

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

Tuesday 26th September 2023 at 7.30pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

Cllr. J. Lewis

Cllr. T. Brazier

Cllr. T. Burge

Cllr. C. Hadley

In Attendance: Ward Cllr. Bruce Baker, Allan Drew Parish Clerk

Members of the Public: 7 members of the public attended

118/23 To receive: apologies for absence

Cllr. Legge had given his apologies for absence. These were accepted by Council

119/23 To receive: Declarations of Interest and written requests for Dispensation

None received.

120/23 To receive and approve: the draft minutes of the meeting of 22nd August 2023

Council approved the draft minutes which were duly signed by the Chairman

121/23 Matters arising not otherwise covered in the minutes

The Chairman reported that-

He had removed the broken spring from the church clock pendulum suspension and sent it to the Cumbria Clock Co. for repair. As a result he had secured a price reduction of £200 from £690 to £490. Council reaffirmed that the repair should go ahead and would be paid from Parish funds.

He had had another key cut for the clock tower door. This had cost £90 and he would be considering how this cost might be refunded. The Clerk commented that such expenditure was strictly proper to the church.

Work on the Sparrington kiosk was complete apart from the gold painting of the crown motif which would be done as soon as practical. He would now be calling on those residents who had pledged financial support for the project.

137/23 To receive: a verbal update from the Ward Councillor

Cllr. Baker reported that-

- No schools in Herefordshire had suffered from the aerated concrete problems, although the investigation was not quite fully completed.
- The cycle track is now open and is a 1km enclosed, traffic free track to help people of all ages learn to ride cycles safely and confidently. It is part of the HALO leisure centre at the racecourse.
- There had been discussion about a proposal to turn all roads where people live into 20mph speed limit areas. This would mean virtually every road in the county would be changed and Cllr. Baker was against such a measure.

- The government proposals to lift restrictions (caused by phosphates) on new house building had been defeated in the House of Lords.
- The position of residents who cut the verges outside their properties has been to some extent clarified. The Highways Act did require residents to obtain a license for such work but Herefordshire would not be implementing such a requirement. Instead Herefordshire Council was pleased that residents contributed significantly to making the county look attractive and encouraged responsible trimming of verges outside properties.

138/23 **To receive:** queries or concerns from local residents to the Ward Councillor

Mr Mottram (Pencombe footpath officer) raised the issue of the unusable footbridge on PG4. He stated that the landowner is minded to seek a court decision under section 56 of the Highways Act to force Herefordshire Council to properly repair the footbridge so reopening the footpath. (This problem had been reported to Herefordshire Council in the Spring of 2022 but that report was no longer visible. The Clerk re-reported the problem in October 2023 ref. no. FS-Case-555711273. Cllr. Baker has been advised).

Similar problems exist on LC5 where the defective bridge at SO 61047 51178 has been reported previously. The Clerk has re-reported again.

Cllr. Hadley raised a number of queries-

There is no salt box at the top of Abel's Bank. Could one please be provided. Cllr. Baker felt that such a request should be fulfilled by the Parish Lengthsman.

The work to re-instate the safety barrier outside the White House (Abel's Farm) has not progressed. BB had erected signs and some flimsy screening but effectively a person or vehicle straying to the side could drop 2m down to the brook. Cllr. Baker would check progress.

139/23 **To receive:** a planning report from Cllr. Colin Hadley

Cllr. Hadley reported that-

There are no new applications

Existing applications – Council noted the village car park had received consent.

232312	P	Remove porch and replace with a small extension	Undecided
231201	P	Village car park	Approved with conditions
221751	LC	CoL for land adj. 3 Horseshoes	Pending appeal

140/23 **To receive:** an update on the Parish Hall

In the absence of Mrs Legge, Mrs Drew reported that-

- The Hallmaster self-service booking system is operational and users seem able to use the facility and make their bookings.
- There was a very successful LinC Lunch at the beginning of the month and about 35 residents attended.
- After the summer "recess" bookings for the various local clubs and societies are on the rise.

Mr Nicholson reported that the faulty hot water heater had been replaced. However, an intermittent fault with the fire alarm had been reported and the maintainer was working to resolve the problem.

141/23 To receive: a finance report from the RFO

The RFO reported that-

Bank Balances

Bank balance on 21/09/2023 -Unity Trust current account £17424.07-

Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.48	August 2023 salary
2	D C Gardening Services	520.00+VAT	July Grass cutting
3	D C Gardening Services	80.00+VAT	Grass cutting additional
4	A M Drew	757.72	Additional hours spent on NDP for 2022-23
	Total	1721.12+VAT	

Income received since last meeting –

£9150 precept part 2

Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.55	September 2023 salary
2	HMRC	550.82	Q2 PAYE
3	D C Gardening Services	520.00+VAT	September grass cut
4	D C Gardening Services	80.00+VAT	Grass cutting additional
	Total	1514.37+VAT	

Total for payment £1514.37+VAT as appropriate.

Council resolved to make these payments.

142/23 To receive an update: Provision of notice boards for-

1. Sparrington hamlet

The residents of Sparrington had asked if a noticeboard could be provided so that notices of events and other items of local interest could be posted. The Clerk advised that legal complications could arise if such a board became an official Council board, since all Council notices would have to be posted as for the other two village boards. This would require quite a large board and the costs would be in the region of £800. Council felt that this was a high cost given the relatively small

number of residents involved and the Clerk agreed to look for other options to be discussed at the next meeting.

2. The Causeway, Pencombe

Council had heard that the school is keen to erect a small information centre for use by school children (and any other interested people) about the wildlife and flora of the Causeway. There was no real detail available but Council thought the idea was a good one and agreed in principle to support the project with a financial contribution. The Clerk will write to the school to understand their plans.

143/23 Lengthsman Scheme/Grass cutting:

To receive: a report on current Lengthsman work from Cllr. Tony Brazier.

The Lengthsman grant which had been applied for in August had now been agreed by Herefordshire Council. Council will receive £2572 for the regular annual maintenance and up to a further (match funded) £2572 contribution. The project to concrete an area from the highway to the Parish Hall ramp has been agreed by the Locality Steward so Council and will now progress with an agreed plan and obtaining the necessary (3) quotations for the work to commence.

Grass cutting. There had been a minor problem with the grass cutting contract and the September cut had been omitted. The final cut of this year's contract would be during October. There was discussion about removing grass after the cut but currently the contract did not cover gathering and removal. Council noted that if required an additional cut could be requested.

144/23 Neighbourhood Development Plan

To receive: update on NDP from the Clerk.

In the absence of Cllr. Legge the Clerk reported that-

The Clerk apologised for not having been able to organise the NDP workshop proposed at the last meeting to discuss the first written draft of the NDP and also to present the findings from the AECOM report on the sites submitted. At the last Council meeting a summary of potentially suitable and unsuitable sites had been presented. Landowners had been informed of the results of the AECOM exercise for the sites they had submitted.

145/23 Provision of a village car park.

To receive: update on the car park from Cllr. Tony Brazier

Cllr. Brazier reported that planning consent had been received from Herefordshire Council. The conditions around the consent were summarised, and none were particularly onerous. Before work can start on the car park the only condition is to provide a suitable access with the required visibility splays. The remaining conditions will be met as work progresses.

The Clerk summarised the conditions for information to the residents present.
It was agreed that contractors should be approached to obtain likely costs of construction.

146/23 Matters for discussion at the next meeting.

Cllr. Hadley asked that the willow sculptures which have been planted (perhaps too) close to the Hall be discussed.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed



Chairman

Date 24 October 2023