

Avening Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 January 2024 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Mulligan– Chair, Cllr R King, Cllr Howell, Cllr J Hetterley, Cllr Hamilton, Cllr Slater, Cllr D Bendall.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: - Mrs S Baker (Clerk),

VISITORS: Mr Lane

01/24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – Mr Lane thanked the Parish Council for their response to planning application 23/03649/FUL & 23/03650/LBC.

02/24 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE – Cllr Hamilton

03/24 CODE OF CONDUCT

166.1.18 Declaration of Interest in Items on the Agenda

166.2.18 Updates to Members Register of Interests

None.

04/24 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13th December and 8th November 2023

The minutes of the meeting held 13th December were signed as a true record.

Due to the Clerk attending the meeting remotely due to Covid, the minutes of the on 8th November 2023 agreed at the December meeting 13th December 2023 were signed.

05/24 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13th December 2023

None

06/24 COMMUNITY ISSUES AND PROJECTS

Community Issues

Playing Fields Update

The contractor providing the quote for the new path has requested the dimensions. Cllr Mulligan agreed to provide these.

The Community Orchard group have agreed to the new path on condition planting is damaged.

Memorial Hall

The heaters in the Chamberlain Room are faulty. Cllr Mulligan has arranged for an engineer provide a quote for radiated heat before replacing them.

Cllr Bendall said that there was a complaint that the double outlet socket short circuited the electricity when a industrial tea urn was plugged in. Cllr Bendall was asked to check if the tea urn had been pat tested.

Cllr Mulligan informed the Clerk that the engineer from EDF did not keep the appointment to install the smart meters. The Clerk will contact EDF for an update.

Cllr Slater requested that the badminton lines are painted on the floor. Cllr Mulligan will arrange this.

Cllr Bendal said the hall bookings were slowing down.

Cllr Mulligan reported that Mel Young has expressed an interest in joining the Memorial Hall Committee. It was requested that the Clerk distribute a copy of the Memorial Hall Charity Scheme.

The Clerk said that she still did not have access to the Charity Commission account for the Memorial Hall. Cllr Mulligan agreed to call them urgently to organise access.

07/24 TRAFFIC & HIGHWAYS

Traffic Survey on Tetbury Hill The Clerk reported that due illness she has not been able to meet with the Highways manager to discuss the survey.

Complaints have been received regarding the leaves covering the footpath on the Avening Road. The Clerk will report the issue on “fix my street”.

Cllr Slater requested that the area of the Avening Road that is being monitored for subsidence appears to be getting worse. The Clerk will contact Highways to request an inspection.

The road at Nags Head is breaking up. Cllr Slater provided What3words location. The Clerk will report the problem.

08/24 BIO-DIVERSITY POLICY

Cllr King said distributed a draft copy of the policy (Appendix 1) for the Parish Council to review. This will be added to the agenda for the February meeting.

09/25 DEFIBRILATOR

The Clerk reported that had received a quote from a company, who can do matched funding. The cost to the Parish council will be £750.

The Clerk contacted Community Heartbeat, the current supplier. She is waiting for a call back.

10/24 FINANCE

- I. Cllr Hetterley presented the Parish Councils financial position going forward. This showed the Council finances remain in a healthy. A projected £32.K in reserves at year end.
- II. The Clerk confirmed that she had applied for the precept payment for 2024/25.
- III. Approve bills for payment – The list distributed prior to the meeting was agreed.

11/24 POLICE REPORT

Report unavailable. The Clerk reported that a message was on the answerphone from Cirencester Police Station asking about speeding problems in the village. The Clerk is trying to establish who called as the message was garbled.

It was agreed that the problem areas were Tetbury Hill and the Lower High Street by the School and Church.

Cllr Bendall expressed his concern regarding the bikes speeding through the village.

12/24 DISTRICT COUNILLORS REPORT -Cllr Slater appendix

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13/24 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – unavailable

14/24 PLANNING AND TREE WORKS

New Planning Applications

23/03925/TCONR 10 Sandford Leaze Mature oak tree (quercus robur) to the rear garden - Removal of dead wood to inner canopy and also thinning of 20% to let more light in and increase wind penetration whilst retaining a natural shape and appearance to the crown. – No Comment

For Info only –

24/00024/OHL Street Record Woodstock Lane Avening Gloucestershire

APP/F1610/W/23/3330144 – 12 Star Lane – Demolition of detached garage Erection of new dwelling

23/03925/TCONR 10 Sandford Leaze Mature oak tree (quercus robur) to the rear garden - Removal of dead wood to inner canopy and also thinning of 20% to let more light in and increase wind penetration whilst retaining a natural shape and appearance to the crown.

