

AVEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of Avebury Parish Council held online on Tuesday 6 October 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, CAA for Civil Aviation Authority, CATG for Community Area Transport Group, FB for Facebook, ICO for Information Commissioner's Office, MAB for Marlborough Area Boards, MTC for Marlborough Town Council, NALC for National Association of Local Councils, NT for the National Trust, PC for Parish Council, RoW for Rights of Way, 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 (attended all items except item 6), Mr Terence O'Connor, Mrs Lynzey Paradise; and by invitation Jane Davies (Wiltshire Councillor).

In attendance: Miss Liz Moore (Clerk).

Time started: 19:30

1. **Public question time:** no members of the public were present; Jane Davies attended up to and including item 18e. The Chairman thanked Jane for attending the meeting that night.
2. **Apologies:** Ms Zandria Service.
3. **Declarations of interest:** Mr Mike Daniel declared an interest in respect of item 6 as the applicant of the planning application.
4. **Minutes of an ordinary meeting held on 1 September 2020: It was resolved** to accept the minutes as a proper record. Proposed by Cllr Stacey, seconded by Cllr Byatt, and carried unanimously.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes:** there were none.
6. **Planning applications:** Outline Planning Application for 32' x16' Swimming pool at Dorwyn, Swindon Road, Avebury, SN8 1RH. Ref: 20/05660/OUT. **It was resolved** to support the application on condition that **1.** There should be an archaeological watching brief throughout the excavation **2.** There would be no further associated applications for e.g. changing facilities, but noted that any associated applications would have to be judged on their merits if and when they were made. Proposed by Cllr Byatt, seconded by Cllr Paradise and agreed. N.B. Cllr Daniel had removed himself from the meeting for item 6 only.
7. **Transport Group: CATG meeting 17 September 2020:** Cllr Lewis reported that:
 - a. **Safety measures on A4361 at Avebury Trusloe:** (see appendix 1 for CATG meeting notes dated 17 September 2020). Several Parish Councils expressed

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dissatisfaction with the results of the speed limit survey and that she had pressed for a 40 mph limit as suggested in Atkins' 2015 transport strategy. The cost of implementing the survey was reported to be about £13k and according to Steve Hind this was too high for the current financial year.

The Chairman asked Jane Davies for her feedback. Jane explained that further to the CATG meeting, she had met Cllr Bridget Wayman (Cabinet Member for **Highways**, Transport and Waste) and agreed road safety markings for those PCs that had requested them. She understood that WC would be providing further funding for CATG projects for the current financial year. **Action:** Jane said that she would work with Steve Hind to ensure that Atkins' 2015 proposal giving the option of reducing the 60mph limit to 40mph on the A4361 between Beckhampton and Avebury was taken into proper consideration.

- b. **Repairs to B4003 West Kennett Avenue:** Martin Cook had advised that repairs to the verge using the stipulated sandbags would take a lot of resources but had agreed that refreshing the yellow lining could be implemented before the layby construction. The PC's project had dropped to first reserve as priority had to be given to MTC requests for increasing the length of the speed limit along Frees Avenue and formal crossings in Kingsbury Street.

Jane Davies stated that filling sandbags with chalk was an impractical task and she felt strongly that the process for reconstructing the layby needed revisiting in an attempt to find a pragmatic solution.

The Chairman reported that he had emailed Jamie Mundy (Senior Engineer, Traffic and Network Management) to request occasional enforcement of the status quo on the B4300, and that Jamie had agreed to raise this with colleagues in Parking Services to see if they could make ad-hoc visits en-route to Marlborough.

Jane Davies reported on the results of the Road Safety Survey carried out by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon. She said that 876 people from Wiltshire had taken part, less than 40% said they felt safe on the roads, 62% witnessed daily accidents, and 82% wanted to see greater enforcement. Click here to access the survey results:

<https://www.facebook.com/WiltshireandSwindonPCC/photos/a.376070872465767/4547421098664036/?type=3>

The Chairman invited questions from members and thanked Cllr Lewis for attending CATG and the traffic safety meeting with Danny Kruger (Conservative MP for Devizes) reported (with photograph) in the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald in September.

