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

Tuesday 26th October 2021 7.30pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

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

In Attendance: Allan Drew (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 7 members of the public attended

116/21 Apologies for absence

All Councillors were present

117/21 Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation

No requests had been received

118/21 Draft minutes of the previous meeting on 28th September 2021.

The minutes of the meeting of 28th September 2021 were agreed and the Chairman signed the draft minutes as a true record of the meeting.

119/21 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

None

120/21 Open Session

120.1/21 To receive an update from the Ward Councillor.

Cllr. Harrington had attended a joint cabinet meeting with Powys Council and felt that Herefordshire and Powys had many common interests. The discussion was wide ranging including pressure on services in areas of sparse population and to work closely on phosphates and other cross border issues.

COVID cases remain quite high with 437 cases/100k residents as of 16 October. The average for England is 457 cases/100k residents. There has been a slight increase in hospitalisations and precautions are still necessary to limit infection spread.

The Lengthsman's grant is moving forward within the governance structure but is taking longer than expected. However, the plan remains to provide £250k one off for current projects and also to have £250k/annum for 5 years available probably on a matched funding basis.

Traffic regulation orders and public rights of way. The teams managing these activities are planned to return to Herefordshire Council from BB on January 1st 2022. It is expected that these activities will then deliver better value and be more flexible, for example using volunteers for PROW work. Extra funding (~£400k) will be made available to deal with back logs of work in these areas.

The BB runs until 2024 without an extension and Council currently does not intend to grant an extension. Notice of termination is required during 2022.

Repairs to the length of highway into Little Cowarne remain un-funded but a new pot hole repair machine has arrived and Cllr. Harrington has suggested trialling this machine on this stretch.

Three officers responsible for BB contact management have been replaced recently and improvements in contract performance are expected.

Cllr. Harrington has again raised the issue of the drain discharging water onto the carpark adjacent to the village hall and expects the problem to be resolved shortly.

It was also confirmed that road closure notices had been issued for re-surfacing/restoring areas of concern specifically at Ram's Corner and also on the A44 at West Hill on the Bromyard bypass.

Mr Nicholson (resident) raised concerns that the issue of the footpath across the school playing field appeared to be in abeyance. Cllr. Harrington stated that he was dealing with this issue by having the school work with Herefordshire Property Services and that as a result it would be useful if he then had a meeting with the school governors.

Cllr. Legge raised the matter of progress of the proposed roundabout at the A417/A49 junction. Cllr. Harrington updated Council that an approach to buy the necessary land had been made to Mr Mercer (landowner) so the matter had become live again and should now progress to completion.

120.2/21 To receive queries or concerns from local residents.

No further queries or matters were received

121/21 To receive an update on the Parish Hall.

Mr Mottram updated the meeting with progress on Hall repairs and refurbishment. The current phase of repairs and improvements has been completed with the installation of the impressive audio-visual equipment which performs better than earlier systems. Other improvements included replacing the fans. Trustees will meet to consider the next phase of works particularly the oil-fired heating system which has enjoyed an extended life but will have to be replaced in the relatively near future. Options will include "green" technology but further investigation is required to establish the most appropriate replacement option.

122/21 To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

The RFO reported that bank balances stand at-

Unity Trust £35443.10 including ~£9,000 for the NDP grant. HSBC £0.

The RFO asked that 2 signatories to the HSBC account sign the account closure form and Cllrs. Brazier and Barrett duly signed off the form.

Payments as authorised at the September meeting had all been made-

No.	Name	Amount £	Authorised	Details
1	A M Drew	£300.83	TB/ChrisH	Clerk's September salary
2	HMRC PAYE	£225.40	TB/ChrisH	2 nd quarter 2021-22
3	HFSP Council	£42.49+VAT	TB/ChrisH	Laser printer cartridge (Costs shared with HFSP)
4	PrintPlus	£28.00	TB/ChrisH	250 flyers for village meeting. Purchased using delegated authority
5	UnityBank	£18.00	Automatic	Bank charges
6	PGPC	£386.42	N/A	Payment from HSBC account

Payments received since last meeting.

