

AVEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Draft: minutes of an ordinary meeting of Avebury Parish Council held online on Tuesday 6 April 2021.

In these minutes AGM stands for Annual General Meeting, 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), Mrs Donna Byatt, Mr Mike Daniel, Mr Terence O'Connor, Mrs Lynzey Paradise and Ms Zandria Service.

In attendance: Miss Liz Moore (Clerk); for part of the meeting.

Time started: 19:35

1. **Public question time:** two members of the public were present as guests: Jan Tomlin (General Manager, Wiltshire Landscape); up to and including item 7 and Jane Davies (Wiltshire Councillor); from item 9iii onwards.
2. **Apologies:** Councillor Ben Butler.
3. **Declarations of interest:** there were none.
4. **Minutes of an ordinary meeting held on 2 March 2021:** the following three corrections were requested: (i) item 9 to replace 'Mr Hues' with 'Mr Seccombe' (ii) item 8 to change references to Friday 12 April to Monday 12 April and Saturday 17 May to Monday 17 May (iii) item 14.a.i. to specify that the payment to the Clerk is for lockdown pay and expenses for February 2021.

Proposed by Cllr Service, seconded by Cllr Byatt and carried unanimously.

It was resolved that the corrected minutes be accepted as a proper record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Paradise, seconded by Cllr Lewis, and carried unanimously.

5. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
 - a. **Min ref. 7. Local Issues - second paragraph:** the Chairman confirmed that WC had formally proposed an experimental order to prohibit vehicles driving on the Ridgeway from a point close to Overton Hill car park to a point near Hackpen Hill for no more than 18 months from 1 May onwards (and, during that time, to consider whether to introduce a permanent order). See appendix 1 for a copy of the notice. He said that in his opinion unenforced closure was unlikely to be effective over Solstice in particular and that the PC would need to continue to work closely with the National Trust, WC, and the Police. He reported that Jayne

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Drew (Chair), Kennet Valley PC, and local landowner Gill Swanson had written to the Police and Crime Commissioner on 23 March to request more vigorous policing of the Ridgeway [letter previously circulated to members] and a response was awaited.

- b. **Min ref. 10a. High Street Planters:** thanks were expressed to the Paradise family for their excellent work in replacing the planters with a new design, installing them so quickly, and planting them up using the existing shrubs and plants. Cllr Paradise confirmed that each planter had a designated member of the community or family to look after them. It was noted that two of the original planters were still in reasonable condition and would be temporarily stored until the PC decided what to do with them.
 - c. **Min ref. 13. Correspondence:** the Chairman reported that the Parish Steward was not allowed to fill potholes on the right of way leading up to Tan Hill and he had been advised by him to contact Stephen Leonard (Countryside Access Officer, WC), who might have some planings to offer.
6. **National Trust Update:** Jan Tomlin (General Manager, Wiltshire Landscape) reported on the NT's work (see appendix 2). Jan reminded members that access to the Manor Gardens was free of charge to all Avebury residents. She said that she welcomed feedback from the community on the NT's Easter arrangements. It was noted that there would be no camping or special arrangements for Beltane (1-2 May). However NT staff would be on site. The NT was planning to have at least the usual security presence over Solstice. Jan Tomlin invited questions from the PC.
 - Members observed that Easter had been busy. Thanks were expressed to the NT for the smooth running of the Easter trail. It was noted that the NT's overflow car park had been additionally utilised for garden ticket holders in order to ease parking.
 - Cllr Byatt reported that she had picked up a lot of rubbish in the road after the weekend.
 - Jan Tomlin confirmed that the main tarmacadam footpath to the NT car park was back in use. Dropping the two metre separation rule to one metre made this possible.
 - The wood chippings that the NT had put along Kyter's Walk received positive feedback from members.

The Chairman thanked Jan Tomlin for her helpful update.

7. **Arrangements for Solstice:** in discussion members felt that it would be unrealistic to assume that Solstice would be quiet and it was noted that this view had been shared by the community on social media (WhatsApp). Cllr O'Connor pointed out that ticket selling for UK-wide festivals was well under way with some event organizers putting in place Covid passports and other restrictions; and therefore the PC ought to consider how that might affect the number of people planning to visit Avebury and the surrounding area.

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Members of the PC with B&Bs confirmed that they had already received high levels of enquiries for accommodation. Cllr Paradise stressed the need to ensure that the Police and WC were ready to deal with gatherings before they happened. Government guidelines for social distancing at Solstice was still an unknown and Covid marshals along with security would need to be mindful of the health and emotional aspect as many people had been locked down for a long period of time. In further discussion, **it was agreed** that Cllr Service would put together a short draft document outlining the PC's wishes for management of Solstice. The document would be circulated to members for comment and then approval at next meeting. The PC also agreed the need to advertise the car parking permit scheme by writing to residents and putting information in UKN and on Facebook. The Chairman said that our local postman had offered to help distribute permits and members were keen to take up his kind offer. Members stressed the importance of all partners working together to ensure a good outcome for all. The Chairman and Jan Tomlin confirmed that they would be talking further on the management of Solstice outside the present meeting.

Thanks were expressed to Jan Tomlin, who had to leave for another call.

8. **Planning applications:** Cllr Byatt said that she preferred to withdraw her planning application for work to a tree at Elements so that it could be resubmitted at a later date.

