

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council VIDEO Meeting of Pensax Parish Council held at 7.00pm on Monday 15th March 2021

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

In Attendance: Clerk, One Member of the Public, County Cllr Ken Pollock, Dist Cllr Paul Cummings,
Douglas Godwin (Parkinson Wright Quality Solicitors)

1. **Apologies:** None – None.
2. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs reminded to keep their registers updated.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – All Cllrs agenda item 12 - Pensax Village Hall, item 20 Conveyance for Hall Sale, item 21 Phipps and Pritchard agents.
Chairman agenda item 10(c) – Plans 21/00381/AGR due to being a neighbour.
 - 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 items 12,18 and 19 all Cllrs have been granted a Dispensation until May 2023 at the January 2020 meeting.
4. **Public Question Time** – See notes at end of minutes.
5. **County Cllr Report** – Report at end of minutes, Cllr left meeting.
At 7.35pm the meeting closed for five minutes due to technical issues. The meeting resumed at 7.40pm.
District Cllr Report – See notes at end of minutes, Cllr left the meeting.
6. **Minutes** of Parish Council Video Meeting held on 18th January 2021 and Extraordinary Video Meeting held on 2nd March 2021 were agreed by all and will be signed by Chairman.
7. **Progress reports for information:**
 - a. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Menith Wood** – Work progressing well.
 - b. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Worles Common** – Fully funded, at delivery stage.
Cllr stated the scheme for Pensax Common was short of funds but was hopeful of a good outcome.
 - c. **Stockton Road speeding** – WCC still not responded regarding speed monitoring information.
 - d. **B4202 Speeding and signage for resident's entry** – WCC state they are not able to put signs up or review speed limit. Clerk to update resident.
8. **Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors:**
Clerk attended informal group video meeting with CALC.
9. **Finances** –
 - a. **Payments made** – See item 14.
 - b. **Payments received** – Dist Cllr Grant £57.60 (Defib sign).
 - c. **Bank Reconciliations** (circulated) – Agreed to be signed for January/February balance agreed as £12495.10.
 - d. **Clerk Salary increase** – National increase agreed, Clerk paid at Scale 7, hourly rate increased to £10.41, letter for Standing Order agreed to be signed monthly payment £166.56.
10. **Planning:**
 - a. Plans circulated since last meeting – **None.**
 - b. Decisions received since last meeting – **None.**
 - c. Plans for comment on tonight –
21/00381/AGR - New Inn Farm, Worles Common, Stockton, Worcester, WR6 6XQ - Agricultural storage building for machinery and hay straw (non-livestock) –
Chairman declared an interest and left the meeting. Vice Chairman Chaired the meeting.
No comments were made by Cllrs. Clerk to query with Planning Officer why there is no notice in lane to alert neighbours to the application.
Chairman returned to the meeting.

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11. Road report

- a. **Lengthsman** – Timesheet to be submitted this week.
- b. **Any problems to report** – None.
- c. **Stockton Road drainage issues** – WCC advised ditches need clearing, this is responsibility of landowner. MHDC have passed details to Land Drainage Officer at MDHC. Clerk to contact MHDC and WCC on this issue.
- d. **Worles Common/Menith Wood roads drainage issues** – Chairman has spoken to landowner but ditches have not been cleared. Clerk to contact Land Drainage Officer at MHDC. WCC are aware of the issue, Clerk will copy them into email.

12. Pensax Village Hall (circulated) –

WFDC Planning Decision - 20/1065/FUL – Pensax Village Hall – Change of use of Parish Hall to 1No. dwelling including associated works and erection of detached double garage Pensax Parish Hall Worcester Road Pensax. **Approved by WFDC with conditions.**

13. Correspondence for information –

COVID 19 updates from CALC, NALC, WCC, MHDC, Police
South Worcestershire Development Plan information
WCC - Online Budget Briefing – 27th January – 5pm
WCC - Ticket to Ride Event – 25th January – 2-4pm
MHDC - Abberley Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 Consultation, comments by 21st January
MHDC – Standard Housing Methodology – further update
MHDC – Video Forum – 25th January - 6-8pm
MHDC – Planning Training, Urban Design – 26th April – 6-8pm
WCC - Natural Networks Event – 17th March – 6pm

14. Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting –

Payments made –

27th January 2021 – Mr R Whiteman (LM December 2020) = £112.00,
27th January - Mr D Nunn (Mowing of War Memorial 2020-2021) = £180.00.
17th February - SSE (Electric Pensax Hall March 2020 to March 2021) = £260.60.
26th February - Painter Architect Ltd (final invoice Hall plans) = £650.00.
Noticeboard, Menith Wood - had blown down. LM made safe and felt it was beyond repair. Cllr to obtain costs for repair and circulate by email.

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

Agenda items - Pensax Village Hall, Old Chapel Menith Wood.

