
**Minutes of the Meeting of Pencombe Group Parish Council
held on**

Tuesday 25th April 2023 at 7.30pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

Cllr. W. Brazier, Chairman	Cllr. C. Hadley
Cllr. D Legge	Cllr. S. Barrett
Cllr. S Walsh	Cllr. J. Lewis

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

Members of the Public: 6 members of the public attended

42/23 Apologies for absence

All Councillors were present

43/23 Declarations of Interest and written requests for Dispensation

None received

44/23 Minutes of previous meetings

The amended draft minutes of the ordinary meeting of 28th February 2023 and the draft minutes of the ordinary meeting on 28th March 2023 were both approved and signed by the Chairman

45/23 Matters arising not otherwise covered in the minutes

Arrangements for the Parish meeting 2023:

It was agreed that the Parish Meeting would be held on Tuesday 13 June 2023 and the Clerk would invite the Great Collaboration to give a presentation on the wide-ranging environmental initiatives being undertaken around the County. (The Great Collaboration has agreed to attend. Some light refreshments will be provided).

The Clerk reported that the election set for 4th May will not be contested since the number of candidates equals the number of seats available. So, no poll will be held (other than for the seat of Ward Councillor).

Cllr. Walsh was not seeking re-election and Council thanked for her service over the past year.

46/23 Parish Hall update

Mr Mottram was unable to attend so the Clerk read out his report on the Parish Hall to the meeting-

Report for the Parish Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 25th April 2023

Recently I was asked why there was a report from the Parish Hall at the Parish Council meetings. I explained that the Parish Council is the 'holding' or custodian trustee of the Parish Hall. Consequently the Parish Council members have a role in providing encouragement, support and practical help for the hall which benefits the local community. Furthermore Section 19 of the 1976 Local Government Act enables a Parish Council to give unlimited financial assistance for work on village halls or in support of their running costs, therefore requests for funds or reports of spending by the hall trustees need to be made in the public domain of the Parish Council meetings.

Since the last Parish Council meeting the trustees have been exploring new arrangements for booking and invoicing which we hope to have in place before I step down in July. Trustees will have a monthly rota to share the tasks using 'Hallmaster' software package together with a mobile

hand-set held by the 'on duty' trustee. This arrangement will enable there to be a single published phone number along with the existing published email address for all enquiries and bookings.

A number of the double-glazed units on the south side of the hall have failed. These are capital items and therefore fall within the criteria for funding by the Parish Council.

It is evident that there are insufficient active trustees (approximately 50%) on the trust body and it will be necessary to find more people who are able to undertake the work involved in running the hall for the local community. This may be something of a challenge.

The AGM is to be held on Monday 3rd July 2023.

There followed discussion about some of the double-glazed units in the Hall windows which had "blown" and had condensation in them. The Hall had received a quotation for replacing the units and the defective panels could be replaced for £260+VAT. Council agreed that it would settle the bill for the double-glazed units.

There are also concerns about the possible high electricity charges when the contract falls due for renewal in the near future.

- 47/23** Cllr. Sally Walsh presented the finance report-
Bank Balances
Bank balance on 21/04/2023 was as follows-
Unity Trust current account £21,489.58

Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.35	Clerk's March salary.
2	HMRC	334.15	Q4 PAYE for payment 6 April
3	NDP meetings Hall hire	68.00	Hall 4 hrs 17 Oct '22=£46.00 CR 30Jan & 20 Feb=£22.00
4	Microsoft 365 software	7.90+VAT	Charges for February. Refund to Clerk
5	Unity Bank	18.00	Bank charges (automatic)
6	Planning Portal	149.20	Planning application fee

Total payment - £922.60+VAT as appropriate

Income received since last meeting – 21 April 2023 - £9150.00 Precept first part

Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	Berrys	902.70+VAT	Final payment for planning application preparation
2	A M Drew	363.55	April 2023 salary
3	Autela	59.65+VAT	Payroll & EoY invoice
4	Adrian Hope tree services	585.00+VAT	Work carried out in Pencombe churchyard
5	Herefordshire Council	329.34	Cemetery business rates
6	Groundworks	4842.86	Unused NDP grant monies to be returned
7	A M Drew	114.00	Refund to Clerk for additional planning fee due to incorrect calculation by planning portal

Total for payment -£7197.10+VAT as appropriate.

