

## AVEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of Avebury Parish Council held online on Tuesday 1 December 2020.

*In these minutes APC stands for Avebury Parish Council, ASSC for Avebury Sports and Social Club, ASSF for Avebury Sacred Sites Forum, AWHS for Avebury World Heritage Site, CATG for Community Area Transport Group, FB for Facebook, MAB for Marlborough Area Boards, NT for the National Trust, PC for Parish Council, RoW for Rights of Way, SID for Speed Indicator Device, UKN for Upper Kennet News, WALC for Wiltshire Association of Local Councils, WC for Wiltshire Council and WHS for World Heritage Site.*

**Present:** Mr Stephen Stacey (Chair), Dr Mike Bedford (Vice-Chair), Mrs Maggie Lewis (Vice-Chair), Mr Ben Butler, Mrs Donna Byatt, Mr Mike Daniel, Mr Terence O'Connor (up to and including item 8cii), Mrs Lynzey Paradise and Ms Zandria Service.

**In attendance:** Miss Liz Moore (Clerk).

Time started: 19:34

**Welcome by the Chairman:** Cllr Stacey warmly welcomed Cllr Jane Davies (Wiltshire Councillor) who was a guest at the meeting.

1. **Public question time:** no members of the public were present.
2. **Apologies:** Mrs Jan Tomlin (General Manager, Wiltshire Landscape) and it was noted that Cllr O'Connor would be leaving the meeting early at about 20:30hrs.
3. **Declarations of interest:** there were none reported.
4. **Minutes of an ordinary meeting held on 3 November 2020: It was resolved** to accept the minutes as a proper record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Daniel, seconded by Cllr Lewis, and carried unanimously.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
  - a. **Min ref. 5a. Safety measures on A4361 at Avebury Trusloe:** the Chairman confirmed this was an important issue and would be dealt with in detail at item 8c.
  - b. **Min ref. 5b. Repairs to B4003 West Kennett Avenue:** the Chairman reported that there was no further update but he was hopeful that the double lining in primrose yellow would be implemented in the New Year.
  - c. **Min ref. 5c. WC Consultations:** the Clerk reported that she had not yet heard from WC or BT about whether the red BT 'phone kiosk would be retained at West Kennett, as requested by the PC.
  - d. **Min ref. 5f. New rubbish bins for the High Street:** the Chairman reported that two new Centurion black bins had been delivered by the supplier and paid for by APC, Elements, the Henge Shop, the NT shop, and the community shop. The

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shops had been invoiced for one of them by the Clerk. Members expressed appreciation to the shops for providing a second bin on the High Street. It was noted that Andrea Begent (WC Streetscene Engineer) had taken photographs of the bins to map them to the bin emptying route and that the contents of the bins would be collected weekly at no extra cost to ourselves.

- e. **Min ref. 5h. Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** Cllr Lewis said that she had checked the WC-owned bus shelter on the A361 that the Parish Steward had thought might have been struck by a vehicle, and it appeared that the asphalt was being pushed up from under the ground and that it might be tree roots causing the supports and bus shelter to lean backwards. She had reported the problem to WC using the mywiltsapp. She added that a member of the public had noticed a street lamp out in the layby adjacent to Trusloe Cottages, so she had reported this too via the mywiltsapp.
6. **National Trust Update:** (previously circulated to members and see appendix 1).
  7. **Planning applications:**
    - a. Application for Work to Trees in a Conservation Area at **Gunsite Lane**, West Kennett SN8 1QF. Proposal: pollard sycamore tree. Ref: 20/10185/TCA. **It was resolved** to support the application. Proposed by Cllr Butler, seconded by Cllr Daniel and carried unanimously.
    - b. Application for Listed Building Consent at **The Henge Shop**, High Street, Avebury, SN8 1RF. Proposal: replacement of existing windows and doors. Ref: 20/06053/LBC. In discussion it was felt that the application needed more detailed scrutiny particularly as there were about 36 documents attached to the application. **It was agreed to set up a separate on-line Planning Committee meeting** to discuss the applications listed under items 7b and 7c and defer any decision to that meeting. The applicants would also be invited to participate in the process.
    - c. Application for Full Planning at **Sarsen Kennels**, West Kennett, SN8 1QF. Proposal: removal of existing dog boarding kennels, conversion and extension of existing shop/grooming parlour and kennels/kitchen to form 1 no. residential dwelling, with associated parking, turning, landscaping, and private amenity space. (Resubmission of 19/03781/FUL). Ref: 20/07628/FUL.
    - d. It was noted that APC had received a response to its letter to the occupants of **15 Trusloe Cottages** explaining that a sycamore tree had been cut down on the advice of a tree surgeon and that they had checked with WC to ensure there were no preservation orders and that the tree was not in a Conservation Area. **Action:** the Clerk was asked to check with WC Planners that the correct advice had been given, and that the tree had been lawfully felled.
  8. **Project updates:**

