

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Pensax Parish Council held in Pensax Village Hall at 8.43pm following close of Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 21st May 2019

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

In Attendance: Clerk

All Cllrs had signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office prior to start of meeting.

1. **Election of Chairman** – It was agreed by all that Cllr Keron be elected as Chairman. Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed.
2. **Apologies:** Received and accepted from Cllr Rudd.
3. **Co option of a Cllr** – Application received from Tim Wood. It was agreed by all that he be co opted onto the PC. Cllr Wood signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and completed his Register of Interest form.
4. **Election of Vice Chairman** – It was agreed to discuss at July meeting.
5. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs had completed new Registers.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – Item 20c Cllrs Weston and Sanders, plans 19/00283/HP – Holly Cottage, Menith Wood, WR6 6UB due to both being near neighbours to the property.
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – See above.
6. **Dispensations** –
 - a. To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) – Cllrs Weston and Sanders requested a Dispensation to speak and vote on item 20c as above. This was agreed by all Cllrs.
7. **Public Question Time** – No matters raised.
8. **County Cllr Report** – Attended Parish Meeting, summary of report at end of minutes.
District Cllr Report – Attended Parish Meeting, see notes at end of minutes.
9. **Standing Orders** (circulated) – It was agreed no changes necessary.
10. **Financial Regulations** (circulated) – It was agreed no changes necessary.
11. **Data Protection** – It was agreed consents to be renewed every five years as per national guidelines.
12. **Scheme of Delegation** (circulated) – It was agreed no changes needed.
 - a. **To appoint Cllrs to the following**
Staffing Working Party for Clerk and Lengthsman – Cllrs appointed, details in files.
Planning Working Party – All plans to be circulated by email to all Cllrs. Comments from at least 3 Cllrs including Chairman. Meeting to be called on controversial plans.
Clerks Finance Support Group - Bank Reconciliation to be circulated to all by email, Cllr Rudd to sign at meetings. All Cllrs to input on other matters.
13. **Council Risk Assessment** (circulated) – to review at July meeting.
 - a. **Asset Register** (circulated) – Cllrs noted contents of the register, no changes needed.
14. **To appoint volunteers to the following roles:**
 - a. **Footpath Officer/Tree Warden** – Resident willing to continue in this role.
15. **To consider appointment of representative to outside bodies:**
 - a. **Pensax Village Hall Committee** (1Cllr). Cllr Abraham on committee but had not yet been called to a meeting.
 - b. **Worcestershire CALC Meeting** (2 Cllrs). It was agreed any Cllr can attend meetings.
16. **Minutes** of Parish Council Meeting held on 18th March 2019 were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
17. **Progress reports for information:**
 - a. **BT Box** – Cllrs to wash inside of Box, shelving from DIY store to be looked at.
 - b. **Assets of Community Value** – It was agreed by all, following consultation with Menith Wood residents and

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Lindridge PC, the Cross Keys would not be considered for registration again.

- c. **Welcome pack for residents** – Cllrs advised the information she was offered has still not been received, it was agreed to take this matter off the agenda.
- d. **Hedges Pensax Road/Menith Wood Road** – WCC have advised the hedges are not cut as they would have hoped but are monitoring the situation and will take action if they feel it is necessary.
- e. **Penn Hall Lane removal of hedge** – MHDC have advised there are no restrictions on this area. They will write to the landowner advising them of the concerns raised by PC.
- f. **B4202 Speeding issues** – Clerk to ensure Vehicle Activated Sign is put up in Snead Common.

18. Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors:

19. Finances –

- a. **Payments made** – Mr R Whiteman (LM March/April 2019) = 420.00, Wel Medical Ltd (Defib pads) = £44.28, D M Payroll Services Ltd (Internal Audit) = £70.00, Worcestershire CALC (see d) = £220.63.
- b. **Payments received** – WCC LM July to October 2018 = £168.00 and LM November-December 2018 = £420.00.
- c. **Bank Reconciliations** (circulated) - Signed for March 2019, balance agreed as £10743.34. Signed for April 2019 balance agreed as £13007.18.
- d. **Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils** - It was agreed by all to continue membership at cost of £220.63.
- 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 2018-19. It was confirmed all other requirements are met.
- f. **Annual Governance Statement** (circulated) – It was agreed Council are adhering to all the requirements.
- g. **Internal Audit report** (circulated) – Minor issues had been brought to Cllrs attention and will be actioned by Clerk in future. No matters regarding the accounting figures were raised.
- h. **Annual Return/End of Year Accounts 2018-19** (circulated) – It was agreed for Chairman to sign all relevant papers for the End of Year Accounts and Annual Return. A balance agreed as £10743.34 to be carried forward to 1st April 2019.

20. Planning:

- a. Plans circulated since last meeting – **None**.
- b. Decisions received since last meeting- **None**.
- a. Plans for comment on tonight –
19/00283/HP – Holly Cottage, Menith Wood, Worcester WR6 6UB – Proposed single storey rear extension plus detached garage with storage and study over. It was agreed by all to support the application. Comments to be made regarding deliveries coming from the B4202 and parking of construction traffic to be off road at all times.
14/01586/FUL – ENF/18/0005 – Enforcement Notice Appeal - APP/J1860/C/18/320974 – Ridding Coppice, Worles Common, Stockton – It was agreed Chairman to circulate comments to send in.
16/00455/HOU - New House Farm, Stockton – Concerns regarding building being built too close to highway – Dist Cllr advised the matter is being looked into by MHDC.

