

ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
11th March 2026 at 7:30 PM in Kingston Blount Village Hall

Present:

- Cllrs: S Bain, D Chaplin, T Hill, H Hopwood, R Payling and A Bernstein (in the chair).
- Four members of public were present (inc. FAAG Chair S.Sowerby & C/Cllr Heritage).

Minutes:

Actions:

1	APOLOGIES: Cllr. M Day, Cllr. R Payling (both for work commitments)	Noted.
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None	Noted
3	MINUTES FEBRUARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Approved.	Clerk: publish
4	<p>MATTERS ARISING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Update on Potential to incorporate Crowell into the parish. Crowell Meeting chair was not aware of the approach, but the window for inclusion in latest review was last July and as no interest was expressed, no further action. ➤ Email only received on day of meeting with an update on potential Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) & meeting with OCC for path to Oxford Tube bus stop(s). C/Cllr came to meeting and expanded more – discussions still ongoing for both issues. ➤ Potential replacement noticeboard in Kingston Blount and relocation. No further forward establishing who now owns the former Squire Automech building (to which the damaged board is attached) so may need to relocate, but no discussion as to where until we know if we can re-use existing premises. HMLR Fee £30 + VAT 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. Clerk: contact SODC & Land Registry for details?</p>
5	<p>OPEN FORUM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ AR resident requested the PC re-visit a 20mph on the B4009 as every other village between M40 and Chinnor have. SID figures show average speeds of 31mph within the existing 30 limit, but traffic still doing Motorways speeds at certain times of the day and as pavement is narrow, large vehicles create a dangerous slip-stream causing hazard to pedestrians. It was felt that existing speed limit, SID Unit and Chicane were generally sufficient, but as T/Calming lead Cllr was absent, deferred for future discussion and possibility of OCC official speed survey. We can request 20mph, but decision is ultimately OCC Highways. TV Police not interested but potential for further attempt to get a Community Speedwatch in place. There are 4 registered locations* in the parish, but previous attempts have failed for lack of volunteers. * (B4009 AR, 2 in KB at either end of High St, Stert Road). ➤ A MOP gave update on work being undertaken at Pleck Wood. Cllrs agreed it all looked very neat and tidy following clearance of wayward tree branches - scrub clearance & path still to be tackled. 	<p>Clerk/Chair: liaise with Cllr Day for future discussion, possibly as part of the potential TAC as above.</p> <p>Noted and thanks to MOP & volunteers.</p>
6	<p>COUNCILLOR REPORTS: – District & County Councillor reports shared with Cllrs on receipt. No subsequent updates on D/Cllr report as not present. C/Cllr update as above in OF. Clerk/FAAG Chair report on maintenance issue – see minute 9</p>	
7	PLANNING: See Planning report, attached to these minutes.	No action needed.
8	<p>2025/6 AUDIT PREPARATIONS (to comply with new Assertion 10 on 2025/6 AGAR):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NEW – Website Accessibility Statement. Resolved to approve. ➤ NEW – Publication Scheme Policy. Resolved to approve. ➤ Assertion 10 Checklist, all tick boxes completed. Resolved to approve. 	Clerk/Chair: publish to website.
9	<p>FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ OCC have confirmed proposals to re-route the footpath which currently goes behind the Play Area. To run down from Pleck Lane footpath, down side of Village Hall and thence to Pleck Wood (diametrically opposite to current route). Resolved to accept proposals and give the go ahead. ➤ Report into Maintenance Contractor hours and charging (in conjunction with Clerk) has concluded charges generally in line with Maintenance Tasks list (all of which are pre-approved) and fee of £25 p/h per person (some jobs require 2 people), apart from one invoice last year where instructions were not clear and extra work was undertaken. As a result the work in question will not be needed again for several years. It was resolved unanimously to continue with current contractor as a potential alternative would have been more expensive. Contractor will be asked to list exactly 	FAAG Chair: to continue liaison with OCC contact to conclude.