8. **Project Updates: superfast fibre broadband:** Cllr O'Connor reported that he had been informed by Kieran Gallagher at BT Openreach that only Bray Street was included in the initial plans for fibre. He understood that the decision was dictated by the local authority i.e. Wiltshire Council with no differentiation between home and business users and based on the current available download speeds for the whole Parish. Roll-out to the whole Parish was dependent on available funding. He noted that the World Economic

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Forum had released data on each country and ordered them according to digital preparedness, and that this was an essential move to help future-proof broadband for everyone. **Action:** Cllr O'Connor said that he had a meeting booked the following week to speak with Wiltshire On-line (Wiltshire Council Broadband). He was also hoping to attend a round table summit organized by Danny Kruger (Conservative MP for Devizes). This was being organized for villages or towns wanting to discuss broadband and to enable Danny Kruger to go to Openreach and WC with a proper map of local needs. The Chairman suggested getting local businesses involved in the round table as they also had an interest in getting higher broadband speeds. In further discussion it was noted that live streams and download speeds varied considerably across the Parish and that BT was prioritizing door-to-door fibre for residents and not businesses. The criterion for BT connecting Bray Street first was due to the low cost as there was already a green junction box in situ, also helped by the fact that BT had found Cllr Butler's additional ducting.

9. **WC Consultations:** options for BT 'phone box in West Kennett and feedback from residents in West Kennett and the wider community: the Chairman reported that at least four responses had been sent to WC by members of the public requesting for the 'phone kiosk to be kept as it was. **It was resolved** to object to the removal of the kiosk and send the following feedback to Mary Moore (Development Officer, Regeneration Economic Development and Planning): 'At its meeting on 6 October, Avebury Parish Council decided to object very strongly to the proposed removal of the payphone in the telephone box at West Kennett layby. The payphone is sited in an area where there is no mobile phone coverage and close to three junctions on the A4 on which vehicles travel at very high speed. This is known locally as an accident black-spot with a long history of near misses and crashes. The absence of mobile phone coverage means that emergency and breakdown services cannot be summoned except by using fixed lines. Residents living nearby have said that they want this payphone to be kept for that purpose. So does the Parish Council. The payphone will never generate revenue for as long as only emergency calls can be made from it'.

Proposed by Mrs Lewis, seconded by Mr Butler and carried unanimously.

10. Local Issues:

- a. **Low flying aircraft:** Cllr Daniel reported that he'd had a constructive conversation with a resident in Rawlins Park about light aircraft flying too low and the noise associated with that and, supported the resident's view. Cllr Paradise offered to check with the Civil Aviation Authority.
- b. **Excessive motorcycle noise on the A4361:** Additionally, Cllr Daniel stated that his informant was unhappy about motorcycle noise, which was reported to be especially loud early in the morning. Cllr Lewis said that vehicle noise on the A4 and A361 was also at its worst between 5 and 6 a.m. Cllr Bedford explained that the police didn't have the kit to check illegal silencers and suggested that a petition sent to WC might be a way forward. Jane Davies

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confirmed that a minimum number of signatures were required before the petition could go to a Full Council meeting. **It was agreed** that Cllr Bedford and Cllr Daniel would start a petition and that Jane would forward to them the petitions link from the WC website.

