

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Pensax Parish Council held in Pensax Village Hall at 8.54pm on Tuesday 3rd May 2016

Present: Cllr Rob Gready (Chairman), Cllr Wise, Cllr Keron, Cllr Weston

In Attendance: Clerk, County Cllr Ken Pollock, District Cllr Paul Cumming, Richard Whiteman (Lengthsman)

1. **Election of Chairman** - It was agreed by all that Cllr Gready be elected as Chairman. Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed.
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Rudd, apologies received and accepted.
3. **Election of Vice Chairman** – It was agreed to put this on next agenda for consideration.
4. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs to keep updated.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – Chairman item 21 Dog mess
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – Chairman as above.
5. **Dispensations** –
 - a. To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) – Cllr Gready was granted a dispensation on 5th April 2016 to speak and vote on item 21 until May 2019.
6. **Public Question Time** – No matters raised.
7. **Standing Orders** – To be reviewed at next meeting.
8. **Financial Regulations** – To be reviewed at next meeting.
9. **Scheme of Delegation** – It was agreed to adopt as drafted (copy in files). Members agreed to the following:
 - a. **Staffing Working Party for Clerk** – Chairman plus Cllr Rudd or one other Cllr as available.
Lengthsman Co ordinator - Cllr Keron – Clerk Line Manager
 - b. **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.
 - c. **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.
10. **Councils Risk Assessment** (circulated) – After discussion it was agreed to review at next meeting.
11. **To appoint volunteers to the following roles:**
 - a. **Footpath Officer** – No officer in place at present. Some paths need strimming, Cllr Keron to advise on paths that need strimming. To advertise post of Footpaths Officer and to encourage residents to use paths more.
 - b. **Tree Warden** – Cllr Rudd wishes to continue in this role, all agreed.
12. **To consider appointment of representative to outside bodies:**
 - a. Pensax Village Hall Committee (1Cllr). Chairman agreed to continue in this role. All agreed.
 - b. Worcestershire CALC Meeting (2 Cllrs). It was agreed any Cllr can attend meetings.
13. **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 5th April 2016** were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
14. **Progress reports for information:**
 - a. **Pensax Village Hall** – Trustee presented report to Parish Meeting. Work ongoing, Committee being formed to organise events for future.
 - b. **Superfast Broadband** – Presentation given at Parish Meeting. Cllr Wise to take this project forward and look at the 'Never Say No' project offered by BT for the Parish.
 - c. **Queens 90th Birthday Celebrations Pensax Village Hall** – Event planned for June 12th. It was agreed by all to allow £250.00 to be spent on event.
15. **Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors:**

MHDC Conference 18th April – Clerk and 2 Cllrs attended, information circulated including MHDC 5 year Plan.

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

16. Finances –

- a. **Payments made** – Mr K Gittins, (Internal Auditor) = £20.00, Mrs S Burrows (Salary arrears see item 19) = £128.90, Mr R Whiteman (LM April 2016) = £420.00, WCALC (see 16d) = £167.55, MHDC (Business Rate Relief see item 20) = £461.31
- b. **Payments received** – MHDC Precept £2000.00 (including Council Tax subsidy £50.64).
- c. **Bank Reconciliation** (circulated) - Signed for March 2016. Balance agreed as £6271.63.
- d. **Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils** - It was agreed by all to continue membership at cost of £167.55.
- e. **Annual Governance Statement** (circulated) - It was agreed by all Council are adhering to the requirements and the form was signed by Chairman.
- f. **Accounts for 2015-16** (circulated) – It was agreed by all for Chairman to sign the Accounts and the Annual Return for 2015-16. Accounts have been audited by the Internal Auditor, no issues raised, report circulated. Balance agreed as £6271.63 at 31st March 2016.

17. Planning:

- a. Plans circulated since last meeting - **None**
- b. Decisions received since last meeting-
15/01017/FUL – Land off Stockton Road, Stockton-on-Teme, Worcestershire WR6 6UT – Photo Voltaic Solar Energy Farm (5MW) and ancillary equipment. Refused by MHDC.
- c. Plans for comment on tonight – **None**

18. Road report

- a. **Lengthsman** – New contract signed with LM and WCC. Worles Common cleared of dirt, ditches cleared.
- b. **Problems to report** – None.

19. Clerks Review (circulated) – It was agreed by all for Chairman to sign.

Clerks increase in hours (circulated) – It was agreed by all to increase Clerks hours from 2 to 4 per week from 1st April 2016. Letter for Standing Order signed and arrears of £128.90 to be paid, details in files.

20. Business Rate Relief application from Bell Inn Pensax (circulated) – It was agreed by all to support this application due to 'The business being of benefit to the local community and it is reasonable for the parish to support it financially'. All agreed to pay contribution of £461.31.

