**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Pensax Parish Council**

**held in Old Chapel, Menith Wood at 7.00 pm on Monday, 21st March 2022**

**Present:** Cllr Alistair Keron (Chair), Cllr Weston, Cllr Abraham, Cllr Meese, Cllr Rudd

**In Attendance:** Clerk, Dist Cllr Paul Cumming and one parishioner

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Sharon Sanders, County Cllr David Chambers.
2. **Co-option of a Cllr –** No applications received.
3. **Declaration of Interest:**
4. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs are reminded to keep their registers up to date.
5. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – All Cllrs Items 13 Pensax Village Hall.
6. **Other Disclosable Interests** – See above.
7. **Dispensations** –

To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) **–** Dispensations requested **-** Items 13 – Village Hall **–** All Cllrs have been granted a Dispensation until May 2023 at the January 2020 meeting.

1. **Public Question Time –** None raised
2. **County Cllr Report –** Report at end of minutes.
3. **District Cllr Report –**
4. Councillor Cumming reported that the South Worcester Development Plan had been further delayed to 2023 and that this may impact on house building in the parish
5. Councillor Cumming reported that the MHDC Electoral Review might result in abolition of Woodbury Ward and Pensax Parish would be incorporated in an adjacent Ward. Pensax Parish boundary to remain unchanged

1. **Minutes** of Parish Council Meeting held on 18th January 2022 and minutes of Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 27th January 2022 were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
2. **Progress reports for information**:
3. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Menith Wood –** Cllr Sharon Sanders had given her apologies and therefore no report but it is understood that the network is virtually complete
4. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Worles Common to Abberley** – Cllr Alistair Keron reported that work was nearly complete with significant numbers of properties benefitting from the fibre broadband
5. **Broadband Fibre To The Property in Pensax Common** – Cllr George Rudd that work was continuing slowly as being held up by surveys. Cllr Meese to looked into funding for properties not accepted onto this scheme and found it was not financially worth it at present.
6. **Snead Common** in delivery phase, completion in next twelve months.
7. **Post code issues Menith Wood –** no further action to be taken.
8. **Dog Waste Bin Penn Hall Lane –** Installed.
9. **Speeding Concerns -** Snead Common B4202 and Stockton Road (Worles Common junction), road through Pensax. Police and WCC are looking into all issues and will update as matters progress.
10. **Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors:**  None.
11. **Finances** –
12. **Payments made**:
13. Earth Anchors Ltd (Penn Hall Lane waste bin) - £147.54
14. Mr C Bunn (LM) January 2022 - £15
15. SSE (Village Hall Electricity) - £78.34
16. Mr C Bunn (LM February 2022 - £161
17. McCartney’s LLP (Village Hall fees) - £2,640.00
18. Parkinson Wright (Village Hall fees) - £1,810.80
19. Sue Burrows final expenses - £126.32
20. Mark Kinross – Two month’s salary - £501.12
21. Mark Kinross – Expenses - £173.48
22. **Payments received:**
23. Village Hall Net Sale Proceeds - £220,000. Transferred to restricted Reserves after deduction of all fees.
24. **Bank Reconciliations**  -Signed by Chairman for January/February 2022, balance agreed as £13,105.22
25. **Planning:**
26. **Plans circulated since last meeting**
27. **Spring Meadow, Pensax** – Chairman declared an interest and withdrew from discussions. Clerk asked to raise objection to MHDC in respect of visibility at exit onto public highway which is poorer then suggested in the Planning Statement.
28. **Decisions received since last meeting** –
29. **Westkerke – Appeal (ref: APP/J1860/W/21/3284164) allowed** – restraint on use of permitted development rights removed
30. **Land at (OS 7240 6903), Pensax – Approval** of new access, gates, and fencing.
31. **East Wing, Pensax Court, Pensax - Approval** of replacement of timber framed stable block with new 3 bay garage.