12th October 2021

£386.42

Closing balance from HSBC

122.1/21 Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	300.63	Clerk's October salary
2	Autela payroll	43.50+VAT	Payroll services
3	A C Garden Services	310.00	September 2021 cut
4	Amazon UK	25.73+VAT	100 Face masks for village meeting – refund to A M Drew
5	Mutts Butts	10.38+VAT	500 Dog poo bags – refund to A M Drew
6	Viking	33.74+VAT	Envelopes, filing wallets, plastic sleeves
7	Eyelid	£100.00	Late invoice Council agreed payment

Council resolved that the above payments should be made

The RFO also presented the bank reconciliation for quarter ending 30 September 2021 which showed the cash book to be completely in step with the bank account.

123/21 Planning applications & updates

123.1/21

To comment on planning applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council-
P213713/F - Planning Permission 4th October 2021

Little Cowarne, Hampton, Three Horseshoes Inn Little Cowarne Bromyard Herefordshire HR7 4RQ, Three Horseshoes Inn Little Cowarne Bromyard Herefordshire HR7 4RQ, Proposal for the change of use of land to extend the existing beer garden and the erection of a covered seating area on the land in association with the Three Horseshoes Inn

Council discussed the application and concluded that the proposals would enhance the amenities at the Inn and should be supported. The Clerk submitted the following comments-

"Council noted the proposed change of use of the land from agricultural to class A4 (drinking establishments) and the erection of a building on the land to act as a shelter. Council felt that the development would provide enhanced facilities for the community and should be supported"

123.2/21

To note: planning permissions granted by Herefordshire Council-

None

123.3/21

To note: planning permissions refused by Herefordshire Council

None

124/21 Lengthsman & Grass cutting

124.1/21 To consider work to be undertaken

At present no further grass cutting was anticipated but this would be reviewed if warm weather caused significant growth.

The Chairman reported that the hedge around the inside of the cemetery needs cut back and the Legthsman would carry out the work.

In the northwest corner of the cemetery there was a collection of green waste caused by spent flowers and other green waste. It would improve the appearance of the cemetery if the waste was removed and a small screen erected. There was discussion about possibly providing a compost bin although there was concern about other materials being deposited there.

It was also reported by the Chairman that there was considerable tidying work of ditches, gullies etc. to be undertaken before the weather turned wintery and the Lengthsman agreed that he would be able to undertake this work in the near future. The Clerk confirmed that there was funding in the budget for such work.

125/21 Neighbourhood Development Plan – to agree next steps following the village meeting on 25th October.

The important next step is to agree the date of the next steering group meeting following the successful launch of the NDP at the village meeting held on 25th October. The Clerk reported that he had contacted Louise Kirkup, the planning consultant, and she would be keen to come to the next meeting of the steering group. After some discussion and consultation with the Parish Hall Chairman it was agreed that Monday 22 November would be the earliest suitable date. The Clerk would publicise the meeting and thank those that had attended the first meeting.

126/21 To receive an update on the provision of a Village Car Park.

The car park had also been discussed at the village meeting on the 25th October and there had been overwhelming support for the car park proposals based on £50,000 (ex VAT) expenditure with no increase in the precept. The Clerk reminded those present that before a Parish Council could borrow permission would be required and such permission was achieved via a submission to HALC who would then liaise with the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government who make the final decision. Information on the Council's finances is required, and the Clerk had completed the application form in line with the conclusions reached at the village meeting on 25th October. After some discussion it was agreed that Council would commit some reserves to engage the planning consultants and that once consent had been obtained firmer costings would be possible. The planning costs would be shown as Council's contribution to the project. It was resolved that this approach would be adopted as the way forward with the project.

127/21 To receive a report from Herefordshire Talk Community presented by Jess Howdle, Talk Community Development Officer

Jess Howdle had told the Clerk that she was unwell and unable to attend. The Clerk would re-arrange her visit for the next meeting.

128/21 Matters for discussion at the next meeting.

Cllr. Barrett raised the matter of St John's Church and the problems with the fabric of the building. The Clerk confirmed that the Council could not legally fund expenditure for the benefit of the church, but anything short of funding would probably be acceptable.

Mr Mottram provided very useful background to the reasons why the village was in such a difficult position. In summary the church is too large for a village of Pencombe's size to support. Crucially the parish church is the responsibility of the parish and not the Church of England. Some parishes had successfully solved this problem, but it was difficult. It was also noted that several residents had mentioned the church at the NDP meeting and it was likely that there would be considerable community support for ensuring the church was properly maintained.

The consensus was that the church should be part of the NDP discussions.

The date of the next meeting is 23rd November 2021.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.47pm.

Signed 

Chairman of the Parish Council

Dated 23/11/2021