

AYNHO PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 5th November 2007 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Chairman - Keith McClellan
Councillors – Anderson, Bellamy, Bradford, Brook, James, Macklin, Oakey and Phillips.

In Attendance: Steve Jones (RFO) and Peter Cole (Clerk).

1 Apologies for Absence

None.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1st October 2007

It was proposed by Cllr. Bradford, seconded by Cllr. James and agreed that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1st October 2007 should be approved and signed, subject to the following amendment: -
Page 4, item 10, line 3: insert "from his local allowance" after "support".

4 Matters Arising not on the Agenda

Regarding the problem of ensuring that the Village Hall rent every five years is not missed, the Clerk has prepared a note for his Clerk's Folder, which lists this and all the other items which come up either annually or at longer intervals to remind him and any subsequent clerks.

He has spoken about the Home Guard hut to David Belcher, who has asked us to remove the graffiti.

5 Revision of Categorisation of Budgetary Items (including the ASRA financial situation)

Cllr. Brook said that he and Cllr. James had visited the RFO to find out how the Council's financial system works, and to get a better feel of how the budget operates. Their opinion (and that of the RFO) was that the present spreadsheet is very outdated, and does not have the flexibility to provide all the information which is needed. Steve Jones has contacted our auditor, who suggested a program which has been designed for town and parish councils. He will be having a short on-line demonstration later this week. This can be hosted on-line, with automatic daily back-up, which would cost approximately £150 per year, with a compulsory initial training course at £195. There was some discussion as to whether an off-the-shelf commercial package would be cheaper and easier. It was decided to leave it until after the demonstration.

Cllr. Brook was concerned about the "reserve " which seems to be maintained from year to year, It was confirmed that this is included as a contingency in case there is some unplanned expenditure occurring at the end of a financial year, or in the following year, but before the first instalment of the precept is received.

Regarding ASRA, the Clerk had produced figures showing what the Council had so far paid for the pavilion work over the last two financial years, and what grant we had received towards the work. He pointed out that there was a difference between the original Cheney quote and the final bill, since Cheney had said at the outset that there might well be additional work, depending on what they found when they took out the original showers, and he had agreed to this when he accepted the estimate and asked them to do the work. He also said that ASRA had paid a bill on behalf of the Council for immediate remedial electric work, which we would normally have paid, but Kay Anderson had told him that she had tried to obtain more than one quote, without any success, as most local electricians were away engaged in helping flood victims in Oxford and Gloucestershire at that time. The one she found had one small window the next week, when he could do the job. The Clerk had realised that he did not have sufficient time to legally convene a special meeting before then to seek Council's authority to get this urgent work done, let alone get any more quotes than she could, so he had taken it upon himself to consult the Chairman and authorise Kay to get it done and pay for it. This bill had amounted to £1599.46.

Cllr. Anderson said that there were three issues so far as ASRA is concerned. Firstly the relationship between the Parish Council and ASRA, secondly the one-off strategic things such as the recent work, and thirdly the on-going monthly expenses, such as electricity, water rates and the most expensive, which was grass-cutting, most of which had this year been paid by the Council. Historically the ASRA accounts had been kept separate from the Council's, since at one time it had been hoped that by obtaining charitable status ASRA could qualify for certain grants. There is £6,456 in the accounts, part of which can be used towards the recent pavilion work. The Sports Field receives income from two football teams, other ad hoc bookings of the pavilion, and the Park Club draw, whereby village residents pay £12 per year, with a chance to receive a monthly cash prize. This raises about £800 per year. Cllr. Anderson suggested that in future perhaps ASRA's income should fund the normal outgoings up to a certain level, and any excess should be funded by the Council. It was noted that the ASRA accounts have never been audited, although apparently arrangements had at one time been made for this to be done. Over the years ASRA has built up funds due to fund-raising activities, but these are now running down year by year.

Cllr. Macklin asked if the field and pavilion came under the Council's insurance. The Clerk confirmed that this was so, although the insurance company had not yet been advised of the recent work, as we had only just paid the bill. It was suggested that Kay should meet the RFO to sort out details of the regular ASRA income and expenditure, so that they could eventually make a monthly contribution to Council finances. Cllr. Macklin said that Kay should be given a vote of thanks for all the finance, booking and cleaning work that she does voluntarily for ASRA. This was agreed unanimously.

