

Avebury Parish Council

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of Avebury Parish Council held online on Tuesday 2 February 2021.

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, NALC for National Association of Local Councils, 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, Mrs Lynzey Paradise, and Ms Zandria Service.

In attendance: Mrs Jan Tomlin (General Manager, Wiltshire Landscape), Mr Rob Hues of Galtee More Farm, Beckhampton and from about 20:20 Cllr Jane Davies (Wiltshire Councillor for West Selkley)

Time started: 19:36

Welcome by the Chairman: Cllr Stacey warmly welcomed Mr Rob Hues and Mrs Jan Tomlin, who were invited guests.

1. **Public question time:** no members of the public were present online.
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Terence O'Connor.
3. **Declarations of interest:** there was none reported.
4. **Minutes of an ordinary meeting held on 1 December 2020:** It was resolved to accept the minutes as a proper record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Service, seconded by Cllr Butler, and carried unanimously.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
 - a. **B4003 West Kennett Avenue:** the Chair reported that at its meeting on 10 December CATG had agreed to initiate public consultation on the proposal to paint double primrose lines on the edges of those sections of road previously unpainted and (presumably) where they are not so degraded as to make it impossible. He hoped this would lead to the work being undertaken during the course of 2021.
 - b. **WC Consultations:** the Chair reported that WC had upheld our request to retain the emergency payphone at the layby at West Kennett. BT had given him an undertaking that the telephone box had been put back on the list for repainting. He hoped this work would be complete before the start of the next

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consultation, which seems to be an annual exercise and would presumably start in about six months' time. Boxes under threat of removal may not be painted.

- c. **Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** Cllr Lewis said that there was no sign of action from WC about the off-beam bus shelter on the A361 following her use of MyWilts and so she would repeat her report.
 - d. **Replacement mirror for Beckhampton:** Cllr Lewis advised that she had recently taken delivery of a mirror and an unexpectedly long post. She would discuss with the landowner how best to install the mirror.
6. **National Trust Update:** Mrs Tomlin underlined three points made in her update (see italicised section below): (1) closure occasioned by the latest COVID-19 restrictions, (2) plans to reopen when so permitted, and (3) observances. The Chair thanked Mrs Tomlin for attending and providing the update.

Closure of NT facilities at Avebury

In line with Government guidance, the National Trust's policy is to keep the majority of its gardens, parks and countryside in England open for local people to enjoy fresh air and exercise during this difficult time. However, there is a recognition that individual properties are different, and that this guidance can't be safely and practically implemented at all places. After consultation with the community and our local and regional teams, we have concluded that it is not currently safe to keep open the NT facilities at Avebury. This is due to the particular challenge with the narrow footpath between the main visitor car park and the High Street, which doesn't allow for 2m social distancing along the route. Although we were able to operate the footpath under the Government's previous spacing guidance of 1m+, we're not able to use the path safely and compliantly under the current 2m restriction.

Re-opening

We will review the situation in line with changing Government and Trust guidelines and will re-open our facilities as soon as we can safely do so. We're currently exploring various options, including a one-way circular route using Kyter's Way. This is to ensure that we're prepared for the eventuality that social distancing guidelines remain at 2m for an extended period.

Offer in 2021

As we look towards the end of lockdown, we're preparing to be open before Easter and are planning a small-scale family Easter trail offer over the Easter holidays; however, like everything else, this is subject to further guidance. Once we're able to re-open, our offer will look different from previous years. We'll have a booking system in place for the Manor Gardens and hope to provide limited on-the-day walk-up tickets for access to the Stables Gallery of the Alexander Keiller Museum. Our Circles Restaurant is likely to re-open on a take-away basis to start with, and the NT

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shop and Cobblestones second-hand bookshop will revert to their previous operating model as soon as possible.

Observances

We do not currently have plans to offer camping provision over Observances this year, but we are constantly reviewing the situation and guidance. We'll provide updates at future meetings.

Thank You

Finally, throughout the pandemic and various periods of lockdown, the National Trust team has been - and continues to be - particularly well supported by both members of the Parish Council and the local community. Jan Tomlin extended a warm and sincere expression of thanks for the continued support, which is most warmly appreciated and very greatly valued.

7. Planning applications:

- a. **It was resolved** to accept the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 9 December as a proper record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Daniel, and carried unanimously.

