
PENCOMBE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Pencombe Group Parish Council
held on

Tuesday 22nd June 2021 7.30pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

Cllr. T. Brazier (Chairman)

Cllr. J Barrett

Cllr. C. Hayes (Vice Chair)

Cllr. P. Hope

Cllr. C. Hadley

In Attendance: John Harrington, Ward Councillor: Allan Drew (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 8 residents attended

68/21 Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Legge

69/21 Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation

Cllr. Hope declared an interest in item 78/21 – provision of a car park for the Parish Hall. A dispensation was agreed to allow Cllr Hope to participate in general discussion of the car park but his withdrawal would be required if and when financial arrangements are discussed.

70/21 Draft minutes of the previous meeting on 25th May 2021.

The minutes of the meeting of 25th May 2021 were agreed and the Chairman will sign the draft minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**71/21 Action Tracker.
Launching the NDP.**

The clerk reported that he had completed the application form for the grant. However, before submission he wished to have council agreement in principle to the appointment of the planning consultant whose quotation was part of the grant submission. The clerk explained that the funding available from Locality is in two parts -a basic £10,000 grant for creating the NDP and a further £8000 pounds if technical assessment assistance was required for site selection. The quotation received from the planning consultant (Kirkwells) was for £8820 to deliver the NDP. The Clerk had consulted HALC who had recommended Kirkwells on the basis that they have worked with a considerable number of Parish Councils in Herefordshire and the results had been very satisfactory.

At present it is too early in the process to apply for technical assistance grants to aid site selection although it was likely that sites would be available within Pencombe. Cllr. Hadley asked if Little Cowarne would also be included in the plan and the clerk clarified that although the NDP would cover the entire parish, to align with the Herefordshire core strategy only in Pencombe would development be possible. Additionally the clerk explained that all locality grant money had either to be spent within the current financial year or, if unspent by 31st March, had to be returned. In these circumstances Council resolved that the grant submission should be based upon employing the planning consultants Kirkwells to support the Pencombe and Little Cowarne NDP.

Ditch clearing at Little Cowarne.

This item had been outstanding since October and the parish Lengthsman agreed that the work would be completed during the next month. There was some concern that the work

was not particularly straightforward but the Lengthsman would visit the site and make an assessment.

Road deterioration at Hollybush lane. Cllr Harrington reported that he was continuing to press this issue with Balfour Beatty. The area was not within the resurfacing programme and Cllr Harrington had asked for an explanation of how this conclusion had been reached. He would provide an update shortly.

72/21

Open Session

72.1/21

To receive an update from the Ward Councillor.

COVID update. In the last week cases had risen 17 per cent to 28.5 cases per 100,000 residents. Although cases in Herefordshire are rising, the level still compares well with national results which are around 75 cases per 100,000 residents. Most of the outbreaks are on the farms where there has been little or no serious illness.

New chief executive for Herefordshire. Cllr Harrington noted that Paul Walker, the new chief executive for Herefordshire, had started work and was quickly starting to make changes and improvements.

Problems with Children's Services. The County's Children's Services department had received serious criticism from a senior judge over its handling of a number of cases during the past 10 years. The department head had left office and an improvement notice had been received from central government. An improvement board had been created and additional funding had been allocated.

72.2/21

To receive queries or concerns from local residents.

Mr. Maynard raised the issue of Two Hoots farm and the length of time it was taking to serve the enforcement notice. Cllr Harrington also expressed his frustration at the time it was taking enforcement to make progress with this case and he advised that it would help his position if Mr Maynard submitted a complaint to the Ombudsman. However, it was clear that Assured Energy would be required to return to the original plan which they had consent to run and would no longer be able to operate the current arrangements. The only question remaining was the timescale for the enforcement to be effective.

73/21

To receive an update on the Parish Hall.

Mr. Mottram reported that full opening of the hall had been delayed by about a further month until the 19th July. However, some events could take place such as coffee mornings and it was hoped the first Link Lunch for some time would be held on the 3rd July. The annual general meeting of the hall had been delayed until the 28th July in the hall if the restrictions were lifted on schedule on 19 July. There was use by the school on several days a week and currently repair and restoration work was being carried out at times when the school was not using the hall.

