

# PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Pensax Annual Parish Meeting held in Old Chapel, Menith Wood at 7.00pm on Monday `17th May 2021

**Present:** Cllr Keron (Chairman), Cllr Weston, Cllr Sanders, Cllr Meese, Cllr Abraham, Clerk to Pensax Parish Council  
Five Members of the Public, County Cllr David Chambers, Dist Cllr Douglas Godwin

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Rudd, four residents. Dist Cllr Paul Cumming.
2. **Minutes** of Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th May 2019 were circulated. The minutes were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
3. **County Cllrs report** – David Chambers is newly elected; he is looking forward to working with the PC.
4. **District Cllrs report** – Report given and is noted at end of PC minutes. Dist Cllr Paul Cumming is very ill, Dist Cllr Godwin attended for him. It was agreed a card be sent to family of Cllr Cumming from the Parish.
5. **Police Report** – Full report attached to these minutes.
6. **Chairman's Report** – Chairman gave a brief report. The full report is attached to these minutes.
7. **Pensax Village Hall** – Viewings have been held but no offers have yet been made, comments regarding the details of overage have been made to agent. The PC to discuss further at their meeting tonight.  
**Proceeds from Sale of Hall** – It was confirmed full consultation with residents will be held regarding the money the PC will receive following a successful sale. The money cannot be used to fund normal running costs of the PC but can be used to improve the Parish in many ways.
8. **Solar Panel Companies approaching landowners** – Chairman has been approached by a Solar company looking for large blocks of land near to pylons to site panels. It is possible land will be offered in the Teme Valley area at some point.
9. **Stockton Solar Farm** – The Planning application lapsed on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 due to conditions not being met. The landowner was present and asked if he would speak which was agreed. He stated he had lived in the area for over sixty years and helped the community out in many ways. He felt he has not had support from the community regarding this application, he was disappointed by the actions of some people which meant the application could not now be progressed. He is looking to make a further application. He accepted mistakes were made by the developers but MHDC/WCC created delays. The Chairman thanked for resident for speaking.
10. **Issues raised tonight** – No further matters raised.
12. **Chairman thanked everyone for coming and meeting closed at 7.23pm.**

Signed----- Date      May 2022  
Chairman

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### CHAIR'S REPORT

**Introduction** - I am pleased to present my Chair's Report for the two years to 17th May 2021. The Annual Parish Meeting scheduled for May 2020 was cancelled under emergency legislation enacted because of the COVID pandemic. The Council welcomed Tim Wood and Stuart Meese as co-opted Councillors in the period covered by this report. The Council offers its thanks to Councillor Tim Wood who recently resigned as Councillor due to personal reasons. I therefore note that we have a vacancy for a Councillor which could be filled by co-option.

**COVID Pandemic** - The COVID pandemic, which resulted in the lockdown announced by the Prime Minister on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 had a major impact on life in the parish. We were fortunate to experience a low level of infection and no deaths as a direct result of the pandemic were brought to the attention of the Council. However, following the temporary closures of The Bell and the Old Chapel Hall in Menith Wood, the social life in the parish was severely disrupted. School closures and the need to work from home had a major impact on parishioners' lives.

**Village Hall** - The closure of the Thrift Shop in the autumn of 2019 resulted in a total absence of use of the Village Hall, with no realistic possibility of use by future hirers due to competition from much

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more modern facilities in adjacent parishes. Therefore a public meeting of the Hall Trustees was held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 which was attended by approx. 30 parishioners, Councillors and advisers. Those present voted unanimously to close the Village Hall with immediate effect.

Since that meeting, the Council has obtained planning permission to convert the Hall to a single dwelling and it is currently for sale with the benefit of that Permission. The Council was disappointed that the Local Planning Authority would not grant Planning Permission for social / low cost housing on the site. The Council will shortly initiate a consultation on how funds received from the sale will be used for the benefit of the parish.

**Planning Matters** - The Solar Farm at Stockton was granted Planning Permission by the Planning Inspectorate on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and, in the absence of any High Court Challenge to that decision, construction was due to commence prior to 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The Developer failed to fulfil two of the pre-start Conditions by that date and the Planning Permission lapsed. However, in August 2020, the Business and Planning Act 2020 was enacted by Parliament which gave the Developer a further opportunity to comply with the pre-start Conditions by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021, but, again, the Developer failed to comply with one pre-start Condition and the Planning Permission has again lapsed.

It is noted that the Developer could, at any time, submit a repeat Planning Application.

**Defibrillator** - Following the closure of the Village Hall, the defibrillator has been re-located to the redundant telephone box in Menith Wood which is now owned by the Parish Council.

**Traffic Speeds** - The Council has continued to lobby for traffic speed enforcement on the B4202, particularly following a recent injury accident in the vicinity of Lilac Cottages. Concern has also been expressed about traffic speeds on the Pensax to Stockton Road, particularly in the vicinity of the Worles Common lane.

**Broadband** - The prospect of a dramatic improvement in broadband facilities has been made as a result of the efforts of Councillors managing the potential of the Gigabit Voucher Scheme to provide Fibre to the Premises (FTTP). Two schemes are currently in the delivery phase and a further scheme is currently being progressed.

