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

Tuesday 25th January 2022 at 7.30pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

Cllr. D Legge (A/Chairman) Cllr. P. Hope
Cllr. C. Hadley

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

Members of the Public: 7 members of the public attended

1/22 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. T. Brazier who had tested positive for COVID. Council accepted the reason for absence.

2/22 Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation

No requests had been received

3/22 Draft minutes of the previous meeting on 23rd November 2021 and the extra ordinary meeting of 21st December 2021.

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd November 2021 and of the extra ordinary meeting of 21st December were agreed and the Chairman signed the draft minutes as a true record of the meeting.

4/22 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- a. The Council received the resignation of Cllr. Hayes and thanked her for her many years of service both on the Council and to the wider communities.
- b. The four trustees of the Arkwright trust have resigned as required by the trust's constitution and the Council has been asked to provide a replacement for Cllr. Brazier who had represented the Council on the trust for some years. After some discussion Council resolved to re-appoint Cllr. Brazier as a trustee to the trust.
- c. The Clerk had received a request to purchase more flags for the village flag pole. He had been advised that the cheaper polyester flags were just as serviceable as the more expensive version and Council agreed that more of these flags should be purchased.
- d. The Clerk advised Council that the printer used for the production of Council business had been giving trouble for a while now and required attention after every Windows update. He was spending increasing amounts of time fault finding the printer software and had concluded that the machine was no longer sufficiently serviceable to be economic. Council agreed that since the machine was now seven years old it should be replaced with a similar model costing £200+VAT. (Update: as a final attempt the Clerk had applied a new software repair tool to the printer and the device is now working perfectly. No further action necessary at present)

5/22 Open Session

5.1/22 To receive an update from the Ward Councillor.

Cllr. Harrington reported that COVID cases were now 770 cases/100k as at 17 January which was some way below the national average of 970 cases/100k. 63% of Herefordshire residents have now received their booster injections. Severity of infection is lower with this variant and hospitalisations are lower.

Herefordshire is currently setting the budget of the coming year and is proposing to raise council tax by 1.99% and an increase of 1% for social care (2.99% total). 80% of the budget is spent on social care which is increasingly difficult to manage given that annual revenues are down by £100m compared to 2010.

Public rights of way (PROW) and traffic regulation orders are now scheduled to come back in house from 1st April 2022. These changes will clear the way for use of volunteers particularly for PROW.

The Lengthsman drainage grant is now available and registered Councils such as Pencombe should submit quotations to obtain a share of the £250,000 which is available. The annual recurring grant also of £250,000 (match funded) will definitely start on 1st April. Some funding has been provided to the school to resolve the drainage problems.

C1117 at Little Cowarne needs attention and Cllr. Harrington has requested a re-survey in the hope that it will be re-surfaced in next year's program.

Cllr. Hadley raised the issue that a road closure notice for the C1117 was in effect but for the past two days no work had taken place. Cllr. Harrington would raise the issue with Highways & BB.

5.2/22 To receive queries or concerns from local residents.

Mr Barrett raised concerns about the C1110 road surface around Sparrington cottages and the Clerk mentioned that Cllr. Brazier was also concerned about drainage problems in the same area. Additionally the kiosk housing the defibrillator was dilapidated. In conclusion Council agreed that Sparrington needed some investment perhaps using some grant money

6/22 To receive an update on the Parish Hall.

Mr Mottram explained that the Hall boiler continued to give trouble and there had been a visit from consultants to explore the possibility of a heat pump replacement for the oil boiler. A quotation is expected shortly. The consultants also advised that the capacity of the electricity supply was unlikely to be a barrier to such a project.

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7/22 To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

Bank balances on 21/01/2022 were as follows-

- Unity Trust current account £33422.51

Council to note the breakdown of the bank balance as regards reserves and grants-

Use of Reserve	£
Winter maintenance & management	5000.00
Neighbourhood Development Plan	9414.76
Flood protection capital fund	5000.00
Village car park	6900.00
TOTAL	26,314.76

The general reserve to fund activity for the remainder of the financial year stands at-
 $£33422.51 - £26314.76 = £7107.75$

Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	300.63	Clerk's November salary
2	Society of Local Council Clerks	123.00+VAT	12th Edition – Local Council Administration (The clerk's "bible")
3	Community Heartbeat Trust	135.00+VAT	Sparrington annual maintenance charge
4	Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall	31.50	NDP village meeting 25 October 2020
5	PGPC	100.00	To create a petty cash fund for NDP meetings and for use using delegated authority
6	Royal British Legion	30.00	Donation for Remembrance Day wreath
7	Bank Charges	18.00	Automatic

Payments received since last meeting.

Nil

Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	• 300.63	Clerk's December salary
2	A M Drew	• 300.63	Clerk's January salary
3	HMRC PAYE	• 225.60	3 rd quarter PAYE
4	Autela payroll	• 43.50+VAT	3 rd quarter payroll

5	Kirkwells	• 490+VAT	Payment 1 for NDP
6	Viking	• 33.16+VAT	Stationery (for NDP & PGPC)
7	P&LC Parish Hall	• 63.00	Hall hire for NDP meetings 2 & 3

Clerk's extra hours worked on NDP project

At the November 2021 meeting, Council agreed (minute 132/21) that the Clerk would be paid for the extra hours worked on the NDP project. The Clerk has kept a timesheet since the project started back in June 2021 and between June 2021 and 12 January 2022 the time spent on the project had been 50.5 hours which at the current pay rate is £655.59 gross. Following agreement at the November meeting the Clerk had drafted a letter to Autela payroll for signature by the Chairman to have this amount added to the Clerk's pay.

