

### PENCOMBE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

**Approved Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Pencombe Group Council  
held on  
Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall 7.30pm**

**Councillors Present;**

Cllr. T. Brazier (Chairman)      Cllr. D. Legge.  
Cllr. C. Hayes (Vice Chair)      Cllr. J Barrett  
Cllr. C. Hadley

**In Attendance:** Ward Cllr. John Harrington, Allan Drew (Parish Clerk)

**Members of the Public:** Susan Drew (Treasurer, Parish Hall), Mr. Frank Nicholson, Ms Margaret Simcock.

**38/21 Apologies for absence**

Cllr. Hope had given his apologies for absence. Council agreed that Cllr. Hope would be excused for absences so far.

**39/21 Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation**

None received

**40/21 Draft minutes of the previous meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.**

The minutes of the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 were agreed and the Chairman will sign the draft minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**41/21 Action Tracker.**

**Road safety in Pencombe (61/20)**

Cllr. Harrington reported that he would be meeting the LEA and Tony Agate, PROW officer in two days' time to discuss the issue. He would provide an update after that meeting.

**Neighbourhood Development Plan (59/20)**

The Clerk reported that Locality are now accepting applications for financial year 2021-22 and he had started the application process.

**Clearing of ditch at Little Cowarne opp. Phone kiosk. (35.2/20)**

Work had still not started although the weather had been dry for some time. Cllr. Legge said he would move this issue forward.

**Road deterioration at Hollybush Lane (13/20)**

The Clerk raised the issue with Cllr. Harrington that the Parish would be keen to know the priorities that BB used to decide which work to carry out. Cllr. Harrington explained how BB set priorities but agreed that for a work program of roughly similar priorities there was probably scope to move work around to more closely match the Parish view of urgent work. Cllr. Harrington said he would arrange for the plan to be sent to Council and also that the specific case of Hollybush Lane would be raised again.

### **42/21 Open Session**

#### **42.1/21 To receive an update from Cllr. Harrington**

Cllr. Harrington reported that-

Herefordshire COVID cases had reduced to 11.9/100k residents, well below the national average of 25 cases/100k residents. Increases are expected though as services and facilities open up. 21<sup>st</sup> June is the date when nearly all restrictions will be removed and the emergency measures will be removed.

A new Chief Executive Mr Paul Walker is arriving in May.

In the past few weeks a serious case for the Children's Services has resulted in a court judgement critical of Herefordshire Council. The Director of Children's Services has been replaced and extra funding has been allocated to improve the service. Other criticisms included officers not keeping members up to date with issues and sometimes not following court judgements.

Two Hoots has been prioritised for rapid action now that the application to vary the planning consent has been refused. The enforcement team is now preparing to take action against Assured Energy for breaches to the original consent.

The transfer of Locality Stewards back to Herefordshire Council was raised and Cllr. Harrington said that at present the contractor was inspecting their own work.

The drainage grant of £250,000 would also be repeated this year.

#### **42.2/21 To receive queries and questions from local residents.**

Residents had no issues to raise.

### **43/21 Parish Hall update**

The Hall Treasurer reported that the Hall was ready for hire when the rules permitted and that plans for re-opening were well advanced. The Trustees had agreed that for past regular Hall users there would be a short term simple flat rate of £20 hire charge to help these organisations get back into business.

**44/21 Finance** – to receive a report from the RFO. The RFO reported that a problem with internet banking had meant that as a short term measure the old HSBC account had been restarted in order for Council business to continue. A single cheque payment of £3000 (signed by TB & PH) had been made to the HSBC account from the Unity Trust account and this balance then used to make internet banking payments. However, the Unity Trust internet banking problem is now resolved and payment arrangements will return to normal.

#### **44.1/21 Bank balances & spend against budget**

Bank balances on 23/04/2021 were as follows-

- HSBC Community Account: £1371.08
- HSBC Business Money Manager Account: £0
- Unity Trust current account £22874.50

Councillors to note that in due course Unity Trust will close the HSBC current account and transfer the balance to the Unity Trust current account.

### 44.2/21 Payments made, receipts and payments for authorisation

#### Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	£300.63	Clerk's Salary February 2021
2	A M Drew	£300.83	Clerk's salary March 2021
3	HMRC	£225.40	PAYE on Clerk salary
4	A M Drew	£720.00	Refund on payment for 2 skips
5	Autela	£61.45	Payroll process
6	Unity Trust	£18.00	Quarterly bank charges (automatic)

#### Receipts received since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	Parish Hall	£62.50	24/03/2021 Loan repayment
2	Herefordshire Council	£6397.50	23/04/2021 Precept first payment

#### Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A C Garden Services	£310.00	March grass cutting invoice

#### Other Finance

The RFO reported that with the change in banking arrangements duplicate payments had been received from the Parish Hall in payment of the loan. The RFO and Parish Hall Treasurer had agreed that full repayment was now possible and the duplicate payments would be counted against the final balance.

#### Income & Expenditure Forecasts & Actuals – As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

End of year summary as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (Unaudited)

	Budget 2020-21	Year Outturn 2020-21	Variance from Budget
<b>Income</b>	17458	19545	2087
<b>Expenditure</b>	16010	16659	-649
<b>Income-Expenditure</b>	1448	2886	1438

### Reserves

The RFO reported that as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 Council reserves stand at £17183. These reserves are not earmarked against any particular need or project so must be considered general reserves. However, it would be good practice to earmark reserves against particular risks such as the example that follows.

Reserve	Fund
Flood protection & recovery	5000
Winter maintenance & management	5000
General reserve	7183

The RFO asked Council to give thought to the risks it would wish to see covered by the reserves and the topic would be discussed further at a future meeting.