**Plans for comment on tonight** – None.

#### Road Report

1. **Lengthsman** – See report below
2. **Penn Hall Lane Flooding** – The Clerk has reported the problem to the new Worcs. CC Highway person.
3. **Pensax Village Hall**
4. The Village Hall salehas been completed and the sale proceeds of £220,000, less fees and costs of £6,979.20, will be placed into a restricted deposit account with the TSB Bank pending a decision on investment.
5. It is understood that the monies can only be used for capital projects.
6. The Clerk and the Chairman will speak to an Investment Consultant about short / medium term investing in ethical funds and report back to the PC.
7. Residents will be consulted over the use of monies by way of a consultative letter.
8. Once consultation has taken place, a working party will be formed to consider project requests.
9. **Police Report** – See below
10. **Housing Needs Survey (circulated)** – underway on behalf of Lindridge PC - no further action by Pensax PC
11. **War Memorial –**
12. Clerk was asked to monitor the mowing contract on the Memorial.
13. **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebration Community Grants**
14. Details circulated
15. Clerk asked to apply for £500 towards a project yet to be specified
16. **Destination Zero Crowdfund PR** = Noted
17. **Correspondence for information circulated** – CALC, NALC, WCC, MHDC, Police, South Worcestershire Development Plan Information**.** Noted.
18. **Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting** – None.
19. **Councillors’ reports and items for the next agenda. None**
20. **It was agreed to exclude the Public and Press from the meeting due to the confidential nature of**

 he business to be discussed:-

1. **Lengthsman Contract 2022/23** – Increased hourly rate of £15ph approved,
2. **War memorial Mowing** – Increased rate of £17 per cut approved.
3. **Clerk’s Appointment** –
4. Clerk’s Contract ratified. Clerk to sign and return to Chair for signature
5. Bank standing order for Clerk’s salary approved
6. Clerk’s expenses approved.
7. Mobile Phone for Clerk not approved. Clerk agreed to continue to use personal home number to assess impact of PC calls on his homelife
8. Clerk’s e-mail address mkpensaxpc@outlook.com approved.
9. Clerk’s training with CALC approved.
10. **Bank**
11. New bank mandate ratified.
12. Clerk requested to investigate Online banking for PC’s bank account.
13. Clerk requested to set up deposit account with TSB Bank for net proceeds of Village Hall sale.
14. **Gov e-mail addresses** – after discussion it was decided not to proceed.
15. **Cloud Back Up** – Clerk and Cllr Stuart Meese requested to investigate and report back to PC.
16. **Confirmation of Appointment of Auditor**
17. Diane Malley as Internal Auditor approved
18. Clerk requested to investigate appointment of External Auditor as PC’s Bank balances exceed the External Audit threshold.

1. **Any Other Business**
2. The Chairman reported that there had been damage to plants and supplementary plates on road signs. The Clerk was requested to report any further incidents to the police,
3. The Village Hall noticeboard, formerly affixed to Pensax Village Hall will be used to replace the Pensax Court noticeboard. Cllr David Abraham has agreed to undertake this work. Chair to seek approval from landowner and request that the adjacent hedge overhanging the highway be trimmed.
4. The consultation letter re Village Hall funds to incorporate a request for applications for councillor vacancies and also request parishioners to provide email addresses to the new clerk if they wish to (continue to) receive email communications from the PC .
5. The Chair thanked the group of parishioners who carried out a litter pick on 6th March
6. **Agenda items for next meeting:-**

 Pensax Village Hall funds consultation process and Queens Platinum Jubilee 2022,

1. **Date of next meeting:** Annual Parish Council Meeting, Monday, 23rd May 2022 - OLD CHAPEL HALL, MENITH WOOD at 7.15pm or immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting
2. **Meeting Closed 9.00 pm**

**Signed--------------------------------------------- Date 23rd May 2022**

**Chairman**

**Written Reports**

1. **Worcestershire County Councillor’s Report to Meeting of Pensax Parish Council 21st March 2022.**
2. Covid Figures as of 17th March 2022 are:
3. Worcestershire is showing an infection rate of 601 cases per 100,000.
4. The infection rate in the Malvern Hills District is 777 cases per 100,000.
5. The direction of travel is up in all Worcestershire Districts.
6. Malvern Hills District has the highest infection rate in Worcestershire with 777 cases per 100,000. Redditch has the lowest infection rate with 468 cases per 100,000.
7. The rate of infection in England as a whole is 580 cases per 100,000.
8. Worcestershire County Council’s Budget for 2022/23 was approved on Thursday 17th February.
	1. There will be the following increase in Council Tax: the Precept will increase by 0.94%; in addition, there will be a 1% Adult Social Care Levy; in addition, there will be a 2% Adult Social Care Levy that was carried forward from 2021/22.
	2. This additional funding for Adult Social Care will ensure the most vulnerable in society are protected.
	3. The above increases in Council Tax will give an additional £11.3million in Council Tax revenue for 2022/23.
	4. This will result in an increase of £52.95 per annum on a Band D property.
9. It has been agreed that Local Members’ Highway Fund of £22,000 and Councillor’s Divisional Fund of £10,000 will be extended to the next financial year. If there are any community projects that you believe would benefit from financial support, then please let me know from April onwards.
10. WCC has agreed that grants to Town and Parish Councils will be increased by 15%, with regards to the Lengthsman Scheme.
11. Worcestershire County Council is working closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and with local partners, to co-ordinate actions regarding our response to the Ukraine refugee crisis. The County Council has agreed with the six Worcestershire District Councils, to co-ordinate our response as “One Worcestershire,” to ensure a joint approach is undertaken. Further details will be available shortly.