- b. **Application to create a new access track for use by commercial vehicles servicing Galtee More farm (ref: 20/10929/FUL): consultation expires 09/02/2021.** The Chair invited Mr Hues to present the application. Mr Hues explained that the access track would allow family members and occasional tractors to access southern parts of the farm without disturbing the occupants of the new holiday let accommodation. Furthermore the courtyard through which there had previously been access would, require an alternative route to be found for the same reason. In answer to questions, Mr Hues said that the type of surfacing envisaged for the new access route would lie on top of the ground, following a model used on Salisbury Plain, and not be dug into it. Therefore it would not damage any hidden archaeology there might be. He also confirmed that HGVs would be unable to use the new access route and this meant that there should be no additional traffic of that type in the village itself. **It was resolved** to support the application. Proposed by Cllr Paradise, seconded by Cllr Lewis. The Chair thanked Mr Hues, who left the meeting.

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- c. **Application for a certificate of lawfulness of proposed works to a listed building for works to replace the oil boiler including a new flue through the timber cladding on the rear elevation of the extension [at West Kennett Farmhouse] (ref: 20/10367/CLPLB): consultation expires 12/02/2021.** The Chair said that he had had an email on Sunday from WC to say that there was no need for APC to discuss this application but that no harm would be done if it did so. **It was resolved** to support the application. Proposed by Cllr Service and seconded by Cllr Daniel.

8. Mobility:

- a. **CATG meeting 10 December:** The Chair reported that WC had been encouraged to start its statutory consultation on the proposal to reduce the speed limit to 50mph on the A4361 from Beckhampton to the 30mph section before Avebury and from the end of the 30mph section north from Avebury to a point beyond Daily Mail corner. The consultation process would cost £3,000. CATG agreed that, given that only £36 remained of its FY2020 budget, Avebury and Berwick Bassett & Winterbourne Monkton Parish Councils would share the cost between them, being reimbursed once CATG's budget had been refreshed for FY2021. Each parish council would be reimbursed £1,125, being £1,500 (half-share of £3,000) minus £375 (half-share of the 25% contribution parish councils are required to make for schemes approved by CATG). **It was resolved** to make a payment of £375 from our budget for this FY following the logic described above on receipt of an invoice from WC. Proposed by Cllr Daniel and seconded by Cllr Bedford. The Chair reported that implementation of the scheme, expected in or soon after Q2 2021, was estimated to cost in the region of £10,000. Avebury's half-share of the mandatory 25% contribution would be £1,250. Given the fact that the implementation cost was an estimate, **it was resolved** to add a line for £1,800 within the agreed FY2021 budget for transport projects. Proposed Cllr Daniel and seconded Cllr Bedford.
- b. **Petition for a 40mph limit on the A4361:** Cllr Daniel reported that there were over 200 signatures on the petition, which may be accessed at http://aveburyparishcouncil.org/?page_id=5782 . Cllr Byatt said that she had collected a further 50 from customers at Elements. It was agreed that this was

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a very good result. In further discussion, it was decided that Cllr Daniel and the Chair would prepare a submission to WC.

Cllr Daniel spoke to a note previously circulated giving prices for three types of Speed Indicator Device (SID). He reminded members that parishes on the road from Marlborough to Ramsbury had told him that their SIDs had been very effective in keeping vehicle speeds down. He said that most drivers were willing to keep to the limit but often needed a reminder and a SID provided it. Cllr Service asked whether it was necessary to have a SID or SIDs given that there would soon be a reduced speed limit; the feeling was that the one might complement the other. She also asked that the design of the SID was appropriate to its location in a WHS; it was agreed that this should be kept in mind. Cllr Davies encouraged the PC to consider making a request for funding support from MAB. It was agreed that APC should consider purchasing two SIDs, one to be installed on the A4361 southbound near the entrance to Rawlin's Park and the other eastbound near to the entrance of the Trust's main car park. It was noted that the SIDs would be located temporarily in those places, say for four months at a time. They could then either move to a different location in the parish within the 30mph zone or be loaned to adjacent parishes, at least one of which had expressed interest, perhaps for a modest fee. It was agreed that Cllr Daniel and the Chair should discuss with our local WH engineer, Martin Cook, and in due course prepare a submission to MAB, circulating it to members for approval as soon as possible. The Chair thanked Cllr Daniel for his hard work on the petition and the SIDs.