### Draft Budget for 2021-22

Since the precept is unchanged the RFO recommended that the budget remains essentially unchanged except for the following -

#### Income

- The VAT reclaim matches the VAT to be recovered from this year
- The cemetery receipts have been higher than budget for several years so the budget has been increased from £1000 to £1500.
- Receipts from Lengthsman (farmers' contribution) have been reduced from £500 to £250

#### Expenditure

- Neighbourhood Plan budget raised to £2000
- No community projects have yet been included in the budget

The draft budget is as follows-

<b>Income</b>	£
· Precept	13875
· Bank interest	0
· Cemetery receipts	1500
· Field rent	180
· Lengthsman scheme	250
· Miscellaneous	0
· VAT reclaim	924
· Wayleave	13
Parish Hall loan repayments	312
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>17059</b>
<b>Expenditure (including VAT)</b>	£
<b>a. Salary &amp; Expenses:</b>	
· Parish Clerk salary	3600
· Parish Clerk annual allowance	0
· Travel expenses	0
· Temporary clerk cover	0
· HMRC PAYE	960
· Autela Pay roll	250
<b>b. Administration</b>	
· Training	350
· Stationery & postage	50
· Website provision	200
· Insurance	215
· Election expenses	100
· Office software	140
<b>c. Cemetery</b>	
· Cemetery rates	280
<b>d. Maintenance</b>	
· Maintenance works	0
· Grasscutting	2300

· Lengthsman scheme	1500
<b>e. Fees &amp; Subscriptions:</b>	
· External auditor fee	0
· Internal auditor fee	50
· ICO registration	35
· HALC/NALC membership fee	420
· Bank Charges	72
· SLCC membership fee	0
<b>f. Miscellaneous:</b>	
· Charitable donations	50
· Remembrance Sunday wreath	25
· Sundry expenses	25
<b>g. Special projects:</b>	
· Neighbourhood development plan	2000
· Parish hall improvements	2500
Defibrillators - L Cowarne	0
- Sparrington	150
- Pencombe	100
<b>Community Projects</b>	TBA
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>15300</b>

The Clerk reminded Council of the need to plan for community projects now that the COVID pandemic was easing. On the basis that community projects would be added in due Council resolved that the draft budget would be adopted for 2021-22.

### 45/21 Planning applications/decisions to be determined by Herefordshire Council

45.1/21 Planning applications received.

210137 2 storey extension to 1 Wakefield. Council have already received an objection from a neighbouring resident who had also written to the planning officer. Council noted that this application was the second extension to the property which had originally been a small 2 bedroom house. The first extension had created 2 additional bedrooms plus extra living space and this application would increase living space significantly and add a fifth bedroom. Council was concerned that proposals such as this application reduce the "entry level" housing stock in Pencombe making it increasingly difficult for first time buyers to buy in Pencombe. Eventually this results in no young families moving into the village and the population becomes on average more elderly. Council also accepted the objection from the neighbouring resident regarding loss of day light caused by such a large extension.

The Clerk submitted the following comments to the planning officer-

Council objects to this proposal for the following reasons-

- The size of the extension proposed develops the plot and the surroundings beyond what is appropriate for the village. There is already an acute shortage of the 1 and 2 -bedroom properties which are affordable for first time buyers and those whose means require a modest property. This property has already been developed from its original 2-bedroom format and this further proposal makes the dwelling into 5 bedrooms. Such a development removes smaller homes from the village and is counter to the Core Strategy RA2 which aims to improve the ratio of smaller, more affordable homes.
- The effect of such a large extension on the adjacent property (2 Wakefield) is to significantly reduce light, and sunlight in particular, as laid out in the objection lodged by the resident at 2 Wakefield, Mrs Dutson. Council supports the reasoning behind Mrs Dutson's objection.

Council had no comments to make on other applications (210714 and 210874)

45.2/21 Planning permissions granted  
210212 Pencombe school retention of mobile classroom Approved with conditions

45.3/21 Planning refusals  
None received

### **46/21 Lengthsman scheme/Grass cutting**

46.1/21 The Clerk raised concerns that the Lengthsman may not have sufficient capacity to cope with the possible increase of work in the current year especially if the funding from Herefordshire Council should be agreed. The Chairman undertook to discuss with the Lengthsman the capacity available to the parish for the next 12 months. (NB In response to this and other works the Lengthsman has hired an additional staff member to increase capacity)

46.2/21 **To consider payment of invoices**  
The Chairman reported that he had received a quotation for five noticeboards which would contain reminders about the penalties for dog fouling in public spaces. The quote was for £40 and Council agreed that the boards should be commissioned and erected at trouble spots around the Parishes.

47/21 **Launching the NDP**  
See Action Tracker item 28/21. The Clerk reported that Locality are now accepting grant bids for 2021-22 and he will progress the application for our NDP. However, the Lugg issues prevent the NDP cannot be officially made but Cllr. Harrington advised that a completed NDP would still carry full weight.

48/21 **To receive an introduction to Parish Online and its application to drainage mapping and the NDP**  
The Clerk presented a video summary of Parish Online which is a subscription service allowing access to OS mapping data and the ability to create custom maps of any resources the Council held. Examples included the locations of salt bins,

cemetery layouts, Parish benches and most importantly for Pencombe Group the location of drainage assets. Additionally, the mapping resources would be required for developing the NDP. Council agreed the application would be most helpful and the Clerk stated that the annual price would be around £40+VAT. Council agreed this expenditure and the Clerk undertook to register PGPC with Parish Online

**49 /21**

**Matters for discussion at next meeting.**

At this stage no matters were raised for discussion at the next meeting

The date of next meeting is the Annual Meeting and is on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021, at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed  Chairman of the Parish Council

**Dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021**