Decisions Notices

23/03804/TCONR Holy Cross Church Ash (T1) - Fell as it has extensive die-back and its branches overhang headstones. Rowan(T2) - Fell as it is leaning badly and the majority of the crown is dead – No Objection

23/03602/COMPLY 25 Point Road Compliance with condition 3 (Replacement Flagstones) of permission

23/00167/LBC - Installation of air source heat pump to front elevation - Permitted

23/03871/TCONR Opposite 48 High Street Remove the self-seeded Ash and Sycamore saplings on roadside bank. Reduce Laurel bush by half. Cut back the brambles and sever ivy on trees – No Objection

23/03328/LBC Beehive House Nags Head Lane. Replacement windows – Permitted

23/03252/FUL Bannut Tree New Inn Lane insertion of x2 dormer windows and insertion of second floor side facing window – Permitted

23/02627/LBC Old Nags Head Nags Head Lane Repair and replacement of flood damage on the ground floor including the demolition of stud walls. Demolish existing rear porch. Refurbishment of first floor bathroom and removal of stud

wall. Replacement of front elevation windows. Demolish and rebuild garden walls and other associated works. – Permitted

23/02344/COMPLY 18 Woodstock Lane Compliance with conditions 3 (render sample panel), 4 (render type), 5 (material samples) and 6 (window and door details) of permission 22/02043/FUL and conditions 2 (sample panel), 3 (render type),

5 (materials) and 6 (windows and doors) of consent 22/02044/LBC - Erection of single storey extension, internal alterations, relocation of roof-light and replacement of roof-light frames. – Permitted

23/00352/FUL7 Woodstock Lane Demolition and replacement of existing dwelling and outbuildings and associated landscaping and works - Permitted

15/24 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported very little correspondence due to the Christmas break.

16/24 COUNCILLORS

17/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 12th February 2024 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Actions

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| 166/23 | Arrange Defib relocation + Quote | Cllrs Slater & Hamilton, Clerk | |
| 168/23 | Collate Community Speed watch Information | Clerk | |
| 148/23 | Chase contractor for path quote | Cllr Mulligan | |
| 10/24 | Make Payments | Clerk | |
| 14/24 | Planning Response | Clerk | |
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Appendix 1

Draft Biodiversity Policy

Background

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Avening Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) must from time to time consider what action it might properly take, consistent with the proper exercise of its functions to further the general biodiversity objective.

Definition

The natural world underpins our economy, society, and our existence. Biodiversity provides us with everything we need to survive including food, water, medicine, materials for shelter, and even natural cycles such as climate and nutrients. Our economy relies on nature too – a report by The World Economic Forum in 2020, has estimated that over half of global GDP is highly or moderately dependent on nature to the tune of \$44 trillion per annum. According

to DEFRA (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants alive on the planet.

The ecosystem services supported by biodiversity help mitigate issues such as flooding and drought events, regulation of climate, provision of sufficient, clean water, and pollination of our crops. One in every three mouthfuls of food we eat is dependent on pollinators such as bees, butterflies and moths so the rapid loss of these pollinators from our environment has significant implications for human life.

Business as usual is no longer an option if biodiversity and all the services it provides to us is to be protected and enhanced.

Aims and Objectives

The objective of this policy is to help the council work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Avening area.

This policy recognises that the Avening Conservation Area is part of the Cotswold AONB (renamed in June 2020 as the Cotswold National Landscape although AONB is still the legal designation) and should be read in conjunction with the Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025.

This policy also recognises the need to balance and manage the sometimes conflicting interests of local stakeholders such as farmers, small holders, estate managers, residents and visitors.

The Council will consider the impact on sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity of any decisions it makes and will develop a strategy and implement policies to improve biodiversity in the following areas:

- Commenting on the impact of local planning applications
- The management of the land and property under the ownership or influence of the council
- Encourage and / or support local businesses and organisations in the adoption of environmentally positive practices
- Encourage and /or support Avening residents to promote and enhance biodiversity

Specific Actions

Planning Applications

Note: Cotswold District Council have made it clear that local opinion and local policies carry no weight with them when they review planning applications, however CDC have used the Building with Nature Standards in its Cotswold District Green Infrastructure Strategy <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/vs4j4fmf/1-draft-green-infrastructure-strategy-draft-for-consultation-june-2021.pdf>.