21. Dog mess – After much discussion it was agreed to purchase a waste bin at maximum cost of £56.39. The bin is to be put on roadside by footpath stile with a clean up dog mess sign. To be up for a trial period of 6 months. Cllrs to advise Clerk on which bin to purchase, details have been circulated. Cllr Keron to advise landowner and neighbours in that area of this project.

22. Meeting dates – Monday was the preferred night for all, Clerk to circulate dates.

23. Correspondence for information –

Email correspondence circulated - list in minute's folder.

WCC – Volunteering in your Community' - 9th June, 5-7-pm at The Hive – Cllr Wise may attend.

24. Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting. None

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

Litter Pick – Clerk to ask insurers regarding cover for organised event.

Agenda items - Broadband, Pensax Village Hall, Police to be invited, Defibrillator for Parish, Communication with residents, Litter pick.

26. Date of next meeting:

19th SEPTEMBER 2016 7.00pm

At MENITH WOOD OLD CHAPEL HALL

27. Meeting Closed 10.05pm.

Signed-----

Date **19th September 2016**

Chairman

Public comments - Landowner who attend the April Parish Council Meeting wished it to be noted the land in question regarding dog mess is Conservation Land voluntarily set aside to help wildlife.

County Councillors Report

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

Worcestershire: the year in review - The last year for WCC has been dominated by the need to reconcile a declining income with an expanding demand. Our corporate plan emphasises the four areas we perceive as being most important to residents, namely children and families, health and wellbeing, open for business and the environment. Translating those broad categories into practical action means that we are spending most of your council tax on vulnerable children, vulnerable adults and highways, as these are the areas that have caused greatest concern expressed in our viewpoint surveys and road shows.

Vulnerable children - we have increased the numbers of children in care. This is expensive and does not have a good record in terms of their success on leaving care. In consequence one area that we have sought to develop is the numbers in foster care and we would always welcome more people coming forward to assist in this way.

Vulnerable adults - we are very keen to seek new ways of helping those, young and old, who need such care to receive it in their own homes and with their families. This involves a number of innovative methods coming under the general heading of assistive technology. They need not be expensive and if they help keep people among those whom they know and love, they can give much better outcomes than conventional care homes.

Caring for the **environment** covers a very wide range of activity. We are keen to increase our recycling of waste and the new facility in Tenbury helps that, along with the material recovery centre at Norton. We are keen to reduce the overall amount of waste produced, but now have a new energy from waste facility being built in Hartlebury, to convert black bag waste into energy and a harmless bottom ash.

Roads/pavements - it is encouraging to see a small increase in satisfaction with the state of our highways in the past year. We are aware that the pavements are in need of extra attention and this will be a focus for attention in the coming year. Our roads are generally in a better condition than many of our neighbours, but we will be devoting £12 million over the next two years to raise their standard to a level that can then be maintained as satisfactory at a lower cost.

The area of **open for business** has come into sharp focus for me in the last year since being given the portfolio covering the economy, skills and infrastructure. Worcestershire's record in growth and productivity is very strong, although some would argue it is from a low base. Worcestershire's productivity growth has been second fastest in the country, equalling Oxford and behind London. The economy as a whole is the fourth fastest growing in the country. We are cooperating closely with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership in seeking development support in their Strategic Economic Plan. This involves many areas of infrastructure development like the dualling of the Southern Link and the improvement of the A38 in Bromsgrove. In addition there are major developments in Worcester 6, by junction 6 of the M5, the Malvern Hills Science Park, the Hoobrook estate in Kidderminster and the Eastern Gateway in Redditch. In all these areas, we are seeking to demonstrate that Worcestershire is a "World Class" county and a first rate place to live and work.

Allied to that is the investment in skills through our schools and colleges, with particular emphasis on apprenticeships for those not seeking a highly academic route to work. The County has a good record in this area and our levels of unemployment at all ages are lower than the national and cohort averages.

Investment in broadband has resulted in over 50,000 premises being connected to allow superfast speeds to be attained. This covers both residences and businesses. Broadband has come to be seen as a utility, so that everyone regards it as an essential. Unavoidably, this means that those in more remote and difficult areas complain about poor service and we will work with BT and others to seek solutions for all people. BT have committed themselves under the "Never say no" slogan but we must accept that this will take time and in certain areas will be more expensive.

We are now in the period of purdah before the local council elections on May 5th, so no party political activity is possible. Please note also there are elections for the Police and Crime Commissioner on the same date.

When the first such elections were held there was a lot of concern about politicising the role of police supervision. I would only comment that on election all PCCs take the same oath showing they will work with complete neutrality on all such concerns, no matter what political background or none they may come from.

Last time the turnout was poor, but the election was in November and stood alone. This time I am expecting a much larger turnout, to give the successful candidate a much stronger mandate.

Ken Pollock, Martley, Worcester WR6 6QA

03.05.16