



ASTON TIRROLD & ASTON UPTHORPE
PARISH COUNCIL

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ASTON TIRROLD & ASTON UPTHORPE
MINUTES FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT 8.00PM ON
MONDAY 15th MAY 2017 IN THE VILLAGE HALL.**

Present:

Joanna Hart (Chair), Tim Vallings, Simon Young (SY), Justin Keeble (JK), Anna Dillon (AD), Jane Knight (JBK), Nigel Hawkey (NH)
Parish Clerk: Denes Marffy

Public – Ted Betts, Richard Buletson, Jane Murphy, Ed Blomfield, Gerald Threadgold

1. Election of Chair for 2017/2018 and declaration of office - **Joanna Hart was unanimously voted into office.**
2. Election of Vice-Chair for 2017/2018 and declaration of office – **Tim Vallings was unanimously voted into office.**
3. Apologies for absence: Susanna Brunskill (SB),
4. Declaration of any relevant interests – none.
5. Approval of 2016/17 report. **Approved. See Appendix**
6. Appointment of the Responsible Finance Officer to the new parish council – **Denes Marffy was unanimously appointed**
7. Review and adoption of standing orders – **Approved** (Note Section 15 to be looked at, at a later date)
8. Review and adoption of financial regulations – **Approved** (Note during year PC to clarify financial processes to simplify internal audit)
9. Regarding the sub-committee: Astons Recreation Committee (ARC)
 - i. Review Terms of Reference. **Approved**
 - ii. Acceptance of AGM minutes. Carried over to the next meeting
 - iii. Appointment of two councillors to ARC. **Joanna Hart (JH) Approved.** The second Councillor to be appointed at June meeting.
10. Review of delegated powers:
 - i. JK has delegated powers regarding footpath maintenance of up to £500. **Approved**
11. Review of banking arrangements and signatories. JH, SY and TV are signatories for online transactions. **Approved.** Cheque signatories to be reviewed.
12. Parish Council insurance to agree to accept Zurich insurance quote for £1554.58. **Approved.** Noted

that there must be risk assessments in place for key activities. Insurance includes defibrillator, war memorial, pavilion and playground.

13. Appointment of Steve Morant as internal auditor. **Approved**
14. Review of Fixed Asset Register. Hard drive and salt bin added to the register. **Approved.**
15. Full Year accounts to March 2017 **reviewed** Thanks to Clerk for preparing.
16. Review subscriptions to other bodies:
 - i. OALC **Approved**
17. Review policies & procedures: Code of Conduct; Equal Opportunities; Expenses; Grievance; Health and Safety; Recruitment. **Approved**
18. Review Information Guide. **Review this at the June meeting.**
19. Review Risk Register. **Approved** (Review during the year)
20. Review Emergency Plan. **Approved** (DM to circulate to all Councillors and ARC and place hard copies in the Village Hall and Pavillion)
21. Review Defibrillator processes. The defibrillator at the Pavillion's has been regularly checked. AD to check the one at the Pub and the process for regular checking to be discussed at the next meeting.
22. War Memorial Committee (PC are formal custodians of the War Memorial). The PC would like to thank Ryan Morris for cleaning the Memorial. It was reported that the footpath at the back of the War Memorial was in a poor state of repair. To be discussed next month and will accept annual report at that meeting
23. To accept the CLP Project Team Guidance. **Approved**
 - i. To appoint a Councillor to facilitate meetings of CLP groups no less than twice yearly. **Tim Vallings appointed.**
24. Agree dates of meetings for the 2017/18 municipal year
 - 19 June
 - 17 July
 - 18 September
 - 16 October
 - 20 November
 - 11 December*
 - 15 January

19 February

19 March

16 April

* NB this is the second Monday of the month as the third falls too close to Christmas

Meeting finished at 8.15 pm

SIGNED AS ACCURATE

NAME.....

DATE.....



ASTON TIRROLD AND ASTON UPTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Parish Meeting 15th May 2017
Chair's Report for 2016 -2017

Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe Parish Council (PC) met on the third Monday of the month for eleven meetings during the year (no meeting in August). There were no additional meetings during the year.

COUNCILLORS

In July the PC welcomed Denes Marffy to the role of Parish Clerk. As a former Councilor that has lived in our community since 1983, Denes has brought knowledge and perspective to the role, which he has carried out diligently and thoroughly. The role of Parish Clerk is essential to the smooth running of the PC and the PC thank him for all his hard work.

Two Councilors have stepped down during the year: Steve Falle served our community for eight years and Andy Toyne for three years. The PC thank them both for the incredible effort they have put into the PC to make the village a better place for all. Their attention to detail, clarity of thought and drive have been appreciated by Councilors and villagers alike.

The PC has welcomed two new Councilors, Jane Knight and Nigel Hawkey, during the year and the PC has already benefited from their views and enthusiasm.

The remaining Councilors, Joanna Hart (Chair), Tim Vallings (Vice Chair), Simon Young, Justin Keeble, Susanna Brunskill and Anna Dillon have continued to serve throughout the year and the team has worked on behalf of our community. There are currently two vacant positions on the PC. The PC would strongly encourage anyone who would like to help shape the direction of this vibrant community to come forward.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL (SODC) / OXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL (OCC)

Financial pressure continues at SODC and OCC and the PC is mindful that it may have to bear a greater share of the financial burden to keep our community and its facilities at a standard that we would expect. For example, verge cutting will now only be carried out twice per year, so the PC may choose to pay for an additional cut.