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- a. **Play Area refurbishment:** in discussion it was agreed to start the process of sourcing new play equipment with a view to introducing it to the play area incrementally. Cllr Paradise would contact suppliers previously tendering for this project to find out if they would be willing to supply equipment in stages. She added that she was currently involved in due diligence work for a local school and that one of the suppliers had failed the test. Members noted that it was important to research potential suppliers before inviting them to tender for the work. **It was agreed** to review progress in February.
- b. **Planters:** in discussion members felt that the planters could be replaced gradually or all at the same time and that the spring was the best time to do this before the busy summer season. **It was agreed** that Cllr Paradise with the help of the Chair would put together a plan of action for removal of the existing planters and replacement with the new ones. Cllr Paradise would also speak to the existing planter custodians to involve them in the planning process (or, if they so wished, exempt them from it).
- c. **Transport Group:**
  - i. **CATG meeting 10 December:** (a paper entitled 'Road Safety on the A4361: next steps' had been circulated in advance of the meeting: see appendix 2). In discussion members supported the recent Atkins recommendation for a 50 mph limit on the A4361, noting that setting aside their request for a 40mph limit for the Beckhampton to Avebury section could strengthen the case for implementing the Atkins option to reduce the limit from 60mph to 50mph on the A4361 north of Avebury. Jane Davies gave a brief history lesson on how the 20 mph limit had evolved to a 30 mph limit in the 1920s and 1930s. She advised members to accept the lower limit as that should lead to a reduction in the average speed of vehicles, and to view the process as a stepping stone to the end goal. In further discussion it was noted that Community Speed Watch was only viable in 30 or 40mph limits for health and safety reasons. The Chair said that he was not persuaded by the Atkins data and suggested that the PC consider carrying out their own research, citing as an example the recent audit carried out in Manton. **The three recommendations in the paper were supported by the PC and all agreed.** Chair to attend the next CATG meeting on 10 December to provide the PC's feedback.
  - ii. **Findings from site meeting to look at locations for installing SIDs on A4361:** Cllr Daniel expressed his gratitude to Cllr Paradise for helping with the logistics of setting up the petition to reduce speed on the A4361, which had been published on FB and the PC website. He reported that 156 signatures had been received to date and that paper copies were currently in the Community Shop and would soon be available in Elements and St James Church. Cllr Daniel explained that he had had a

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useful conversation with Cllr John Bevan (Chair of Mildenhall PC) about Mildenhall PC's experience of using SIDs. The following points were noted:

- Mildenhall PC had installed a product called Messagemaker on posts, without the option of being able to collect information on a memory stick. They were using two solar powered SIDs purchased for £3,500 each.
- Martin Cook (WC Highways) would need to be involved to help choose the location of the SIDs. The SIDs had to be in a 30mph speed limit with a minimum of 50 metres advance visibility.
- The SIDs had had a positive effect on reducing speeds and that since they had been installed there had been no collisions along the road in question.
- Cllr Bevan's view was that most motorists just needed reminding of the speed limit.
- Mildenhall PC had not joined the Community Speed Watch.

The Chair thanked Cllr Daniel for his report. In discussion it was recognized that, as long as the SIDs were temporary i.e. mobile SIDs, there should be no issues from the WHS. The Chair said that Jan Tomlin had indicated that the NT might be able to support temporary SIDs. Members felt that there was a need for safety at each end of the village and that Martin Cook should be invited to visit to verify that any installation sites chosen following councilors own informal site visit were acceptable. In further discussion it was noted that the speed limit from the A4361 into Avebury Trusloe, past the Play Area and down Gilbert Hill was currently the national speed limit, and that road should also be assessed as it was clearly residential. **Actions: 1.** Cllr Daniel to contact Martin Cook to arrange a site visit to check possible SID locations. Jane Davies offered her support with the site visit. **2.** Avebury Trusloe / Gilbert Hill to be put on the CATG list after implementation of the 50mph along the A4361.