At the moment the best way to provide humanitarian help for the people of Ukraine is through financial donations to organisations with a presence in the region. This is considered a more effective way to support those in need, rather than physical donations, given the complexities and time it can take to physically transport supplies. Together with this Report, I am forwarding a list of agencies supporting Ukraine, should anyone wish to contact them.

1. The Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing strategy consultation 2022 – 2032, has been launched. Formal consultation will run until 2nd May 2022. Good mental health and wellbeing may mean different things to different people. Your thoughts and feelings are welcomed, to help WCC shape the future of health and wellbeing over the next ten years. The consultation survey is open to everyone and will help build up a picture of what Wellbeing means to people of all ages across the county. More details can be found at: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/HWBStrategy2022](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/HWBStrategy2022)
2. For those aged 15 to 24 and would like advice on careers, apprenticeships, 6th Forms, full-time college courses, university and more, a number of Careers events are being held throughout Worcestershire between 2nd March and 7th April, each between 4pm and 8pm. There is no need to book, just drop into any of the events at any time to suit you. Further details can be obtained from: careersworcs@worcestershire.gov.uk

David Chambers

County Councillor, Tenbury Division.

1. **Lengthsman’s Report March 2022**

Please find below short report for my Lengthsman work,

I took the area on in November as nothing had been done for 6 months, I seem to be on top of most things but there are a few problems drains and ditches,

The ditches on either side of the Stockton Rd are in need of being dug out, in some places the ditches are the same level as the grips I try to keep clear and at the top of the ditch on the left as you go down the hill is higher than the pipe coming into the ditch, when things dry up a bit I will see if I can dig it out a bit but really the ditch needs clearing all the way down. There is a problem with a couple of drains on the Stockton road by the junction with the road to Pensax Common, it has been cleared before but there is still on problem, I have reported it on job number 1229854 and I have arranged to meet someone from highways on site Thursday 17th.

There is also a blocked drain at the end of Penn Hall Lane which I have also reported (1229853).

If there is anything that the parish council feels that needs looking at then please let me know.

Just to confirm that my hourly rate will increase to £15 from April 1st, 2022.

Many thanks

Chris

1. **Police Report March 2022**

Dear Mark,

Incidents for the last quarter at Pensax Parish are predominantly related to criminal damage to farmers fields, crops, and gates.. Gates have been rammed to access their land and much damage has been caused as a result. The driver has then used their vehicle to tear up the land doing donuts and generally wrecking the area. Local Policing teams on both sides of Clows Top are making further enquiries to this and have kept the farmers concerned appraised of their actions and progress.

As far as the Parish Charter goes we are to carry out some speed collation data to check speeds on some of the lanes, where speed have been highlights as an issue. The main B 4202 has been referred back to highways to see if there is anything which can be done to change the speeds seen within the 40’s section. I have no further details at this time unfortunately to advise, although the county Councillor may know more?.

In general Rural Thefts are increasing with many trailers being taken. Most often there is seen a Silver Freelander in the area.

Also thefts of red diesel, and heating oil are increasing. Unfortunately, I fear that with increasing costs this type of theft will become more prevalent.

Ideally items need to be marked with Cre Mark available from (CreProducts online), with the owner’s surname and postcode written on there, and Smartwater, (available online). This is the only way, when recovered, we are able to get these items back to the rightful owners.  Any item that is left out is a target for the thieves, so I would urge everyone to make sure that they are locked away if at all possible and marked. There are very many ways to secure items and not always that expensive.

We also have access to Mike Simpson, who is the Rural and Business crime preventions officer, and PC Nigel Bolton Rural We Don’t Buy Crime Officer. Both are more than happy to come and see individuals to give security advise or to carry out a presentation to a group.

Kind regards,

Ness