	<p>which number task is being invoiced and invoices to be scrutinised against Maintenance Tasks list. Any Ad-Hoc requests will need to be quoted and approved by the PC in advance, possibly also with a comparison from the alternative contractor. FAAG Chair is still seeking a contractor with the relevant equipment, insurance and capacity to take on Kingston Hill verge work.</p> <p>➤ Repairs to Crowell and AR Green footpaths discussed briefly, but improving weather has more or less negated any need for action currently. No further action.</p>	<p>Clerk/FAAG Chair: to liaise more closely on invoicing.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
10	<p>HILLWERKE TRUST/VILLAGE HALL: Deed of surrender has been signed, witnessed and returned to Lightfoots with permission given to proceed, invoice to be expected shortly.</p>	
11	<p>PLAY AREA:</p> <p>➤ Given minute 10, the Play Area Committee have been instructed to proceed with Discovery Timber Play for Phase 2 – 50% deposit paid as detailed in finance report and final invoice will follow as soon as work is completed (scheduled for mid-April) so we can obtain rest of SODC grant funding.</p> <p>➤ Play area gate latch has been repaired and will suffice for now, no need for alternative per, agenda point 11, but potential for discussion in future if necessary.</p>	<p>Clerk: Await final invoice and apply for Grant residue ASAP.</p>
12	<p>LITTER PICKER: Advert updated as detailed in February minutes. To be published on Website, KBAR and Apr/May issue of Parish Notes (copy due by 18/March)</p>	<p>Clerk/Chair: publish.</p>
13	<p>FINANCE: See finance report, attached to these minutes. PLUS:</p> <p>➤ To note: Budget 2025/2026 – v10 JAN (not available for February meeting & v11FEB.</p> <p>➤ To Approve: 2026 quote from MK Watts for Playing field grass-cutting@ £180 + VAT per fortnightly cut (£5 increase on 2025 rate – 2.85%). It was resolved to approve.</p> <p>➤ To Approve: New draft councillor expenses policy – amendment requested to S4.6.</p>	<p>Clerk: confirm to MK Watts.</p> <p>Clerk: action.</p>
14	<p>CLERK'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED See report attached to these minutes.</p>	
15	<p>POTENTIAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR next meeting - Deadline: 4/Mar.</p> <p>➤ Traffic Advisory Committee, any update re: way forward.</p> <p>➤ Update on C/Cllr meeting with OCC Highways on Oxford Tube footpath.</p> <p>➤ New KB Noticeboard quote from Greenbarnes, ownership of Squire Automech building.</p> <p>➤ Revisit Expenses policy per, Minute 13..</p>	<p>Clerk: ensure all necessary items on March agenda.</p>

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 8th April 2026
IN ASTON ROWANT CHURCH

PLANNING REPORT FOR MARCH 2026 MEETING

- a) **New applications as follows to be confirmed/discussed:** None.
- b) **Decisions of S.O.D.C. as follows to be noted:**
P26/S0322/AG Upgrade existing shed to grain store at Hill Farm near Aston Rowant HP14 3YJ. A formal application for planning permission is not required. NFA.
- c) **To consider any planning applications or decisions received since the agenda was issued:** None.
- d) **Withdrawn Applications:** None.
- e) **Applications Referred to SODC Planning Committee:** None.
- f) **Planning Inspectorate Appeals:** None
- g) **Information only:** Applications in Neighbouring parishes (which may affect Aston Rowant): None.

FINANCE REPORT AS AT 28/FEBRUARY 2026

	£ p
a) <u>The following payments through bank @ 31/December (Costs include VAT):</u>	
CLERK JANUARY SALARY & DECEMBER HMRC/P.A.Y.E (not loaded to bank)	
DAN CUADRADO (Invoice) 846	570.00
DAN CUADRADO (Invoice) 847	228.00
SHIELD MAINTENANCE	118.56
SCRIBE (Starboard Systems)	42.00
AKC PARISH NOTES	60.00
BUCKS ELECTRICAL SOLUTIONS	30.00

b) <u>Receipts as follows to be noted:</u>	
HMRC – VAT Reclaim to 31/Dec	2,908.30
KB Park Fund-Raising Committee (residue of funds raised)	492.76

c) <u>The following payments to be Approved and Paid</u>	
CLERK FEBRUARY SALARY & HMRC/P.A.Y.E (for January and February)	
CLERK FEBRUARY EXCESS HOURS (not c/f, paid now due to financial Y/End)	67.24
DAN CUADRADO (Invoice 852) per, item 24 on Parish Maintenance Tasks list	60.00
DISCOVERY TIMBER PLAY (50% DEPOSIT FOR Phase 2)	6,636.00
SHIELD MAINTENANCE	118.56
SCRIBE (Starboard Systems)	42.00
OXFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (2026 Membership)	252.00
OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION (2026 Membership)	50.00

d) <u>To approve:</u> payment of any invoices received after agenda publication	
GEOXPHERE (Parish Online Mapping)	45.00

e) <u>The financial situation as at 28/February:</u>	
Unity Current Account	£20,453.17
Unity Instant Access Savings (G/Reserve)	£15,488.87
Unity Instant Access Savings (E-M Reserves)	£35,214.91
	£71,156.95

f) <u>Reserves as at 31/January:</u>	
General Reserve	£15,488.87

Ear-Marked Reserves:

Int to G/Resv (after 24/5 y/e)	-137	
Elections Reserve	1,100	
Play Area Reserve	11,494	
Parish Notes Reserve	430	
Trees, Footpaths & Environment FAAG)	3613	
Village Hall Reserve	2,938	
Traffic Calming	-298	Replenish from VAT refund
Neighbourhood Plan	4,217	
Ex-NSI Acct Funds	11,858	
Ear-Marked Reserves Total:	35,215	

g) <u>To ratify:</u> Transfers to/from Reserves to cover invoices/interest received:	
➤	£518.57 Current to E-MR (FAAG) from VAT Reclaim.
➤	£298.00 Current to E-MR (T/Calming) from VAT Reclaim.
➤	£346.00 Current to E-MR (Play Area) from VAT Reclaim.
➤	£492.76 Current to E-MR (Play Area) Residue of Funds Raising
➤	£6,636.00 E-MR to Current (to cover Discovery Timber Play invoice).

ARPC - CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

(for March 11th 2026 Meeting)

Item	Decision Required	Action to be Taken
1. SODC - Why West Berkshire and Oxfordshire make sense in Local Government Reorganisation	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 13/Feb
2. SODC - sets out people-first budget with new investment in communities, services and local places	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 13/Feb
3. SODC - Find out more about future plans for Didcot at community event on March 18th.	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 16/Feb
4. Email from AR resident re: stream pollution from building work in Church Lane.	YES	Forwarded to Cllrs 16/Feb March Agenda.
5. SODC - Dig in for free! South and Vale residents invited to grab complimentary compost this March	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 19/Feb Website/KBAR.
6. SODC – February edition of South News	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 20/Feb
7. Matthew Barber (Police & Crime Commissioner for TVP) – February report	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 22/Feb
8. SODC - Connecting Local Action events – March 2026	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 23/Feb
9. SODC - Residents reminded to buy their new garden waste permit	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 23/Feb
10. OCC Highways National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey 2025-26 results	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 24/Feb Consultation ends 28/Feb
11. SODC - Revamps for changing rooms at Didcot Wave and Thame leisure centres	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 25/Feb
12. SODC - Over £1.5M grants funding available for community organisations	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 25/Feb
13. Oxford County Council - One Oxfordshire and LGR - Invitation to Parish Councils Briefing Sessions.	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 25/Feb
14. SODC Press Release - New electric waste vehicle will save councils 13t of carbon emissions per year.	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 27/Feb
15. Green Squeeze - Developers can strike out of the blue, will your community be ready. E-Book link	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 27/Feb
16. SODC Media Release – Consultation on 2026 Community Governance Review, now until 9/Apr	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 27/Feb
17. SODC Media Release - Five Councils outline how a two-unitary proposal would reimagine council service delivery across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 27/Feb
18. Chilterns National Landscape – February Newsletter	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 27/Feb
19. OALC February Update/Newsletter	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 27/Feb
20. SODC D/Cllrs Feb report	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 2/Mar
21. OCC C/Cllrs Feb Report	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 2/Mar
22. SODC Media release: Council agrees £500,000 towards improvements for nature site	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 2/Mar

Received after Agenda Publication

1. Email from AR residents requesting action on 20mph speed limit on B4009.	NO	Correspondent advised to attend meeting to discuss.
2. SODC – Powerpoint slides from recent planning changes Teams presentation	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 9/Mar
3. North Oxford Residents Action (NORA) – petition on adding up the impacts of multiple applications.	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 9/Mar
4. SODC – 2026 Community Governance Review. Chance to comment on proposals 28/Feb-9/Apr.	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 10/Mar
5. Wilkins Playground Inspection Services – speculative email offering their service.	NO	Replied asking for more info. and a scale of charges.
6. OCC – Latest info/update for your community	NO	Forwarded to Cllrs 10/Mar
7. KB Play fund-raising Committee Chair – March Update	NO	Forwarded directly to Cllrs by KBPFCo Chair