Cllr O'Connor said that he supported the lowering of the speed limit but urged caution on spending and reminded members that the PC may need to support COVID-19 issues due to shortfalls in services from WC. Jane Davies endorsed this view but said she did not expect CATG's modest budget to be further reduced. Cllr Byatt expressed the view that members should also consider lowering the speed limit on the Avenue (currently 60mph), which was a danger to pedestrians trying to cross it. It was felt that the PC needed to revisit the Avebury WHS Transport Strategy to look at the bigger picture. Jane Davies added that there was no downside to improving Avebury and commented that the Transport Strategy was a powerful document. She advised members to go big on re-emphasizing the WHS and to start with the centre of Avebury and then expand outwards. It was noted that the project should attract the support of Danny Kruger MP.

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- iii. **To approve submission of an application to CATG for a metro count on the A4361 Swindon Road:** not covered, deferred to next meeting.
- iv. **Petition progress report:** see item 8cii. Visit [http://aveburyparishcouncil.org/?page\\_id=5782](http://aveburyparishcouncil.org/?page_id=5782) to sign the petition “To improve perceived and actual road safety, reduce noise, and improve air quality in a village within the World Heritage Site attracting over 350,000 visitors a year by reducing the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph on the A4361 from the Beckhampton roundabout, encouraging observance of the limit by electronic speed indicators and in other ways, with the objective of improving conditions for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users and residents alike.”

### 9. Reports from PC representatives:

- a. **ASSF on-line meeting 19 November:** Cllr Lewis reported that the community was aiming to keep winter solstice on Monday 21 December as low key as possible.
- b. **WHS Steering Committee on-line meeting 25 November:** (Cllr Byatt's notes previously circulated: see appendix 3). Cllr Byatt said that WHS Committee had last met the year before, there was a lot going on and she had asked to join a working party. She asked Councillors to highlight questions and clarify the PC's position on any agenda items that might be relevant to Avebury. She would circulate the agenda prior to attending the meeting.

Thanks were expressed to both Councillors for attending the meetings on behalf of the PC.

### 10. Local Issues:

- a. **Maintenance of stiles:** in discussion it was noted that some of the stiles on East Farm were causing dog owners an issue, and that this was most likely because the bottom of the fencing had been rebuilt to prevent livestock escaping. It was noted that the issue had been raised separately on the local WhatsApp community group and that Natascha Kenyon was going to speak with Laura Corbett. Cllr Lewis stated that it was the landowners' responsibility to maintain stiles appropriately. It was noted that farmers have been very responsive to parishioners' requests on these and other issues.
- b. **Request for hand rail on steps along public footpath leading directly off the A4 down to the village of Beckhampton:** Cllr Lewis advised members that the path was not a public footpath. In discussion it was felt that a handrail should be installed in the adjacent low wall to improve safe use of the steps. As it was not clear who owned the steps, the Clerk was asked to put them on the list to be swept by the Parish Steward, who would advise whether or not they were in scope. Other members would make local enquiries: Cllr Lewis undertook to contact Wadworth's Brewery and Cllr Butler to contact David Hues.

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11. **Parish Council budget and setting the precept for 2021/22:** (revised draft budget and note on reserve fund previously circulated and see appendix 4). The budget was considered and members felt that, in the current economic climate, it was a good balance that would enable the PC to deliver smaller projects along with the Play Area refurbishment and proposed new SIDs. Members noted that last year the precept was set at £13,787 and that increasing it by £413 would result in a very modest increase of approximately £1.53 per annum per household compared to the current year. **It was resolved** to approve the draft budget for 2021/22, proposed by Cllr Service, seconded by Cllr Bedford and carried unanimously and, **it was resolved** to set the total precept for 2021/22 at £14,200 proposed by Cllr Byatt, seconded by Cllr Lewis and carried unanimously.
12. **Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** the Clerk was asked to add the following items to the Parish Steward's priority list for 9 December: to sweep the steps leading from the layby opposite the Waggon & Horses PH down to Beckhampton, repair potholes in the road from Bray Cottage to the grain barn in Avebury Trusloe, clear leaves in gully outside the Social Centre in the High Street and re-request cleaning of the WC bus shelters.
13. **Communications:** the Clerk reported that headlines had been successfully submitted to UKN for the December 2020 edition.
14. **Correspondence:** it was noted that the letter received from 15 Trusloe Cottages had been previously reported under item 7d.
15. **Finance and admin:**
  - a. **Half year internal audit:** the Clerk reported that the internal audit was booked for Thursday 3 December 2020.
  - b. **It was resolved** to approve the PC's updated guidelines on **grants and donations**. Proposed by Cllr Paradise, seconded by Cllr Daniel and carried unanimously.
  - c. **Donations to charities:** the Clerk listed several national charities that had requested funding and other local ones that the PC might wish to consider making donations to including Prospect Hospice (list previously emailed to members). Jane Davies was invited to speak and reported that the Prospect Hospice would welcome financial support. Members felt that more research should be undertaken to discover if there were any more local charities that might be in need of financial assistance. Decision deferred to next meeting. **Action:** the Chair, the Clerk and Cllr Paradise to put together a list of needy local charities for next meeting.
  - d. Members agreed to submit an **advert to UKN for local handyman services** (previously circulated to members by the Clerk) and to set up a list of approved contractors. The Clerk reported that John Giles had yet to action the requested

