

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council VIDEO Meeting of Pensax Parish Council held at 7.00pm on Monday 27th July 2020

Present: Cllr Alistair Keron (Chairman), Cllr Sanders, Cllr Abraham, Cllr Wood

In Attendance: Clerk, County Cllr Ken Pollock, Dist Cllr Paul Cummings

1. **Apologies:** Noted from Cllr Rudd, Cllr Weston, Cllr Meese.
2. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs reminded to keep their registers updated.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – All Cllrs Item 13 – Pensax Village Hall agenda items. Item 16 Chairman. Item 10(i) – Cllrs Sander Millennium Green Trust Grant.
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – as above.
3. **Dispensations** –
 - a. To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) –
Dispensations requested – Pensax Village Hall agenda item 13 all Cllrs had been granted a Dispensation until May 2023. Cllr Sanders had a Dispensation for Millennium Green Trust Grant item 10(i).
4. **Public Question Time** – See notes at end of minutes.
5. **County Cllr Report** – Cllr left meeting after giving report, see notes at end of minutes.
District Cllr Report – See notes at end of minutes.
6. **To review the Council's Scheme of Delegation** (circulated) -
Clerk suggests following wording be added - **Due to COVID 19 virus urgent decisions usually agreed at meetings to be agreed as follows - To be agreed by email with responses from majority of Cllrs if a meeting cannot be held for technical reasons or health reasons. This is to commence from 20th March 2020 until the Government advise normal meetings can be held.** All Cllrs agreed for this amendment.
7. **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 16th March 2020** were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
8. **Progress reports for information:**
 - a. **BT Box** – Work ongoing.
 - b. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Menith Wood** – Openreach want to include part of Eardiston houses in scheme, still waiting for quote for work to see if it is affordable.
 - c. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Worles Common** – Openreach are working on scheme, awaiting final costs.
 - d. **Defibrillator** – It was agreed by all to order green signs with white writing for three sides of BT Box, one side to be plain green. Dist Cllr agreed to part fund, Clerk to obtain quotes.
9. **Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors:**
WCALC - Zoom meetings due to Covid 19 regulations and changes in Government Regulations
10. **Finances** –
 - a. **Payments made** – None.
 - b. **Payments received** – TSB Bank (compensation for bank error) = £250.00, MHDC Precept = £2525.00.
 - c. **Bank Reconciliations** (circulated) - Signed for March 2020 balance agreed as £13080.40. Signed for April/May/June balance agreed as £14233.70.
 - d. **Asset Register** – It was agreed to reduce insurance value of Pensax Hall to £50,000.00, to remove shed and assets of Pensax Hall from assets register as they are of no value.
 - e. **Certificate of Exemption from External Audit (circulated)** – It was agreed the Council qualify to sign this document having income and expenditure below £25000.00 for 2019-2020 and to confirm all other requirements are met.
 - f. **Annual Governance Statement** (circulated) – It was agreed all matters are being adhered to.
 - g. **Internal Audit report** (circulated) – No issues were raised.
 - h. **Annual Return/End of Year Accounts** (circulated) - Accounts were agreed for 2019-2020, it was agreed by all to sign all relevant papers. Balance carried forward to 1st April 2020 = £13080.40.
 - i. **Millennium Green Trust Grant for July 2020 Celebrations** – It was agreed by all to hold the grant of £250.00 in reserved funds for cancelled event. Celebration will be rearranged when Covid 19 allows.

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11. Planning:

- a. Plans circulated since last meeting – **None.**
- b. Decisions received since last meeting –
20/00318/HP - Field House, Worles Common, Stockton, WR6 6XQ - Erection of single storey double garage. Approved by MHDC.
19/01786/CU – Land at (Os 7279 6860), Worles Common, Stockton – Change of use of land from agricultural to equestrian use and erection of stable block. Approved by MHDC.
- c. Plans for comment on tonight –
20/00911/HP - 138 Snead Common, Abberley, Worcester WR6 6AF – Demolition of existing annex and conservatory; erection of ground floor extension and first floor dormer window. It was agreed to make no comment but to refer MHDC to Footpath issues.
- d. **Outstanding Planning issues –**
18/00244/FUL – Fartown, Pensax, Abberley, Worcester WR6 6AE – MHDC have advised the owners have confirmed ‘the building is used for storing agricultural machinery. Lorries and horseboxes have been stored on the land outside and have had work carried out on them, however these are their own and not connected to any business purpose’. The enquiry is now closed by MHDC.
ENF/19/0333 Stockton Road Caravan in field – It appears Caravan is being used for agricultural purposes only. If use changes MHDC will be informed.
ENF/20/0027 - Heather View, Pensax Common – Enforcement have been advised by the developer that ‘the retaining wall needs to be longer to be able to build the house at the lower level and yes the house will be built in accordance with the size on the plans’. The enquiry is now closed by MHDC.
- e. **15/01017/FUL - Land off Stockton Road, Stockton-on-Teme, Worcestershire, WR6 6UT Photo Voltaic solar Energy Farm (5MW) and ancillary equipment – The approval date passed without the applicant satisfying the necessary conditions so the permission has lapsed.**

12. Road report

- a. **Lengthsman – Work ongoing.**
- b. **Any problems to report –** Worles Common junction onto Pensax Lane. Can WCC monitor speed with a view to extending 30mph limit. Many minor incidents happening due to speed of traffic and farm entry being opposite junction.
- c. **Dangerous trees Pensax Common –** Some of the trees have fallen, Clerk will inform WCC.
- d. **Grit bins –** WCC have apologised for delay, the yellow bins should have been sited last winter.

13. Pensax Village Hall -

- a. **To agree future use of land/building –** Potential prices for the selling of the land have been obtained. If outline Planning permission is obtained it will increase the value of the land. WFDC have advised they will only consider Hall being converted into one dwelling, they will not consider social housing or more than one dwelling as not in line with Planning Policy. After much discussion it was agreed to obtain quotes from Architects to draw up outline plans. It was agreed by all to obtain outline planning permission with a view to selling land in the near future. Clerk to obtain costs of drawing up plans.
- b. **To agree disposal/sale of items in Hall –** A resident has purchased a large amount of tables/chairs and other items, they can be used by residents if requested. It was agreed by all to circulate list of remaining items and ask residents for donations if they wish to take anything. Cllr to look at removing noticeboard to be sited in Pensax when permission obtained from landowner.

14. To confirm matters agreed by email due to Covid 19 measures –

- a. **Payments made 15th April 2020**
Quality Solicitors Parkinsonwright - £685.20 for Pensax Village Hall legal fees
Came and Company Insurance Premium - Pensax Village Hall – £114.88
- b. **29th May 2020**
Internal Auditor fees - £70.00
Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils subscription 2020-2021 – It was agreed to renew at total cost of 230.34
Defibrillator Pads - £33.60
- c. **15th May 2020**
Risk Assessment for LM work – Document was agreed and is a new requirement from WCC
It was agreed by all the above matters had been agreed by email.

15. Correspondence for information –

COVID 19 updates from CALC, NALC, WCC, MHDC, Police, Community First
Abberley Parish Council – Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan – comment by 24th August
MHDC - Repair Café Outreach Service details

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SWDP Review Parish and Town Council Newsletter May 2020

WFDC Submission of Local Plan (2016-2036)

WC Mineral Local Plan – all consultations and updates

WCC Budget Briefing - meeting information Eastham Welfare Trust Report and Accounts

Lindridge PC - Vehicle Activated Signs Report Menith Wood – March to May 2020

16. Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting –

Complaint received by Clerk - 3rd June 2020 –

Report of Ancient Woodland having trees felled – Landowner contacted person complaining and explained this was planned work by Western Power to ensure cables were not damaged by overhanging branches.

17. Councillors' reports and items for the next agenda.

Agenda items - Pensax Village Hall

18. Date of next meeting: VIDEO MEETING MONDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7PM

19. Meeting Closed 8.22pm

Signed----- Date 2020
Chairman

Public Question Time – Old Chapel Menith Wood open from 1st August for meetings only, risk assessment in place, numbers restricted to follow Government Guidance.

District Councillors Report

MHDC meetings by Video – lost income due to Covid virus but have healthy reserves. South Worcestershire Development Plan being delayed until 2022. STW are consulted about the plan.