21. Road report

- a. **Lengthsman** – Progress report.
- b. **Problems to report** –

22. **Menithwood Millennium Green Trust** – Grant application for £250.00 was circulated, supporting papers received yesterday. It was agreed to discuss this at the July meeting, further information regarding exactly what the grant will be spent on and when it is required.

23. **Annual Parish Meeting** – no matters raised that are not being dealt with.

24. Correspondence for information –

MHDC Planning Training Session – 4th July – 5.30-7.30 at Malvern
Police Commissioners survey – to complete by 11th August 2019
Police Commissioner – ‘We Don’t Buy Crime’ Smartwater project – this had been discussed and circulated to residents last year, there was little interest in the matter.

25. **Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting.** **None**.

26. Councillors’ reports and items for the next agenda.

Agenda items - Pensax Village Hall.

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27. Date of next meeting: 15th July 2019 – 7pm - OLD CHAPEL HALL, MENITH WOOD

28. Meeting Closed 9.40pm

Signed----- Date 15th July 2019
Chairman

District Councillors Report

Finances are under control to balance the budget for next five years – non domestic rates pilot scheme being run – Waste collection working well, less going to landfill and more being recycled – SWDP being reviewed, infrastructure to be where houses are to go, not the other way around. Holt Bridge is a problem for emergency services. Hospitals/Doctors Surgeries/School not coping now, all this needs to be taken into account.

County Councillors Report

County Council Affairs - personnel - At this time last year, we were about to welcome our new team of senior officers, comprising the Chief Executive, Paul Robinson, the Chief Finance Officer, Michael Hudson, the Chief Commissioning Officer, Andrew Spice, and the Interim Director of Adult Social Care Services, Avril Wilson. In addition we have since confirmed Richard Taylor as Head of Human Resources. They joined John Hobbs, director of Economy and Infrastructure, Francis Howie in charge of Public Health, and Catherine Driscoll, the director of Children's Services. I can report that the new senior management have settled in well, working with the Cabinet to produce a viable range of services appropriate to the County's needs, and consistent with our income of around £330 million a year. That is not to say that we have not faced substantial difficulties in balancing the budget, and Pensax residents will be aware of some of the stress points that have been encountered during the year. Despite the controversy, I think we can be assured that the necessary range and depth of services will continue to be delivered as required.

County Council Affairs – council tax - Once again we find it necessary to increase Council Tax, this time by 3.99% overall. Within that sum, there is a 1% rise dedicated to Adult Social Care, as the government recognises the increasing burden of an ageing population, some of whom require council support. This overall increase is equivalent to £0.93p per week for a Band D property.

Council County Affairs – expenditure - Many people will be aware that our Children's Services have been judged as requiring improvement and as a result we have found it necessary to place the department into a wholly owned company, named Worcestershire Children First. This will formally come into operation in October, although it now exists in shadow form. This new venture has to be seen in the context of two years of continuous improvement in Children's Services, as a result of concerted effort of all staff, under the leadership of Catherine Driscoll and her colleague Tina Russell. We are hopeful that the new company will assist in this continuous improvement, so that the whole department may be returned to the County Council in a short while. The Government has promised a Green Paper on adult social care for some time, but its publication is still imminent. This is an area of increasing need, but there is the crucial matter of the boundary between County Council funded care and the National Health Service. Clearly both organisations should be working towards the same goal, but there are occasional conflicts about responsibilities and allocation of expenditure between the two organisations. All other services are paid from the residue of income after these two departments are financed. This has resulted in difficult decisions on funding for libraries, archives and the possible need to charge for parking. It should be emphasised that there are no plans to close any libraries, and the archive service is adequately funded to carry out its essential and valuable work. That said, we are very keen to run an efficient and effective council, and this is resulting in a detailed examination of our ways of working, aimed at maintaining or improving the service with fewer personnel and resources. We naturally hope that this endeavour will be supported by all residents, and I would encourage everyone to let me and the officers know of any deficiencies in our performance over the year.

Infrastructure - One of my Cabinet responsibilities concerns infrastructure, and, unlike my colleagues who are concerned with children and vulnerable adults, it means that I get to work on some exciting big physical projects. In the last year we have doubled the width of the railway bridge on the Southern Link Road between Whittington and Norton. This manoeuvre has been recognised as a difficult project well executed by the receipt of two awards for excellence already. We have also had confirmation of the Government's financial support for the 4th phase of the link road, so that is now steaming ahead, aiming for opening in 2021. This will involve dualling the road between the Ketch and the Powick roundabouts, including a second Carrington Bridge and the flood overflow viaduct, as well as the widened causeway for some 1.2 miles. By the end of this calendar year, Worcestershire Parkway Rail Station should be opened and fully operational. This will mean many trains to and

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from London stopping there, and some initial services on the Cross Country line also stopping. We are hopeful that more of the latter will join them, giving residents of the County the chance of joining trains to and from the south west and north east without leaving Worcestershire.

In addition, we are in process of a complete renewal of Kidderminster Station, as well as starting on the improvement of the A38 through Bromsgrove.

Meanwhile, there are exciting developments at our Game Changer sites at W6, Redditch Gateway and the Malvern Hills Science Park, all related to improving the economy of the County and increasing our business rate income and the number of good jobs available for our residents.

Cllr Ken Pollock, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2BZ