Never-the-less, Avening Parish Council will:

- Assess planning applications with reference to the Building with Nature Standards and aim to deliver key information for CDC to consider, based on CDC's stated principals.
- Support the protection of sensitive habitats from the consequences of developments
- Consider whether changes to a proposed development could enhance biodiversity - following the CDC and Building with Nature Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Land and Property Management

Note: The only land under Avening Parish Council control are the Lee Croft Playing Fields and the Community Orchard, and the only property is the Avening Memorial Hall

Avening Parish Council will

- Carry out a biodiversity audit of its holdings
- Collate biodiversity information about areas of the village outside its control. This will include compiling a record of road verges of conservation concern, other habitats of conservation concern and protected species. This will include the stream that runs through the village.
- Consider the conservation and promotion of biodiversity with regard to the management of the playing fields and the community orchard, specifically:
 - the impact of established and potential future use
 - the timing of hedge trimming,
 - management of the copse and the community orchard
 - a review of trees in the village that are currently under a TPO and consideration if other trees should be subject to a TPO
 - application of chemical herbicides/pesticides
 - need for and timing of removal of vegetation
 - Ash dieback – it is recommended that the Cotswolds and Vale Ash Dieback Forum information is used with regard to ash die back and the need for tree works or tree felling. <https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CoVAD-Ash-Dieback-Information-for-famers.pdf>
 - Recording of invasive and/ or non-native species
- Consider biodiversity issues related to the management of the Avening Memorial Hall, seeking to enhance biodiversity where possible

Local Community

Avening Parish Council will:

- Build on the successful partnerships with the Cotswold Rural Skills programme and the Avening Community Orchard
- Seek to raise public awareness of biodiversity issues through regular reporting
- Seek to engage with residents regarding biodiversity in Avening and identify ways in which the community can get involved in enhancing biodiversity in the village
- Support local residents gain access to advice i.e. related to TPOs or the Avening Stream.

Monitoring and Review

This policy was adopted on xxxxxx and will be reviewed in 2 years' time, or sooner if required by legislation.

A summary of how this policy has been implemented will be published annually.

Appendix 2

District Councillor Report

CDC: At both the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S), and full council meetings we reviewed the intension of CDC to break up the joint company (Publica) owned by them and three other district councils, with a view to bringing the staff and processes back under the direct control of each council. This is a highly complex piece of work for which the councils don't have the experience or capacity, and means they will have to employ external expertise to provide the project management, pensions transfers, HR and legal implications.

When I challenged the council Leaders and Financial controllers on the likely costs, they said they didn't have enough information to be able to provide even a high level estimate. Despite this lack of detail (which for a project of this magnitude, in my experience would easily cost £2-3m!), and a motion by O&S recommending a review when costs were known, the council voted to proceed with haste on the work. This is very concerning, and I consider it reckless because it effectively amounts to a blank cheque where the project costs, long term financial implications, and

benefits of proceeding are not even known! There are also differing opinions on which council is actually driving the change.

Visit to AIS - I was lucky to be invited to a tour of Air Salvage International – a highly successful private company operating out of Cotswold (Kemble) Airport. The company specialises in breaking redundant aircraft for spares (the value of which are invariably higher than the original intact aeroplane), and recovery of crashed planes around the world. The owner gave a fascinating presentation and personally took our group around their various facilities at the airport. It's pleasing that a company such as this can thrive in the south Cotswolds, an area which is primarily known for the beautiful landscape and not for a highly skilled industry such as ASI.

The **Public Conveniences Review Group** has completed its review and made recommendations to the CDC Cabinet. Public toilets are not a statutory service but are very important in the Cotswolds, being a tourist area. A balance has to be achieved between costs and availability, and as a result two units are likely to close, including the small convenience at the Chipping in Tetbury. This will still leave the main (award winning) block available at the main car park. All units in the district will be refurbished, but those that are free presently will incur a charge in the future. The report will be presented so that the Cabinet can decide on the future of the services and make appropriate budget provision.

Roads - I am pleased to say that GCC now have a much better system for reporting potholes, and it is linked to the 'FIX My Street' app, so it's never been easier to report road issues. That said, I did have to have two attempts to get a gaping hole fixed outside of Cherington, and some other obvious defects have been rejected! I have written to Highways, the responsible Cabinet member at GCC, and our two MPs to highlight that relying on a cursory annual inspection of roads as required under the Highways Act 1980 is not acceptable due to the perilous state of our disintegrating roads.

Avening & Cherington: You may have seen my piece in the December Villager about the recent showing two Michael Powell films in the Memorial Hall, and that we were honoured by a Q&A session by Michael's widow Thelma Schoonmaker, herself a multi-Oscar® winner in the field of editing, who still resides in Avening. On the roads we still have faulty traffic lights at Longford's Mill and the 30mph VAS sign in Avening to be fixed!

Just before Christmas two of my PC colleagues were invited to a meeting at Aston Farm to discuss the new dam and associated works. There were positive discussions, and I have contacted the Environment Agency to get their help in suggesting ways to rectify the current issues and other improvements to the stream through Avening.

My thanks go to Mike Mitchell for his hospitality recently for hosting the Cherington PC meeting at Toad Hall recently because the Reading Room was out of commission while it was being refurbished. This work is now largely complete, and the hall has been given a new lease of life, with excellent new heating, lighting, and lots of insulation. Well done to all involved.