6 Finance (including the Budget and Precept)

The RFO reported that the bank balances at 31st October 2007 totalled £8,058.44.

The second half of the grant from S.N.C. for the pavilion work (£1,149) has been received.

It was proposed by Cllr. Anderson, seconded by Cllr. Phillips and agreed that the following cheques totalling £601.68 be authorised for payment: -

Cheque	VAT(£)	Cost(£)	Total (£)	Payee	Detail	Power
100437	0.00	22.00	22.00	Aynho Village Hall	Third quarter meetings	(a)
100438	41.65	238.01	279.66	Powergen	Village electricity	(d)
100439	0.00	0.00	0.00	VOID		
100440	2.60	14.84	17.44	A H Contracts	Dog bin emptying	(f)
100441	0.00	243.38	243.38	P Cole	October salary & expenses (£8.18)	(b)
100442	0.00	39.20	39.20	S Jones	October RFO fees	(b)

Code	Power	Regulation
(a)	Administration	Local Government Act 1972, s111
(b)	Salaries	Local Government Act 1972, s112
(d)	Electricity/street lighting	Parish Councils Act 1957, s3 & Highways Act 1980, s301
(f)	Provision of litter bins	Litter Act 1983, ss 5, 6

Regarding the budget and precept Cllr. Brook said that the Council should set some money aside to assist with the setting up of the village shop. Cllr. Macklin pointed out that there will be at least three areas of expenditure next year: the sports field car park and entrance road, the village shop and possibly a contribution towards traffic calming measures.

Cllr. Anderson proposed that the precept should be increased by 5% (i.e. as much as villagers would be prepared to pay) next year, so that we can do as much as possible next year, and that the actual budget is deferred until more details about likely expenditure are known. This was seconded by Cllr. Bradford and agreed. The Chairman will head up a small group to sort the budget out later.

Cllr. Brook said that it would be useful to have a breakdown of what actual unavoidable expenditure was needed for next year, as opposed to items that we might or might not decide to pay for.

The Clerk has confirmed that the Hampshire Association of Parish & Town Councils has endorsed Came & Company, so he will ascertain if using them would result in a saving of 15% on our insurance renewal premium.

It was agreed that Cllr. Anderson would visit the RFO for the purpose of formulating the ASRA and P.C. accounts, including the water rate situation.

7 Planning

S/2006/0867/P – an amendment to the original application, which we supported, and which was approved – rear extension and pitched roof to garage. Porch to front at 2 The Butts – There was some discussion, not about the proposed alterations, as these were acceptable, but because different accounts had been received as to whether permission had already been granted before we had had a chance to comment.

S/2007/1166/P – Replace existing windows and doors with white uPVC at 3 Portway has been permitted.

S/2007/1069/P – Change of use of block built building to industrial/storage use at Wensden Building, Charlton Road has been permitted with a lot of conditions.

The next Parish and Town Council's Planning Forum will take place this Thursday 8th November at the Council Chamber, S. N. C. at 5.45 for 6 pm. Cllr. Bradford will attend.

8 Highways and Transport

Cllr. Macklin said that Cllr. Tavener had visited Aynho, and she now appreciates the circumstances on all fronts. As a result of our continuing pressure, the road surface by College Fields has been repaired, two new "No Entry" signs have at last been replaced on Blacksmiths Hill, and the speed monitor has reappeared.

Cllr. Brook was concerned that due to a satnav problem a large removal van had tried to access Blacksmiths Hill via The Square, which was physically impossible.

The Clerk said that he had written to Roger Jones of The Highways Agency pointing out that an article in the Banbury Guardian had said that he was having discussions with Cherwell District

Council about a possible new M40 junction on either the B4100 or B4031 road near Aynho. It was stressed that although Aynho is in the Oxfordshire postal area, the village itself and both these roads where they intersect with the M40 are actually in Northamptonshire, so any discussions must include both N.C.C. and S.N.C. No reply has so far been received.
A new salt bin has been placed on Charlton Road.

9 Playground Matters

The playground inspection report is being circulated. Cllr. Bellamy said that he and the Clerk had examined all the matters raised at the inspection. In particular they had removed the gaffer tape on the slide. It appears that following a report in July 2000, a piece of angle iron had been welded onto the handrail support bracket to strengthen it, and the tape was covering a piece of foam surrounding the pointed end of the angle bracket, which might otherwise have been a minor hazard to a tall child or adult standing underneath it. This will be filed and sanded down if possible, and the foam and tape replaced. The junior swings had been examined, but nowhere did it seem that there was anything like 40% wear on the chains. No action is therefore needed at present.