There was considerable discussion about the grassed areas around the hall and the banks of wild flowers around the entrance driveway and the main road. Council had concerns that the general appearance was rather untidy and not attractive to people interested in hiring the hall. However, Mr. Mottram stated that there had been a lot of positive comment about the wildflowers. Eventually it was agreed that the wildflower banks should be left until August but that the area immediately around the hall, consisting mostly of long grass, should be mown as soon as possible. The parish grass cutting contract included such work and the clerk, in agreement with Mr Mottram, would instruct the grass cutter to proceed.

The Chairman reported that he had carried out some restoration work on benches outside the hall.

74/21

To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

The RFO reported that bank balances stand around £23,000 and that the first payment of the precept had been received from Herefordshire council. Council had also received some suggestions for community projects (tree planting and signage at the village entrances) which perhaps could be built into a significant community programme. The RFO noted that last year there was a significant short fall in expenditure and he hoped to avoid a similar situation of this year.

Payments had been received from Cllr. Hope (£180 for field rent -three years) and £100 from Emma Bouston for spreading the ashes of Molly Thomas.

Payments for Authorisation

The following payments were submitted for authorisation by Council.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	£300.63	Clerk's June salary
2	A C Garden Services	£620.00	April & May cuts
3	Mr Ian Pardoe	£50.00	Audit fee
4	Viking Direct	£77.19+VAT	Printing paper and filing folders

Council agreed all the above payments.

Other Finance .

The RFO reported that he had forwarded the Certificate of Exemption to the external auditor and an acknowledgement of receipt had been obtained. He was also in the process of submitting the VAT refund request for the previous financial year. He reminded council that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights would start shortly and run from the 30th June through to 10th August. During this period any parishioner could, on reasonable request, ask to examine all the financial transactions for the previous financial year.

The Chairman reported that there was a volunteer prepared to paint the telephone kiosk in Pencombe and some red paint would be required. There was also a discussion about painting the kiosk at Sparrington. The RFO confirmed there was money in the budget to carry out kiosk renovation. He also reported that the replacement pads for the Pencombe defibrillator had been received and would be fitted shortly.

75/21

Planning

75.1/21

To consider the following applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council-

211839 Replacement dwelling at Grendon Court.

Council was pleased to see the updated application following the refusal received last year. The scale of the building had been reduced and the triple car port had been removed.

Council was supportive of the application and the Clerk would submit appropriate comments.

211915/6 Enclose existing wood store at The Cartshed, Little Cowarne plus listed building consent.

Council noted this was a small project and could see no problems with the application. It resolved to support the application.

75.2/21 To note planning permissions granted by Herefordshire Council
None

75.3/21 To note planning refusals by Herefordshire Council
210874 The refusal for a self build dwelling at Crowells Ash was noted

76/21 Lengthsman & Grass cutting

76.1/21 To consider work to be undertaken

The issue of poor drainage from the school field was discussed and Cllr. Harrington offered to raise the issue with the Local Education Authority.

Also discussed was the drain running past New House farm and the Wheelwrights into the Causey at the village centre. Cllr. Harrington also offered to take up this issue with Herefordshire officers.


77/21 Update on NDP
This item has been fully covered in minute 71/21

78/21 To receive an update on the provision of a Car Park for the Parish Hall
The Chairman reported that Cllr. Hope had agreed to sell the Parish Council around half an acre of land to create a Parish Hall car park. Cllr. Hope and Council would each appoint a valuer and the purchase would proceed from there. Cllr. Hope reported that he would appoint McCartneys.

Mrs Maynard raised the issue about the naming of the project and it was agreed that the car park would best be described as a village car park. Following discussion Council resolved that henceforth the car park would be known as the Village Car Park. However, it was also agreed that ultimately the Parish Council should wholly own the Village Car Park to avoid any future legal issues over ownership. Donations towards the cost of creating the Village Car Park would however be welcome.

The date of the next meeting is 27 July 2021

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm.

Signed  Chairman of the Parish Council

Dated 27th July 2021