9. **Project updates:**

a. **Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) for A4361:**

- i. Cllr Daniel said that the post for the mobile SID would be inserted into permanent sockets in the verge at the two points at which it had been decided to install it. This would make it easier to move. Cllr Daniel reported that other Parishes had expressed interest in using the SID and that the NT, Anne Carney (WHS CU) and Martin Cook (Area Highway Engineer, WC) fully supported the project as long as the signs were temporary. The recommended supplier was Westcotec because their product offered the functionality of being able to download data from the SID.
- ii. Cllr Lewis added that the Beckhampton Stables had expressed concern about the risk to slow moving vehicles entering and exiting Nash Lane given the speed of traffic on the A4361. In discussion it was agreed that the PC consider asking WC to put up a 'caution slow moving vehicle' sign or similar on the verge, which would have to be done through CATG. Cllr Bedford reminded members that Atkins had mentioned a 40 mph limit as an option for that part of road (see the 2015 Avebury Transport Strategy at section 1.3).

Turning to the petition for lower speed limits, Cllr Daniel was pleased to report that 212 online signatures had been received and 50 physical

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signatures and this was a good result considering the petition had been running over lockdown. The Chairman said that he would discuss further with Cllr Daniel and ensure that the petition was submitted to Wiltshire Council as soon as possible.

Cllr Jane Davies joined the meeting.

- iii. **It was resolved** in principle to accept the terms and conditions for receipt of MAB funding as the document had not been viewed by members prior to the meeting that night.
- iv. **It was resolved** to part-fund the purchase of one SID from Westcotec for not more than £2,000 from parish funds to which would be added the community grant of £1,882.50 awarded by MAB. The resolutions contained in item 9a.iii-iv were unanimously agreed.

Cllr Davies was thanked for her strong support for the MAB application. She said that APC's offer to make the SID available to other parishes was particularly welcome. She said also that WC had set aside £600,000 for households struggling to pay their Council tax bills due to the pandemic, and asked APC to publicise the fact.

10. Local Issues:

- a. Cllr Lewis reported that the pads on the **defibrillator in the 'phone box** had shown up as too cold. It had been checked and the wiring was in order but the pads might not work as well if they were too cold. Julia Doel of South Western Ambulance Service had advised that the PC should replace the cabinet. It was unanimously agreed that a replacement cabinet be ordered from the supplier; subject to checking its physical dimensions to ensure that the new cabinet, which is a different type, actually fits the space.
- b. **New road mirror in Beckhampton:** the mirror and pole would be installed in due course subject to the metal pole being cut down to the right length.
- c. **Refurbishment of BT 'phone box in West Kennett:** the Clerk had written again to the Team at BT. They had confirmed that the 'phone box was on the contractor's list to be painted that spring / summer but as before were unable to provide a specific date for the work.
- d. **Ownership of concrete steps opposite the Waggon & Horses PH:** Cllr Lewis stated that she was still investigating ownership as a search of the Land Registry had drawn a blank. She had subsequently contacted Savilles, who had advised that the steps were owned by the Crown and thus the PC should ask them as agent for the Crown for the necessary permission to install a handrail. Cllr Lewis said that she would continue making enquiries, if possible seek two further quotations, and report back at the next meeting.

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- e. **Repair to AVE14:** the Chairman said that he had no further update but would continue pushing WC for a strategy to effect repairs to AVE14.
 - f. **Combined Parishes Meeting on RoW (25 March):** the Chairman reported that an excellent survey of RoW and signage condition within the parish had been carried out and thanks were expressed to Tim Lewis for his meticulous work. The next step was to bring together reports from adjoining parishes into an area-wide document, for which the due date was the end of May, and to develop a PR strategy to publicise the outcome and stimulate the remedial actions urgently required.
 - g. **Superfast fibre broadband:** Cllr O'Connor reported that he was continuing to work on the project and was planning to set up a meeting with Danny Kruger MP.
11. **Parish Steward Priority Sheet:** various works had been completed including filling of potholes. Cllr Byatt asked about a decrepit post supporting a sign on the A4361 north of the village and Cllr Davies responded that it should be reported via WC's on-line system.
12. **Communications:** the Chairman reported that headlines had been submitted to UKN for the March 2021 edition.
13. **Correspondence:** covered under item 5a.
14. **Finance and admin:**
- a. **AGM:** the Clerk advised that the previous council stands down on 10 May (4 days after polling day) and the new council takes office on the same day. She stated that the AGM must be held within 14 days of the new council taking office and the first business of the meeting is the appointment of Chairman. **It was agreed** to set the date for the AGM for 7:30pm on Tuesday 18 May 2021; subject to checking that the Social Centre was available.
 - b. **It was resolved** to subscribe to Friends of the Ridgeway for £15 per year. Proposed by Cllr Byatt, seconded by Cllr Service and carried unanimously.
 - c. **Cheques for payment and ratification:** the Chairman reported that several cheques had been raised between meetings for previously agreed work and would be circulated for ratification at the next meeting as he did not have the list to hand and the Clerk had temporarily left the meeting due to a technical issue with her PC. For transparency, the following cheques were raised:
 - i. Wiltshire Council: CATG contribution to design work on A4 at Beckhampton and West Kennett (PC's agreed contribution) £4,694
 - ii. Wiltshire Council: CATG contribution to design work on A4 at Beckhampton and West Kennett (includes donation pledged by the community + PC's additionally agreed contribution of £712) £4,694

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- iii. WALC: Annual Subscription 2021/22 to WALC and NALC (includes VAT) £195.47
- iv. Mrs M. Lewis: re-imburement for purchase of mirror and pole from Barriers Direct (includes VAT) £370.43
- v. Miss E. Moore: lock down pay and expenses for March 2021 £155.52

15. **Date of next meeting:** 7:30pm on Tuesday 4 May 2021 via MS Teams.

16. **Any other business:** it was noted that members were in the process of filling in their applications to stand as a candidate for APC in the forthcoming elections on 6 May 2021.

The meeting closed at 21:12

Appendices:

1. Copy of WC Highways Order
2. National Trust Update – April 2021 (not seen by the meeting but added subsequently)