Cemetery business rates in total would be best paid by standing order of first payment of £54.34 then 5 monthly instalments of £55.00 from 1 May onwards. Council is invited to agree this arrangement. However, the RFO could see no advantage in paying monthly since all payments would have been made before the next precept was received. In these circumstances the full charge should be paid immediately.

It was resolved that these payments should be made.

Cllr. Walsh explained the variances in the year outturn, some of which were positive (favourable) and others negative (unfavourable). Overall the Council had a surplus of -£2501 relative to budget.

Because total expenditure (at about £34000) is well above the threshold of £25000 there will be a Limited Assurance Review by the external auditor.

[illegible]

48/23 To receive: a planning report from Cllr. Colin Hadley

New applications

230918 Sidnall Farm, Pencombe. Removal of conditions 2 & 6 from 201083.

It was pointed out that this application was an attempt to modify the conditions attached to a previous application 201083 which explicitly excluded the use of the building for the purposes now requested. Specifically condition 6 attached to 201083 stated-

The premises shall be used solely as a day room restricted to the use of persons occupying the existing holiday lets at Sidnall Farm, Pencombe and shall at no time be converted to form a separate unit of habitable accommodation.

The Clerk advised that the policies which would be broken if this application was granted are crucial to development in rural areas and that in his opinion Council had no option but to object to application 230918. After discussion it was unanimously resolved that Council would object to this application and the Clerk would submit appropriate comments.

The following comments were later submitted-

"Pencombe Group Parish Council discussed this application (230918) at its meeting on 25 April. Council decided to OBJECT to the application since Condition 6 applied to application 201083 because the original consent for a games/lecture room as granted contained the following-

The premises shall be used solely as a day room restricted to the use of persons occupying the existing holiday lets at Sidnall Farm, Pencombe and shall at no time be converted to form a separate unit of habitable accommodation. The local planning authority wish to control the specific use of the premises, to comply with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017), National Planning Policy Framework, NERC Act (2006), and Herefordshire Local Plan - Core Strategy Policy LD2, SD3 and SD4.

If consent were granted to 230918 the important policies and regulations which form the basis of determinations on rural developments would be breached with unknowable consequences. In particular the Herefordshire Local Plan policies are the basis of many NDPs in the County and these Plans would be rendered invalid if consent was to be granted."

Existing applications

There had been no movement on existing applications

230645	LC	Erection of wooden shed	Undecided
230672	LC	Proposed new kitchen, WC/utility etc	Undecided
230625	LC	Agri. dry manure store	Undecided
224305	LC	Conversion of 3 barns at Upper House	Undecided
221751	LC	CoL for land adj. 3 Horseshoes	Pending appeal

49/23 Lengthsman Scheme/Grass cutting:

Cllr. Tony Brazier reported on current issues with Lengthsman work.

The main issue was that the position was still unclear about the permit to do work by the Lengthsman on the drain/ditch network between New House Farm and Gasbage. Cllr. Harrington undertook to arrange for James Fishlock of BB to contact the Council and discuss the problem.

The Lengthsman has started grass cutting and the village grass areas are much tidier.

50/23 Neighbourhood Development Plan

Cllr. David Legge updated the meeting on the NDP

This meeting has already agreed the return of the nearly £4000 unspent grant monies for the NDP project. These unspent funds will be applied for again when the grant scheme re-opens in early 2023-24.

The offer letter of technical support (for site assessments) from AECOM has been received and the additional grant required has been approved. The offer letter follows containing some terms and conditions which Council is invited to discuss and approve-

TECHNICAL SUPPORT APPLICANT AGREEMENT

Date: March 31, 2023

1. Name of organization Pencombe Group Parish Council
2. Name and details of the main contact for the organisation Allan Drew
3. Name and employer of lead consultant Una Mcgaughrin AECOM
4. Summary of planned activities expected for technical support. 4.1 Activity - Site Options and Assessment 4.2 The period of support is expected to be during -

5. Responsibilities of the neighbourhood planning group

- 5.1 To work closely with the case worker to carry out activities agreed within the agreed timescales.
- 5.2 To provide the lead consultant with information relating to the planned activity as requested and within 5 working days.
- 5.3 To adhere to agreed work plans and timescales and to notify the case worker as early as possible if delays are anticipated.
- 5.4 Participate fully in the programme and where applicable provide feedback.
- 5.5 Provide accurate and complete information and will notify us immediately of any changes to information and materials provided.
- 5.6 Neither you nor the neighbourhood group concerned have actual or potential conflict of interest with Locality (including our programme partners AECOM and RICS). In complying with these terms you will immediately inform us if you become aware of any such conflict of interest.

