

Avebury Parish Council

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of Avebury Parish Council held online on Tuesday 5 May 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, BB & WM PC for Berwick Bassett and Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council, CATG for Community Area Transport Group, FB for Facebook, MAB for Marlborough Area Boards, MDNEP for Marlborough Downs 'Space for Nature' Nature Enhancement Partnership, NALC for National Association of Local Councils, NT for the National Trust, PC for Parish Council, RoW for Rights of Way, SWAST for South Western Ambulance Service Trust, WC for Wiltshire Council and WHS for World Heritage Site.

Present: Mr Stephen Stacey (Chair), Dr Mike Bedford (Vice-Chair: from item 6 onwards), Mr Ben Butler, Mrs Donna Byatt, Mr Mike Daniel, Mrs Maggie Lewis (Vice-Chair), Mr Terence O'Connor, and Mrs Lynzey Paradise.

Time Started: 19:40

1. **Public question time:** there were no members of the public present.
2. **Apologies:** Councillors Ms Zandria Service, Jane Davies (Wiltshire Council), Jan Tomlin (General Manager, National Trust Wiltshire Landscape), and Miss Liz Moore (Parish Clerk).
3. **Declarations of interest:** none was declared.
4. **Minutes of an extraordinary meeting held on 1 April 2020: it was resolved** to amend the minutes by noting that Cllr O'Connor had declared an interest in respect of an application for work to trees (20/01882/TCA) (his declaration having been noted in the minutes of the planning committee, which formed part of the minutes of the extraordinary meeting) and to accept the minutes as amended as an accurate record of the extraordinary meeting. Proposed by Cllr Byatt, seconded by Cllr Paradise and carried unanimously.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes:** there were no matters arising from the minutes that were not already part of the current agenda.
6. **Planning applications:** there was none.
7. **Update from the National Trust:** the Chairman reported that Jan Tomlin had hoped to attend the meeting in place of Catherine Hosie but was prevented from participating by a National Trust requirement not to use Skype. Mrs Tomlin had submitted the following update, which the Chairman read out:

In response to Coronavirus, the National Trust Wiltshire Landscape team started to lock-down on Wednesday 18 March 2020, when all our 400+

volunteers across the entire Portfolio were stood-down, and all visitor elements of our offer at Avebury were closed. Shortly afterwards, on Monday 23 March, we locked the main visitor car park.

Across the National Trust, some 80% of staff are now on furlough leave. Looking at my team, the majority were put onto furlough leave in April, leaving a core staff to complete essential compliance and security tasks. We continue to maintain a presence at Avebury, and across our wider countryside sites, including the Stonehenge Landscape.

Due to concerns for the safety of the Parish, my team and potential visitors, we took the decision not to offer camping or any other facilities over the Beltane/May Day weekend. The local team maintained a presence over the weekend, which was remarkably quiet.

Looking further ahead, we are in discussion with the Police, Wiltshire and Parish Councils, and the Emergency Services regarding Solstice arrangements. We're working closely with all concerned to agree how best to approach this time for the safety of all. I hope to be able to share a more detailed update in the next week or so, and will be involving Avebury Parish Council and other partners in all decision making.

8. Project Updates:

a. Transport Group:

- i. **A4 Traffic Calming Project:** Cllr Bedford reported that he would be in touch with Steve Hind (WC Highways) about Atkins' safety audit report, a copy of which had been expected in time for the council's May meeting. It was agreed that the council should lobby for implementation of the completed report as soon as funds seemed likely to become available.
- ii. **CATG meeting Thursday 12 March 2020:** the Chairman reported that Avebury and Winterbourne Monkton PC representatives had lobbied to accept and implement Atkins' A4361 speed assessment report but Broad Hinton PC had opposed it. CATG had not been able to resolve this difference of opinion and no decision had been taken. The Chairman said that he would try again at the next CATG meeting (18 June).

- b. **Solstice:** Members expressed concern about celebration of the summer solstice, especially given social gathering and other guidance during the lock down, and reported reactions from residents. The Chairman said that he understood that English Heritage was expected to announce next week that Stonehenge would be closed during solstice. He anticipated that the National Trust would adopt a

similar approach for Avebury. He noted that events at Stonehenge, being a closed access site, were easier to manage than at open access Avebury. Thus a key factor for Avebury would be the willingness of the police to maintain a visible presence in anticipation of solstice weekend and throughout it. Cllr Lewis would be attending a multi-stakeholder meeting chaired by the police on 11 May to consider and agree arrangements for managing events over solstice weekend. Following discussion, it was agreed to ask Cllr Lewis to express the council's firm view that large numbers of visitors during the solstice could pose public order and public health concerns and to ask the police and Wiltshire Council to take appropriate steps to mitigate the risk.

- c. **Play area refurbishment:** Cllr Paradise reported that it had not been possible to make further progress due to the lock down.
- d. **5 G and Fibre broadband:** Cllr O'Connor reported that it had not been possible to make further progress due to the lock down.

9. **Local Issues:**

- a. **Pumping station:** Cllr Lewis agreed to raise issues with Thames Water.
- b. **Re-painting of 'phone box at West Kennett:** the Chairman committed to ask BT about its plans, which are thought to be part of the company's 2020 painting and repair schedule, noting that work is usually carried out between the months of April and September, i.e. now.

10. **Avebury Annual Parish Meeting:** It was agreed that, lock down permitting, a Saturday evening from 19h in September or October in the Sports and Social Club would be the best time and venue.

11. **Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** Members asked for strimming on footpaths in the parish especially on Kyte's Walk and the footpath to the bus stop outside Rawlins' Park. Cllr Butler suggested that the National Trust, as the relevant riparian owner, might be asked to attend to the tree immediately north of Big Arch Bridge, one limb of which has fallen into the river and is partly blocking the flow of water.

12. **Communications:** the Chairman reported that PC Headlines had been submitted to UKN as usual.

13. **Items of correspondence:** the Chairman reported that he had not received an item of correspondence.

14. **Finance and admin:**

- a. **It was agreed** to accept Zurich Municipal's proposal and to renew the council's insurance policy with that company for three years from the due date (1 June 2020) at the discounted rate of £358.55/year.

- b. The Chairman reported on arrangements for paying the Clerk during the lock down. It was agreed that these arrangements were acceptable. The Chairman undertook to write to members setting out the detail.
- c. **Cheques for payment: it was resolved** to pay the following cheques, proposed Cllr Lewis and seconded Cllr O'Connor.
 - i. Zurich Municipal (see 14.a) £358.55
 - ii. Miss E. Moore: Clerk's overtime + expenses 22 February - 21 March 2020 inclusive £200.65
 - iii. Miss E. Moore: Clerk's overtime and expenses 22 March – 30 April 2020 inclusive £165.00

15. **Date of next meeting:** 7:30pm on Tuesday 2 June 2020.

16. **Any other business:** there was none.

The meeting closed at: 20:39