18. Date of next VIDEO meeting: 17th MAY 2021 at 7pm.

19. It was agreed to exclude the Public and Press from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

20. Conveyance for Hall Sale – Following Solicitors advise it was agreed to put conditions in the conveyance to ensure the PC obtained payment in the future if the Hall was resold by a buyer and to offer the Hall to residents of the Parish

21. Phipps and Pritchard Agents – Terms of Business had been circulated, suggested alterations agreed. It was agreed Clerk and Chair to sign final copy. Energy Certificate to be obtained by Agent if required. Sale Board to be put up. Cllrs agreed no Cllr has a personal interest with the Agent that needs to be declared. It was agreed to correspond by email with Agent. Clerk to include Chair in emails.

22. Strimming/Mowing Contract War Memorial – It was agreed to renew with Mr D Nunn at £16.00 per cut, 12 cuts per year.

23. Lengthsman Contract – It was agreed to renew with Mr R Whiteman at £14.00 per hour, WCC yet to confirm budget is in place for 2021-2022.

24. Meeting Closed 8.50pm

Signed-----

Date 17th May 2021

Chairman

Public Question Time – Apologies were given by Chair of Stockton Parish Meeting but she wished to be kept updated regarding the Solar Farm issue.

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Solar Farm, Stockton – Resident stated HGVs had been using the access off the Pensax Road and a track had been made on the land. The application showed this gateway was to be used for maintenance vehicles after completion of build but the track is looking to be for HGVs. Work to the main access off the A443 had not been started. Condition of the approval was a compound needed to be put on land by the A443 access before further work could be started. Resident felt the work should be stopped and the planning conditions enforced by WCC and MHDC. School bus had been held up by HGVs using the access. Clerk had contacted Dist Cllr and County Cllr when she was informed on 13th March. Both are looking into the matter and the Dist Cllr Godwin (Stockton Parish) stated he was waiting for a reply from Duncan Rudge (Head of Planning MHDC). Clerk will contact Enforcement Officer at MHDC for update. Dist Cllrs to continue to push MHDC for a formal response. County Cllr had contacted Highways and will inform Clerk of their response.

District Councillors Report

Nothing new to report. No other matters raised.

Cllrs queries for County Cllr –

Broadband – Cllr asked if more funding could be found for the Pensax Common Scheme. County Cllr will look into the matter. It is Government grants that pay for the schemes, he is hopeful new funds will be available from 1st April 2021. Cllr to make direct contact with County Cllr.

County Councillors Report

National lockdown - Everyone will be aware of the tensions resulting from the continued national lockdown, maintained at a time when, fortunately, the numbers of Covid cases, people going into hospital and deaths are all falling. While we can be very thankful for that, vigilance must be maintained, while vigorous discussion continues at the national level on how the rules might be changed. In Worcestershire, our rates of cases are falling, with Redditch an exception. There the high rate is among the under 65 year old population, probably connected with the level of industrial locations in the borough. This week the Prime Minister has announced a substantial investment in improving bus services throughout the country. This is partly to seek to reduce car travel and thence air pollution, as well as encouraging more healthy modes of transport like walking and cycling. The problems of sparsity are recognised in the plans, so that more rural bus services may be supported, as well as helping community transport schemes. All these matters are well known to those in the Tenbury area, where we have the benefit of the Tenbury Transport Trust, and now the new scheme run by John Driver named Teme Wheels.

County Matters - This Thursday, the 18th March, there will be the last Cabinet meeting of the session, before purdah starts next Monday in the run up to the county elections on May 6th. Marcus Hart will be presenting a report on the first year of Worcestershire Children First, the independent company running children's services in the county as a wholly owned subsidiary of the County Council. It would be fair to say that it has gone quite well, and we are hopeful of being upgraded at the next inspection later this year. I will be presenting three reports, two connected with new walking and cycling bridges, seeking to encourage more active travel at least for short journeys. One is the Hampton Bridge over the Avon in Evesham and the other is the Kepax bridge over the Severn, to the north of the city of Worcester. It will enable people to walk and cycle between the area of Gheluvelt Park on the east side and the Hallow road on the west. In addition, I will be presenting a report on the development around the rail station in Redditch, designed to make that a transport hub for bus and rail users among others, encouraging the retail trade as well as commuting to and from Birmingham. In all one might hope that these developments will put an end to the belief of some people that the County Council is only interested in catering for car users, and not alternative modes of travel.

Local matters - I note the reports later in the meeting concerning high speed broadband. I am confident that our officers are doing all that is possible to improve the situation for all residents of Pensax, and I trust any matters where a county councillor intervention might be useful will be referred to me. It is exciting to know that you are pursuing the conversion of the existing parish hall into a private residence. This is not a matter in which the County will be involved, inasmuch as I would expect vehicular traffic on and off the site would be less than while the hall was in public use. I trust the matter will proceed smoothly. I am aware of thee concern about speeding on the B4202 south of The Bell public house. For all sorts of reasons, the response of County officers is negative, but I am hopeful that some changes may be made to ameliorate the situation. Bearing in mind the impact of the lockdown on the retail trade, may I repeat my request that we all seek to shop locally as much as possible to maintain our local retailers, on whom we depend so much over the full year. I am pleased also to read of government encouragement for the use of pavements for outside tables and chairs, to encourage eating and drinking in the fresh air. This has been a bone of contention for some concerned with Teme Street in Tenbury, but I hope the national support will allay the reasonable fears that have been expressed.

County Cllr Ken Pollock