Part of the support involves agreeing a work plan and timescales with the qualifying body. It is essential that work progresses and timescales are followed. We retain the right to withdraw our offer if your group refuses to cooperate or if mutually agreed actions are not carried out.

We will not be liable to you, your partners or anyone else in respect of any direct or indirect loss, economic loss or loss of opportunity arising as a result of your application to the Programme.

Locality, 33 Corsham Street London N1 6DR, 0845 458 8336, www.locality.org.uk

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Una Mcgaughrin is the lead consultant for AECOM and a Zoom meeting was held today 25 April with her.

The output would follow a red, amber, green system for site assessment and once completed the "green" sites would be subject to residents' consultation.

51/23 Provision of a village car park.

Cllr. Tony Brazier provided an update on the design of car park

The planning application for the car park was submitted to Herefordshire Council on 5 April. Payment of £149.20 for the application was requested and paid on 12 April. On 19 April Herefordshire Council started to validate the application and found that the planning portal had calculated the fee incorrectly. Another £114 fee was required to cover change of use of the land from agricultural. The Clerk paid this additional fee on 20 April and a refund has been agreed by this meeting.

52/23 The Wheelwrights

Cllr. James Lewis updated the meeting on progress of the potential purchase of The Wheelwrights by a Community Benefit Society (CBS). He noted that the pub has re-opened and is much appreciated by residents. The paperwork to register the CBS has been completed and will be followed by a survey of residents the results from which will be used to shape the grant application to enable the purchase of the pub. The holiday let idea has been dropped since it was not affordable. Cllr. Hadley asked if an independent valuation had been obtained and would probably be required for the grant application.

It was agreed these updates would continue as currently the only means of keeping the community updated.

53/23 Salt Boxes

The Clerk provided a report on salt boxes and a map showing the locations, but it was apparent that some were missing from the report. Little Cowarne had 3 boxes but they were very close together and this is the route that ambulances use to reach Pencombe Hall. It was probably desirable for a box to be fitted at the top of the hill close to Poplands. Cllr. Harrington undertook to see if Herefordshire would be prepared to provide boxes free of charge. The Clerk pointed out that some boxes needed replacement so perhaps three boxes would be required which Cllr. Harrington would try to obtain. It was also clear that apart from one box in Little Cowarne (opposite the kiosk) the remaining boxes were full of salt and none at all had been used during the past winter.

54/23 Ward Councillor Harrington provided a verbal update.

The first planning consents using the phosphate credits had been passed. A development of 8 house has started and the statutory consultees are happy with the phosphate arrangements.

In places where there are more potholes than surface there was some additional money to do a complete resurfacing.

55/23 Queries or concerns by local residents on parish matters.

Mr Bull raised the matter of abandoned road signs at the bottom of Springfield after the work carried out on the drain top. Cllr. Harrington would raise the matter with BB.

Mr Burge raised the matter of some financial assistance for the pub during the Coronation event. Some funding was available and the Clerk said that £500 was available between the two Parishes, split on a "per head" basis (£366 for Pencombe, £134 for Little Cowarne). It was for those organising the events to decide how best to spend this donation and could support the pub if they wished.

Cllr. Walsh mentioned that she would cease to be involved with the working group on her retirement from Council. A Parish Councillor should be appointed to attend and support the working group.

The Clerk mentioned that he had visited the mobile post office and there was indeed a tail lift for wheelchair access. It is not normally visible since it is retracted under the vehicle but it would be deployed on request.

Mrs Barrett asked who the bus shelter belonged to and would it be acceptable for her to clean off offensive graffiti. Council agreed that the bus shelter was on the Council asset register and would be pleased if Mrs Barrett could carry out the work.

56/23 Matters for discussion at the next meeting

Mrs Drew raised the matter "the £100 laptop" and said that the Parish Council may wish to consider buying such laptops for community use, particularly to help the digitally excluded.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 23rd May 2023

Signed



Chairman

Date: 23 May 2023