Banking Reconciliation

The quarterly banking reconciliation for quarter ended 31 December 2021 had been carried out and a full reconciliation has been achieved. The reconciliation was signed by the A/Chairman and the RFO.

The precept for 2022-23 had been submitted to Herefordshire and the level remains the same as the past year. (£13875)

Recognition of Cllr. John Barrett

A discussion regarding appropriate recognition of the service given to the villages by Cllr. Barrett and also his wife Celia during her 19 years as Pencombe post mistress resulted in agreement that-

- There would be a coffee club recognition event for Celia on a Thursday in February, final date to be agreed
- On behalf of the community the Parish Council would make a donation to John and Celia. The size of the donation will be decided at a later date.

The Clerk also remarked that a vacancy notice had not yet been received for Cllr. Hayes and Council will also have to consider recognition for Cllr. Hayes' service to the community.

8/22 Planning applications & updates

8.1/22 *To comment on planning applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council- 220101 Approval of reserved matters Grendon Court Farm (Comments not required)*

8.2/22 *To note: planning permissions granted by Herefordshire Council- None*

8.3/22 *To note: planning permissions refused by Herefordshire Council 212688 Certificate of lawfulness for land at 3 Horseshoes Refused*

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- 9/22** **Lengthsman & Grass cutting**
9.1/22 **To consider work to be undertaken**
No work had been undertaken since the last meeting. Cllr. Hadley requested that some ditching work be carried out on the recently cleared corner opposite the BT kiosk in Little Cowarne. Council agreed the work should be undertaken and the Lengthsman and Cllr. Hadley would liaise on timing.
- 9.2/22** **Re-tendering of grass cutting contract**
The Clerk reported that the health of the current contractor was not good and the contract would have to be re-tendered with effect from the coming season. The meeting papers contained a draft contract for Council consideration which when agreed would then be advertised in the Hereford Times for interested contractors to apply for the contract. There was discussion around funding for grass cutting in St Guthlac's churchyard and the Clerk reminded members of the legal guidance which forbids support of the Church from Parish Council funds. Council agreed that the draft contract was satisfactory and the Clerk should proceed with the re-tendering exercise.
- 10/22** **Neighbourhood Development Plan**
The Clerk reported that a successful NDP workshop had been held on 11 January and despite COVID fears nearly 40 residents had attended. The purpose of the workshop was to create the first draft vision, objectives and key themes for the NDP. Fives groups of residents had created flip chart output and then each group had presented their conclusions to the rest of the group. These flip charts had then been forwarded to Louise Kirkup who then integrated the ideas and produced the first draft documents derived from the workshop. These documents were included with the meeting papers for this meeting. They are also available on the Council website and had been emailed to all residents who had provided email addresses (about 90 in total). These draft documents would now be finalised by a further resident workshop and then become an important part of the draft NDP.
- 11/22** **To receive an update on the provision of a Village Car Park.**
The Clerk updated the Council on progress. A site meeting had been held with Berrys on 1st December 2021 attended by the Chairman, the Clerk and the Lengthsman along with two representatives from Berrys. (PJ Triplow and Richard Harman). The site meeting had been positive and Berrys had commenced work on the design of the car park. A topological survey had been carried out recently. A tree survey is also required for planning consent and Berrys had recommended a consultant, Salopian Consultancy Ltd to provide all the information required at a cost of £575. Council agreed to engage Salopian.
- 12/22** **Pencombe telephone kiosk**
Following the decision of Council at its last meeting the Clerk had started the process of adoption for the Pencombe kiosk. This process involves a 90 day consultation period because the kiosk is listed. The Clerk has been notified that this consultation will end on 31 January 2022. If no objection is received the Council is free to adopt the kiosk. Legally adoption is in fact an agreement to purchase the kiosk from BT for the sum of £1 and all risks and obligations will pass from the seller (BT) to the buyer (PGPC).
- 13/22** **Matters for discussion at the next meeting.**
No matters were raised for discussion at the next meeting. However, Cllr. Hadley raised three additional matters with Cllr. Harrington-

- A report suggesting that there would be land freed up due to reductions in the number of sheep and beef cattle had indicated that the County would have to decide how this land should be used. Cllr. Harrington had no information on this topic and asked Cllr. Hadley to forward the article.
- What is the Citizens Climate Assembly? Cllr. Harrington reported on this Herefordshire initiative which was a way of involving citizens through mechanisms other than the normal democratic process.
- Is Hereford going to implement a 20mph speed limit? Cllr. Harrington replied that such an initiative was being considered not just for Hereford but for other County towns and villages. However, it would form part of an integrated transport policy designed to encourage short distance trips within the city to be made by improved public transport.

The date of the next meeting is 22nd February 2022.

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

Signed:  Chairman of the Parish Council

Date: 22/2/2022