Stockton Solar Farm – Planning permission has expired but a new application could be submitted, if further application submitted need to comment on changes due to sale of neighbouring farm that was to be used for storage.

County Councillors Report

Flooding - I trust that you will all have heard about the award of £4.895 million towards the construction of a flood barrier scheme in Tenbury Wells. This is part of the massive allocation of money allocated to seek to solve flooding problems across the country, including an additional amount of up to £30 million in the Severn Valley, to overcome the periodic flooding in the river basin. The official announcement contains the following comments on our local area: ***In Tenbury Wells and the Severn Valley, two flood schemes will protect nearly 3,000 homes in areas which were badly affected by last winter's floods and protecting and creating more than 22,000 jobs along the Severn Valley. This will be supplemented by an additional scheme combining natural flood risk management, tree planting and habitat creation to reduce flood risk and capture carbon throughout the Severn Valley.*** There is a requirement for some local funding, and the Worcestershire LEP has been able to allocate £1 million to fill the gap. In addition, the jobs must be regarded as "shovel ready" meaning they must be able to start soon. Those of you who have studied the plans will know that there may need to be some revision or improvement to make them satisfactory, but in general, this is a very welcome announcement. You may know that Harriett Baldwin, our local MP, has played a major part in persuading Defra to fund this need, and her adjournment debate clearly helped to ensure Tenbury was included in the list of approved schemes.

In the meantime, it is good to note that the Spar grocery and its Post Office facility in Tenbury opened again three weeks ago for the first time since the February floods. Other retailers like Soap Opera and Nice Things are also open. Mr Thoms has reopened after extensive restoration and we wish all the other retailers well for the future. It is also good to see The Ship being decorated prior to reopening as a Chinese restaurant. We have to hope that Tenbury, like all our local towns, will survive and thrive, now that the virus pandemic seems to be retreating, and I pay tribute again to our local shops who have continued to operate throughout the emergency. We can all help in this endeavour by remembering to shop locally, and not abandon those small enterprises in favour of their larger national cousins in nearby towns or more extensive use of online shopping.

County Matters - We must hope that the impact of the coronavirus outbreak is diminishing and that we may soon be able to resume what we might refer to as normal life. The County has suffered a little over 500 deaths from Covid 19, with around 57% of them in hospitals. The situation in our hospitals is looking much better, and we have to hope that normal medical care will be resumed, without fear of cross contamination. I believe there

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have been no deaths in our hospitals for 10 or more days. We have stood down our reserve provision, to make it unnecessary for patients discharged from hospital to go to a care home, with the risk of infecting other relatively weak residents. This arrangement might have been usefully duplicated around the country, with a little more understanding from hospitals and county councils, and a stronger resistance from care homes to acting against their better judgement. Two thirds of the county's care homes have had no cases of Covid-19 among their staff and residents. Far more deaths have occurred in care homes from causes other than Covid 19.

Meanwhile, we are trying to revive the local economy with help from a number of government schemes to get money in grants or loans to local businesses. Details can be found on the Worcestershire Business Central website. The County's GDP has fallen by 20.4% and 75,700 workers are currently on furlough. Meanwhile, traffic has risen to 84% of normal pre-Covid levels. Two weeks ago we launched the **Here2Help Business** scheme to channel advice and support to various businesses across the county who need help to get back into full swing after the virus crisis. We are particularly concerned to see apprenticeships supported, and for there to be special help to recent graduates, who we need to find the right jobs to help revive the economy. More details can be found on the WBC and WCC websites.

Local Matters - It is worth observing that our highways personnel have been able to take advantage of the much lower number of vehicles on the road to complete a lot of routine maintenance, pothole filling and surface dressing, so that our roads are in a better condition facing the summer. There has been extensive work on the A443 between Great Witley and Newnham Bridge, patching and surface dressing. The overnight closures for three days were for painting new white lines and the insertion of cats' eyes. Similarly, we are spending £8 million on repairing and restoring footways, the footpaths that run alongside the carriageway. At present there are 10 crews working on this and siding out took place last week in Great Witley, Little Witley and Abberley. There are works of this type going on all over the county, and Penn Hall Lane has recently been closed for repairs. Please let me know of any roads or lanes that need attention, as this may be an effective way of letting our officers know what needs to be done.

Cllr Ken Pollock, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2BZ

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