- c. **Traffic Survey (known previously as 'Metro Count')**: The Chair suggested that perhaps the best time for a Traffic Survey (carried out by an agent appointed by WH) would be once the new speed limit was in place. Together with the SIDs (which, depending on the type acquired, have a data-generating function), a Traffic Survey would produce useful evidence on vehicle types and speeds. Without evidence, there would be little or no chance of persuading WH of the need further to reduce the speed limit. It was agreed to defer further discussion of a Traffic Survey to a later date.

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9. Emergency Planning:

- a. **Wiltshire Communities Prepared & Together on-line meeting 25 November:** Cllr Lewis reported on outputs from this meeting. Following discussion, during which Mrs Tomlin offered the support of the Trust, it was agreed that Cllr Lewis would add to the existing list any items of kit that might be available from the Trust and local farmers in the event of an emergency.

10. Local Issues:

- a. **Bus shelter on the A4 at the Waggon and Horses:** The Chair reported that our former colleague, Dave Brotheridge, had repainted the outside of the bus shelter. He thanked Mr Brotheridge on behalf of the parish council for doing this.
- b. **Request for a hand rail on steps along public footpath leading directly off the A4 down to the village of Beckhampton:** Cllr Lewis said that she was continuing her enquiries with a view to discovering who owned the steps. So far she had learned that Wadworth's Brewery, Galtee More Farm, and WH were not the owners. It was agreed that APC was minded to provide the handrail requested but also that we need to know whose property the steps were before deciding whether we could use APC funds for the purpose.
- c. **Purchase and installation of replacement roadside mirror in Beckhampton:** the Chair had erroneously taken this item under 'matters arising' (see 5.d above).
- d. **'A two-step plan to manage sustainable access: the Ridgeway from Overton Hill to Hackpen Hill':** The Chair had circulated a paper under this title and later a summary of a submission he had received from the Farthing Partnership. He said that he was glad that the Partnership was willing to consider a gate on Green Street for a trial period. He commented that the Partnership had also raised important points of detail in respect of implementation. Cllr Paradise asked when the gate might be in place and the Chair replied that, whilst he would continue to press WC for action, he did not expect WC to regard the proposal or one like it as one needing to be prioritized.

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The Chair added that, having circulated a draft to members, he had written on 20 January by email and hard copy to Cllr Richard Clewer (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Heritage etc, WC) about the very poor condition of AVE14 and looked forward to his reply.

11. **Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** Members were asked to let the Chair know of items for this month's sheet.
12. **Communications:** the Chair reported that there had been one response to the advert for handypersons. Cllr Paradise offered to put the advert on Facebook and this was welcomed.
13. **Correspondence:** a list (a)-(g) was on the agenda for consideration.
14. **Finance and admin:**
 - a. **Half year internal audit:** it was noted that the internal audit booked for Thursday 3 December 2020 had been carried out.
 - b. **It was resolved** unanimously to approve the PC's updated guidelines on **press and media policy and complaints policy and procedures** subject to two small changes (replacing "deputy clerk" with "Chair or Vice-Chairs" and replacing "Vice-Chairman" with "Vice-Chairs"). The Chair undertook to make these changes.
 - c. **It was agreed** to hold over review of the following two statutory documents: terms of reference of the Planning and the Transport Committees.
 - d. **It was decided** to consider contributing to the funds of local and other charities at the next meeting.
 - e. **Cheques for payment and ratification: it was resolved** to ratify the following cheque. Proposed by Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Butler, and carried unanimously.
 - i. Miss E. Moore: £155.62

The Chair advised members that Liz Moore had asked to return to the pay and hours arrangements in force for her during lockdown last year. The current

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arrangements were identical apart from recalculations following the NALC pay award, which had come into effect in April 2020, and APC's contribution of 50% of the monthly cost of her telephone and WiFi, which showed a small reduction following Liz's successful renegotiation with BT.

15. Date of next meeting: 7:30pm on Tuesday 2 March 2021.

16. Any other business: there being none, the Chair expressed thanks to all for attending the meeting that night, and not least to our guests Cllr Davies and Mrs Tomlin.

The meeting closed at 21:07.