**Dogs on Public Footpaths and Bridleways** - Isolated incidents continue to occur when dogs are not under appropriate control on Public Footpaths and Bridleways. In particular, an incident occurred in early 2021 when a loose dog spooked a horse which resulted in a horse rider being airlifted to Worcester Royal Infirmary. Parishioners are asked to ensure their dogs are on a lead particularly when other dogs and animals are present.

**Pensax and Stockton Memorial for Peace** - Services to commemorate Armistice Day were held at the memorial in Nov 2019 and 2020. The service in 2020 was severely affected by the COVID restrictions in place at the time. The Council continues to maintain the memorial as an asset to the parish.

**Support from Clerk** - The Council is fortunate to have Mrs Sue Burrows as Clerk and would therefore express its thanks to Mrs Burrows for her work.

**Alistair Keron**

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### POLICE REPORT FOR Pensax Parish Council MAY 2021

It has been without doubt the strangest time for everyone in 2020 to 2021, including Policing. We have seen many people ill with Covid symptoms, and thankfully recover, and sadly those who have passed from this dreadful disease. We have survived lockdowns, and tiers and are now free to begin to start returning to some sort of normality. As far as Safer Neighbourhood Policing goes it has had its peaks and troughs of work flow last year and this, with a different type of work to actually police that being Covid concerns and enforcement. Many times it has been a case of explaining the Government Guidelines, sometimes sterner words of advice have been issued to those who have breached guidelines, and last case resort to issue fines.

We have worked with our community partners to provide reassurance and signpost people to services such as food banks, or food deliveries; dropping in on those who are isolated and need more robust support.

As a result of the first lockdown, many of our highways were virtually empty, and Parishes eerily quiet. The criminal fraternity were scarce, never venturing out it seemed. When life resumed we did see a take up of crime, with criminal damage, and thefts. Also criminal types who tried to scam the elderly into paying for Covid tests. Due to the lockdown and time spent at home many people have bought puppies/ dogs /cats / kittens into their homes. The cost of purchasing dogs has rocketed. As a result of the uptake, the criminal fraternity, never one to miss an opportunity, have taken to stealing dogs. This may be from gardens, outside shops, or actually snatching the dog leads from the owner. This is a very distressing type of Crime. People have reported wire wrapped around bars or iron work on their gates, or marks left to identify their address. We all need to be vigilant and remove these items. Let your community know what is going on and tell the Police, otherwise we are unaware. Crime in general has been low in our area, but we have seen a surge in catalytic convertor thefts recently. This is

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due to the Palladium metals inside the convertor. There is information on West Mercia Police Website on best practice on how to keep your vehicles safer from this type of theft.

There are also many more items of interest on the site in connection with security, internet safety, and lots more. In Pensax there have been reports of suspicious vehicles, and concerns of speeding raised. As far as I can see from our records there has been a residential burglary where jewellery was taken, and a garage break in. In connection with the speed issue, we work with safer road Partnerships, local authorities and Worcestershire County Council Highways. As I write I do not have a definitive answer to the issues raised but will make further enquiries.

Lastly the team here is PC Jack Sykes & PCSO Ness Snape. We cover approx. 200plus square miles, and more than 27 Parish's. With that in mind if you need to contact us, many calls can now be made by online reporting on the West Mercia Website. If you want to contact us directly, you can call, text, email, the details are below.

If you do need an officer to attend however you do need to call 101.

[mt.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:mt.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk) Ness Snape 07814040307

Lastly here is a list of the scam calls, emails, cards etc. going around at the moment:

There have been many online telephone and email scams, all of which have looked very authentic doing the rounds too:-

**1. Hermes email scam** - Email stating that you have a missed delivery and in order for Hermes to deliver again, you are asked to provide bank details to pay for the £1.45 fees.

**2. Royal Mail email scam** - Email stating that Royal Mail has tried to deliver 3 times and ask you to pay £2.50 to arrange another delivery.

**3. D P D Couriers email scam** - Email stating that you have missed 2 attempted deliveries and you must pay £2.75 to arrange another delivery.

***None of the delivery services would ask you to pay for arranging a delivery under normal circumstances. In the case where excess postage is required, the official Post Office Staff in his/her uniforms with Identifications would advise you what to do. If in doubt, please check with the company yourself before handing over any cash or personal and financial information.***

**4. National Insurance Telephone Scam** - An automated voice states that your National Insurance number has been compromised to carry out criminal activities. You are asked to provide personal details to avoid arrests and prosecution.

**5. HMRC Telephone Scam** - An automated voice states that you have underpaid generally quite a large amount of tax like £2,000 and that you will be prosecuted if you do not pay the outstanding amount immediately.

**6. Amazon Telephone Scam** - An automated voice states that your Amazon account has been debited £349.95 incorrectly and if you provide the bank details, they will refund it to your account.

**7. BT Telephone Scam** - An automated voice says that if you do not provide the personal details, your line will be cut off.

***All government agencies do not use automated voice services to inform you of a problem. They generally would write to you. If a person actually calls you in an unlikely event, you should always check carefully before divulging any personal information. These scams calls are usually from a mobile number.***

**Scammers are getting more sophisticated and professional looking and sounding. Please be very careful when providing any information to anyone you are not sure of.**