It was noted that there have been accidents on the Commando Frame from time to time, but the ROSPA inspection report considers that it does offer a strong development value, and since the safety surface is in a satisfactory condition, it was agreed that no action is required.
The new bins requested for the Sports Field have been received.

10 Farming and Footpaths

Cllr, Oakey said that he had asked Mr Sabin to cut the Sports Field hedge.

Regarding the tree on the corner of Bowmens Lea, the Clerk has approached the person who dealt with it last time. He is working away at present, and says he would not be able to deal with it until January, but this would be better, when the tree is dormant anyway. He will give a quote soon. There is another tree opposite, which is almost completely obscuring a street lamp, and it was agreed that this should be included in the quote.

11 The Parish Plan

The Chairman said that he had sent off the grant application form. He is very hopeful that we will succeed in getting this grant, not least because we are the first parish to consider a second Village Plan, so ACRE are quite eager to support us. A resident from Aynho Wharf is keen to join the Plan Group, in order for that area to be better represented.

He has spoken to Mike Pearson at S.N.C., who deals with planning co-ordination. In the past there have been regional, county, district and village plans, but none of them seems to take account of any others, so he will be trying to pull together common items in all of them. Caroline Neale deals with youth matters, which is likely to become an increasing factor in our Plan.

John Jackson, an Aynho resident, has pointed out that the Sustainable Communities Act has now come into force, which is aimed at supporting local plans, and he has urged the Chairman to send a letter to Northamptonshire County Council asking what they are proposing to do to assist rural communities. This has been done. He produced a Schedule to the Act, which will be copied and circulated.

Cllr. Brook updated everyone with the latest village shop situation. What is intended for the meeting on November 22nd is to give a brief presentation about what is a community shop, what is needed in terms of fundraising, volunteer support to run it, and getting a formal Steering Group voted in to carry the project forward. So far everyone who has shown an interest in running the pub as a tenant on behalf of James

Perkins is keen to have a shop on the premises as well. Having visited similar shops in Tackley and Sulgrave, there was no reason why a shop in Aynho shouldn't succeed.

12 Meetings and Conferences

The S.N.C. Chairman is inviting two members from each parish to a reception at Greens Norton Community Centre on Wednesday 14th November to discuss matters concerning the District. The Chairman already has a commitment that evening, so Cllr, Bradford agreed to attend.

The Northamptonshire NHS Partnership Board is inviting us to stakeholder workshops in Northampton on Monday 3rd December 10 am to 4 pm, and Tuesday 4th December 5.30 pm to 8.45 pm, to discuss views on various work-streams to deliver best outcomes for patients in various areas.

13 Correspondence

N. C. C. has sent a letter about the Strategic Funding Programme 2008/9. This invests core revenue grant funding for up to three years in Voluntary and Community Sector organisations for the delivery of services.

N. C. C. has sent a letter about the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework: Preferred Options for the Core Strategy and Locations for Minerals and Waste Development, plus a detailed questionnaire.

The Northamptonshire Waste Partnership has sent some leaflets and a short questionnaire "Let's Talk Rubbish".

The Keep the Horton General Campaign requested us to write to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel telling them why we need to keep all the services at the Horton. The Clerk has sent a letter along the lines of the previous one we sent to the Health Secretary last year.

Hyder Consulting Ltd has invited us to comment on the Silverstone Draft Development Brief.

The following have been received and will be circulated: -

Alzheimer's Society Newsletter, emda News, Evenley Parish Council minutes, Landlord News & Views, Local Council Review, N.C.C. Safer Driving in Northamptonshire, Victim Support annual report and Village Viewpoint (which includes an item on Enterprise Solutions Northamptonshire supporting village shops).

14 Any Other Business (at the Discretion of the Chair)

Cllr. Phillips suggested that detail of the Park Club Draw should be put in the newsletter.

Cllr. Macklin mentioned that a new development in the Banbury Business Park outside Adderbury may result in increased traffic through the village. He added that the noise from the M40 seemed particularly loud recently.

15 Date of Next Meeting - Monday 3rd December 2007

This date was agreed.

The meeting closed at 10.30 pm.