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repairs to the notice board in Avebury Trusloe and that the work would most likely be done in the New Year.

- e. **Clarifications and corrections:** the Clerk reported that there was an error in the 6 October 2020 minutes. Item 10g 'using section 137 funds' should read 'using small works budget and general funds'. **It was resolved** to agree to the correction and to simply note it in the minutes of the current meeting. Proposed by Cllr Byatt, seconded by Cllr Lewis and carried unanimously.
- f. **It was resolved** to join CPRE, the countryside charity (previously known as the Campaign to Protect Rural England), and pay an annual subscription of £45. The Chair reported that the local branch was leading work to maintain and where possible to improve rights of way locally Decision proposed by Cllr Paradise, seconded by Cllr Service and carried unanimously.
- g. **It was resolved** to make an annual donation of £114 to UKN for advertising costs. Proposed by Cllr Daniel, seconded by Cllr Byatt and carried unanimously.
- h. **Cheques for payment and ratification: it was resolved** to ratify the following cheques that had been raised in between meetings, and to pay cheques raised that night (15hiii – hiv). Proposed by Cllr Service, seconded by Cllr Lewis, and carried unanimously.
  - i. Miss E. Moore: November invoice including expenses      £327.69
  - ii. Idverde Ltd: two Centurion black litter bins with slabs (incl VAT) £450.24
  - iii. CPRE: annual subscription      £45.00
  - iv. UKN: annual donation towards advertising costs      £114.00

16. **Date of next meeting:** 7:30pm on Tuesday 2 February 2021.

### 17. Any other business:

- a. Cllr Service reported that a cherry picker and vans were currently in Bray Street installing **fibre for faster broadband**.
- b. Cllr Butler was asked for his view on **England's Agricultural Policy** due to replace the EU Common Agricultural Policy. He said that he would reserve his opinion but had noted that farmers would be rewarded for supporting wildlife and the environment and that food production was lower down the priority list. He encouraged everyone to buy British and buy local. [N.B. The changes will be designed to ensure that by 2028, farmers in England can sustainably produce healthy food profitably without subsidy, whilst taking steps to improve the environment, improve animal health and welfare and reduce carbon emissions].

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- c. Cllr Paradise reported that the **bushes outside the Henge Shop** had yet to be cut back and it was agreed to raise this with the Henge Shop representatives at the Planning Committee meeting due to take place the following week.
- d. Cllr Lewis reported that the **replacement traffic mirror** had been ordered on-line but delivery was delayed until the New Year. [The PC had previously agreed for a mirror to be ordered and that the most cost effective way to do this was to order on-line]. Cllr Lewis also confirmed that she had attended the **Community Emergency Training** the previous week and she and Judy Farthing recommend that the PC consider purchasing some walkie talkies and clip boards with rain covers for an estimate cost of < £100. Clerk to put on agenda for next meeting.
- e. Cllr Lewis had received an enquiry from the owners of Isobel Cottage, who were currently selling their property, to ask if the PC was aware of any road changes planned in the area as WC currently had a backlog of property highway searches to process. It was noted that, other than traffic calming, the PC was not aware of any planned changes but the owners should seek formal confirmation from their solicitors. Cllr Lewis would respond accordingly.

The Chair expressed thanks to all for attending the meeting that night including Jane Davies and Liz Moore. Cllr Lewis on behalf of members also thanked the Chair for his hard work that year.

The meeting closed at 21:30

### **Appendices:**

1. National Trust Update – December 2020
2. Road Safety on the A4361: next steps – dated 25 November 2020
3. WHS Committee Meeting Notes by Cllr Byatt
4. Draft Budget for 2021/22 and note on reserve funds