- c. **Drones:** In discussion it was noted that drones were on the increase, they were allowed only in open space, and operators needed a licence to fly them. Several members reported problems with drones trespassing over their property. Cllr Paradise said that she would seek clarification from the CAA as it was not clear whether drones were allowed to fly over the Henge. It was thought that strict controls were in place because a member had witnessed a steward at Stonehenge asking operators to put drone equipment away. The Chairman said that he would raise the issue with the NT.
- d. **Safety at Rawlins Park turn-out onto A4361:** Cllr Daniel asked whether it would be possible for the bottom part of the WC wooden bus shelter to be removed and replaced with Perspex. It was noted that the bus shelter was owned by WC and budget dependent.
- e. **Re-painting of bus shelter at Beckhampton:** it was agreed that Cllr Stacey and Cllr Lewis would re-paint the bus shelter in Cornish cream when weather permits.
- f. **Replacement planters for the High Street:** in discussion members noted that because the proposed new planters were longer than the existing square ones, it might not be necessary to order nine and measurements needed to be checked. However it had been noticed that motorbikes and even a Smart car had parked in between the existing planters, and therefore nine might still be needed. Cllr Paradise and the Clerk would think about the best way to remove the planters as some were on the point of collapse. It was noted that the planters would be made to order one at a time, and therefore installation could be carried out gradually. The Clerk reported that she now had a list of all the people who currently looked after each planter, courtesy of Andrew Williamson. She said that Wiltshire Highways had not been able to confirm that permission had been granted for the planters to be installed in the first place and accordingly she had recently completed the paperwork regularizing the status quo. The Chairman undertook to measure the length of road currently covered by the planters, which he said ought not to be exceeded by their replacements.
- g. **New rubbish bins for the High Street:** the Chairman reported that he had not yet received quotations for two litter bins. The proposed location was to put one bin alongside the existing black bin in the NT High Street car park and the other in the line of planters, more or less opposite the footpath to the main NT car park. He explained that WC's contractor Idverde was prepared to empty the extra bins at the same time as the one in the High Street car park

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and that Elements, the Henge Shop, the community shop, and the National Trust had kindly agreed to meet cost of one bin. **It was resolved** to purchase two new black bins in the same style as the existing ones to be funded by the PC <£200 with in due course the above-mentioned contributions using section 137 budgeted funds [the PC has the power to purchase bins under the Litter Act, 1983, ss. 5, 6]. Proposed by Cllr Stacey, seconded by Cllr Paradise and carried unanimously.

11. **Parish Council e-Newsletter:** the Clerk reported that she had attended an excellent online presentation by Daniel Purchase of Breakthrough Communications, a company promoted through WALC which was an expert in its field. She outlined the benefits of an e-newsletter as follows: **1.** Easy and effective way to keep residents updated and seek feedback **2.** Councils were finding that they were getting 70-90% open rates because residents wanted to hear from them, whereas the open rate for businesses was far lower at less than 20% **3.** The newsletter could be printed and also put on Parish noticeboards. **Action:** members felt that a further conversation with the company was needed before committing to a purchase, and requested that the Clerk set up an on-line meeting at 7:30pm on a Wednesday or Thursday.
12. **Play Area Inspection Report:** not received, deferred to next meeting agenda.
13. **Solstice Planning:** the Chairman announced that a site meeting with Cllr Richard Clewer (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities), including members of his team, had been arranged for 23 October at the invitation of the NT to discuss the challenges of Summer Solstice in particular and Wiltshire's support for the site in general. The Chairman would attend the meeting and would report back on the outcome. It was noted that there had been no information about meeting dates for ASSF. The Chairman agreed to raise this with Jan and Eva at their next meeting. Cllr Paradise raised on-going concerns for residents about vans parking on the Ridgeway. She said that she had received feedback that the travellers think that no one minds them camping on the Ridgeway. The Chairman said that the gate to the Ridgeway would be shut after 31 October and vehicles would not legally be able to access it. The Clerk suggested that stakeholders could work together on a guidance leaflet for all users of the byway. See the Countryside Code leaflet for information on respecting the countryside.
14. **Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** the Chairman reported that footpath strimming had been completed by the Parish Steward along Kytters Walk, and the footpath running adjacent to 1 Trusloe Cottages. The Parish Steward was due to visit Avebury on the 14 October and any requests for work should be emailed to the Clerk. [Cllr Paradise had previously requested strimming of nettles on the footpath at Big Arch and this would be added to the list]. Complaints had also been received about vegetation and hedges encroaching footpaths outside the Henge Shop and en route to the main NT car park. This was a serious issue as it was causing mothers with prams to walk into the road and it was difficult for anyone to navigate the footpaths without brushing against wet

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vegetation. The relevant parties would be informed of the problem and asked to trim back overgrowth.

