking names from the village war memorial, Cllr Ronson had circulated 10 names. The clerk agreed to forward these suggestions to AVDC providing the families agreed. Cllrs Ronson and Wyatt agreed to speak to the deceased soldier's families.

**MOTION:** To agree to the 10 suggestions as taken from the war memorial, PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson, SECONDED by Cllr Wyatt and AGREED.

**16.119 Facilities Committee:** 3 amounts of S106 money needed to be allocated to leisure/recreation projects: -

- 16/02752/AOP – College Road South (£250,000): Cllr Osborn reported this had been discussed at the Facilities committee and recommended as follows: It was felt that a new 4G artificial football pitch would not only upgrade the current outdated facility, but may also provide leverage with the F.A. for any funding application for the new community centre.

Repaving of the car park was also recommended to allow access to all sectors of the community to the proposed new facility. The running of any such facility would need to be discussed with the football club who own the current AstroTurf. This recommendation was AGREED, with Cllr Hughes abstaining.

- 15/03627 – Park Farm (£127,000): It was AGREED to allocate this amount to the same project as above, so there would be sufficient funds to include re-surfacing the car park and that the project could be started, using whichever amount became available first.
- 16/04201 – 138-142 London Road (£45,000): The cricket club had proposed a package of improvements including an artificial strip, batting nets, bowling machines, improvements to the pavilion and scoring screens. It was AGREED to allocate this sum to the cricket club.

**MOTION:** to agree the S106 allocations as detailed above, PROPOSED by Cllr Comerford, SECONDED by Cllr Eggesfield and AGREED.

#### **1. Grounds Maintenance Sub-Committee:**

- i **Update:** Cllr Ronson advised that the grounds contactors must cease cutting the grass on the perimeter of the park in September, as this year it had been cut too short and was now waterlogged.
- ii **ITT:** The working party of Cllrs Read and Ronson had prepared the details of the spec. and the clerk would formulate a suitable contract.
- iii **Projects to year-end:** Considering the healthy budget forecast, it was agreed that the following could be carried out for the remaining year: remedial work to the bridge by the beach, repairs to the Churchill Hall, repairs to the school clock, drain repairs around PC office, new village sign(s), office equipment i.e. laptop, projector, printer and IT support for the clerks.

#### **2. Sport and Recreation Sub-Committee:**

- i **Update including Football:** Cllr Ronson reported that ACFC still have not purchased their ground sockets and the Colts are still awaiting restoration of the Meadow Pitch. She expressed concern that Regiment Fitness are damaging the ground and will ask the instructor to move to a new area. Cllr Hughes suggested that if future large amounts of S106 money became available it would be worth considering an underground drainage system for the football pitches, as had been successful at Fairford Leys.
- ii **Skate-ramp:** The surface had been re-laid for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time and it was felt that this time it had been done correctly. The site would remain fenced off until Gravity Skatepark had arranged for the ROSPA inspection and when councillors were satisfied with the quality of the job.
- iii **Santa Float:** The following councillors confirmed their availability to help with the float – Cllrs Ronson, Read, Wyatt, Hughes and Stewart (from 3.30-7pm). All available councillors were asked to attend on 18/12/16 to help set up the float. Cllrs would also be needed to build the float, on Saturday 17/12. The clerk advised that the evening event was not working, due to the late timing, and alternative arrangements had been made facilitating an earlier start. The float would still aim to arrive down the driveway to the Cafe by 8.30pm.
- iv **Youth Club:** A new circuit board was needed and the council's preferred supplier had provided a quote. Cllr Comerford wondered whether the quote was expensive. However, it was clarified that it was an involved procedure to bring the electrics up to a standard to meet legal health and safety requirements. On this basis, Cllrs were happy to proceed.

**MOTION:** to install a new circuit board at a cost of £1325 + VAT, PROPOSED by Cllr Comerford, SECONDED by Cllr Eggesfield and AGREED

**3. Community Centre Committee:** Cllr Comerford reported that the designs were now on display in the Cafe and the feedback to date had mostly been positive. Contact had also been made with members of the public who were experienced in this type of project, who may be prepared to help. After the 2 weeks, the designs would be on the website and comments would be welcomed until the start of the new year.

**The chairman invited public comments:**

- Re. the proposed cricket club project, it was stated that the cricket club was there first and the developer of Park farm had a duty-of-care to protect the new houses, including, if necessary paying for safety netting. Cllr Hughes however, stated that this would have to have been captured in the initial S106 negotiations at the start of the planning application process.
- It was asked to what extent the council would take into consideration public opinion, regarding raising the precept to help pay for the community centre. The speaker felt he would not use the new centre and Cllr Mason asked him for his views. The clerk pointed out that this project had been decided 18 months ago, and had been widely documented since, including the likely shortfall in funding. Cllr Hughes pointed out that the residents can vote out the parish council every 4 years at the election.
- It was pointed out that the precept had been raised 2 years ago, to meet the cost of the legal bills involved in the boundary dispute and now that was concluded, the precept should theoretically go down. The clerk responded that the precept had been raised to enable the parish council to be run properly and that the amount established now, was in fact how much it costs to run the council properly.

**Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December (**afternote:** an additional Extra-ordinary meeting will be held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm, discuss financial planning and the precept for 2017-18)

Signed ..... Date .....