There has been much discussion during the year about a Unitary Council that would replace SODC and OCC. The PC expects to see more detailed proposals later this year. The potential impact on our villages and PC is as yet unknown, although the PC has been reassured that planning decisions will continue to be taken locally.

OCC elections were held this year and Simon Clarke is the new Didcot and East Hagbourne Councilor, following Patrick Greene's retirement from OCC. The PC would like to thank Patrick for all his hard work for the community, especially for attending so many of our PC meetings and following up on issues relevant to the Astons.

PLANNING

Planning has once again proved to be a contentious topic and the PC would like to remind all villagers that it is important to consult neighbours as early as possible about potential planning applications. We are lucky to live in a village with such a strong sense of community, which at times can be tested by development. The PC encourages those planning to do work to their property to understand that building work, no matter how small, will affect neighbouring properties and those in neighbouring properties to appreciate that people wish to adapt their houses to their current needs.

During the year a useful document was added to the village website offering guidance about planning, many thanks to Anna Dillon for putting this together. It also contains guidance on requirements for tree works, which is important for all villagers to be aware of, particularly those in the Conservation Area.

The PC considered 22 Planning applications during the year (several of which were discussed at multiple meetings) and recommended that SODC approve 15 applications, refuse 3 applications and offered 'No strong views' on a further 4 applications.

THE ASTONS' RECREATION COMMITTEE (ARC)

There is a separate written report from ARC post its AGM in May. ARC continues its excellent progress, maintaining the recreation ground and pavilion with the help of successful fund-raising events. Once again ARC had a successful year of fundraising with a particularly profitable Fireworks evening and a Safari Supper. A large number of the community were involved in the organizing of these events and the PC would like to thank ARC and the volunteers that help, for all of the hard work that goes in behind the scenes to make these events so enjoyable and successful for everyone.

ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

The PC would like to thank Rustic Management for clearing the footpaths. The state of the roads and especially the potholes continue to be an issue, but they are slowly being filled in. There are also parking issues with the narrowness of the roads and damage to the verges. The PC would like to remind villagers to use Fixmystreet.com to report any issues.

Justin Keeble has done an excellent job as the designated Roads and Footpaths Councilor and has been working hard to deal with issues as they have arisen, making considerable progress. Following an accident at the top of Chalk Hill during the icy weather a new salt bin has been purchased to sit on Chalk Hill. There were a number of other road traffic accidents during the year, thankfully not too serious. Going forward the PC will keep a record of all accidents to help with future requests for amendments to the roads. The PC invites villagers to notify the Clerk of any accidents in or near the village.

COMMUNITY LED PLAN (CLP)

All households recently received a hard copy of the CLP. This document is the culmination of several years of hard work from the CLP Steering Group. The PC would like to thank the CLP Steering Group for their enthusiasm and persistence to get to this point. The PC hopes that everyone agrees that this is a very useful document that will help shape our community over the coming years. The PC has already used the findings in planning comments and will continue to benefit from the statistics provided. The CLP working groups will now take the recommendations forward and report at least annually to the PC.

Of particular note is the Roads & Traffic CLP working group which is actively considering different ways to slow down traffic in our village, including a 20 mph speed limit, improving Croft Corner junction and adding a mirror at the top of Chalk Hill. The PC thanks the group, including Simon Young and Jane Knight from the PC, for their efforts to date and looks forward to supporting their recommendations.

FINANCE

The PC again increased the precept for the coming year (by 2%) to enable it to finance recommendations from the CLP working groups, as well as continue to provide grants to village organisations. Last year the PC supported Parochial Church Council (£1,906) for the maintenance of the burial ground, Astons webteam (£150), Astons CLP (£100), Village Hall to cover Post Office costs (£500) and Village Hall (£1,000) for maintenance. Similar grants were approved during the year for the upcoming year.

BUS SERVICE

During the year OCC removed the subsidy from the village bus service, meaning that there is now only one service to and from Didcot and only during term time as the times coincide with the school day.

The PC would like to thank the Downlands Village Transport Group (DVTG) for coming together and addressing this dramatic change for those dependent on buses and for representing the villages throughout the discussions. DVTG also proposed and is now managing a weekly service to and from Wallingford, which the PC is currently contributing to.

OTHER

The PC would like to thank George Curtis for leading a team to put on an event to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday at the Recreation Ground and SODC for its financial contribution to the event.

A number of processes and documentation were reviewed during the year: an updated Risk Register was put in place, the Transparency Code reviewed, although as the PC has an income of more than £25,000 (due to the successful fundraising efforts at ARC) the PC will continue to be externally audited. Justin Keeble led the production of an Emergency Plan for the village that is now held by all PC and ARC members with hard copies at the Village Hall and Pavilion.

Two defibrillators were bought during the year for the village as a result of successful fundraising led by Mike Moore. The PC has taken responsibility for these on behalf of the community.

The Chequers pub has been registered as an Asset of Community value, giving it additional protection from future development. Thanks to Nigel Hawkey for preparing the application.

Joanna Hart
Chair
Aston Tirrold Aston Upthorpe Parish Council