15. **Communications:** the Chairman confirmed that headlines had been submitted to UKN.

16. **Correspondence:** the Chair and the Clerk reported:

- a. Several complaints had been received from members of the public about **abandoned vehicles** near the Play Area and on the highway in Avebury Trusloe. A couple of vans owned by a local plumbing company had been left in the area for 7-8 weeks. The WC Enforcement Officer had been notified on 25 September using the new reporting system. **Action:** Clerk to follow up the case.
- b. It had been reported that a **rough sleeper** appeared to have been using the WC bus shelter on the A4361 near Rawlins Park. The rough sleeper team at WC had been informed. They asked that anyone spotting someone sleeping rough reports it via Street Link so that the Outreach Team can engage with the rough sleeper as quickly as possible. <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/>
- c. **Community First AGM** – Wednesday 14 October 2020 (previously circulated).
- d. **Prospect Hospice** based in Wroughton had been impacted heavily by Covid-19. The charity had emailed to ask if they could bring one of their Prospect Hospice vans to Avebury and run a mobile donation station drop-in event one morning. Cllr Lewis strongly supported the idea, and the small NT car park in the High Street was suggested as a convenient location. The Chairman explained that it was NT national policy not to allow another charity raise to fundraise on its premises. Cllr Paradise suggested that she could ask the ASSC whether they could offer assistance. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Paradise.

17. **National Trust Update:** (previously circulated to members and see appendix 2). The Chairman summarized the key points from the update as follows:

- Reset programme proposals had closed and redundancies would be announced that week.
- There had already been some re-opening of NT facilities.
- Future re-openings were detailed in the update.
- There was currently a small group of volunteers working in the Manor Garden.
- A Conservation Area planning application had been submitted to WC for tree works in 10 locations across Avebury.
- A separate Conservation Area application was being submitted that week for tree works at West Kennett.

18. **Finance and admin:**

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- a. **Parish Precept:** the Clerk reported that the second half of the Parish Precept for £6,893.50 had been received from WC on 23 September 2020.
 - b. **VAT:** the Clerk reported that a VAT rebate of £425.91 had been received from HMRC.
 - c. **Review of Asset Register:** (document previously circulated to members and see appendix 3). **It was resolved** to receive and adopt the updated Asset Register. Proposed by Cllr Stacey, seconded by Cllr Lewis and carried unanimously.
 - d. **Review of Financial Risks:** (document previously circulated to members and see appendix 4). **It was resolved** to receive and adopt the updated Financial Risk Assessment. Proposed by Cllr Bedford, seconded by Cllr Paradise and carried unanimously.
 - e. **Website Accessibility:** Cllr Paradise reported that the PC website had a 94% pass rate for accessibility and that the Accessibility Statement had been uploaded to the PC website.
 - f. **Cheques for payment and ratification: it was resolved** to ratify the following cheques that had been raised in between meetings: Proposed by Cllr Paradise, seconded by Cllr Lewis, and carried unanimously.
 - i. Miss E. Moore: September invoice including expenses £261.89
 - ii. Miss E. Moore: difference in the standing order payment not yet adjusted (for the period April – September 2020 inclusive). £50.64
 - iii. ASSC: grant (agreed at Full Council meeting 1 September) £1,000.00
 - g. **It was resolved** that the Clerk set up an annual direct debit payment of £35 to the ICO for data protection registration as there was a saving of £5 per year for doing so. Proposed by Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Paradise and carried unanimously.
19. **Date of next meeting:** 7:30pm on Tuesday 3 November 2020.
20. **Any other business:** Cllr Byatt reminded members that the 'go live' proposal from the Clerk needed discussion. Members would talk more about the pros and cons of recording PC meetings at their next meeting.

The meeting closed at 21:37.

Appendices:

1. CATG Meeting Notes – 17 September 2020
2. National Trust Update – October 2020

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3. Asset Register dated 29 September 2020
4. Financial Risk Assessment dated 29 September 2020