

PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Pensax Parish Council held in PENSAX VILLAGE HALL at 7.00pm on Monday 19th March 2018

Present: Cllr Keron (Chairman), Cllr Rudd (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Weston, Cllr Abraham, Cllr Sanders

In Attendance: Clerk, County Cllr Ken Pollock

1. **Apologies:** Received and accepted from Cllr Greedy, Cllr Hingley.
2. **Vacancy on Parish Council** – one application had been received from Sharon Sanders. It was agreed by all to co opt Sharon onto the PC and a Declaration of Acceptance of Office was completed.
3. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs are reminded to keep their registers up to date, Cllr Sanders was given a form to complete.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – None declared.
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – None declared.
4. **Dispensations** –
 - a. To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) – **None requested.**
5. **Public Question Time** – See notes at end of minutes.
6. **County Cllr Report** – Report at end of minutes.
Dist Cllr Report – Apologies received, no report given.
7. **Minutes** of Parish Council Meeting held on 15th January 2018 were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
8. **Progress reports for information:**
 - a. **BT Box** – Cllr Hingley has contacted interested residents.
 - b. **Community Speedwatch** – still waiting for feedback from Community Speedwatch Team.
 - c. **Broadband** – Clerk and Lindridge Cllr working with WCC for Menith Wood and Pensax areas.
 - d. **Pensax Village Hall** – Clerk to ask for update from Trustees for May meeting.
 - e. **Data Protection Law changes May 2018** – emails to be sent to Cllrs about this change. Clerk will need to spend considerable time recording data held and destroying old records if not held for a genuine reason.
9. **Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors** –
Clerk – WCC Conference- 6th March 2018 – information to be circulated.
10. **Finances** -
 - a. **Payments made** – Mr D Nunn (mowing of War Memorial) = £24.00, Mr R Whiteman (LM December 2017 to February 2018) = £630.00.
 - b. **Payments received** – None.
 - c. **Bank Reconciliation** (circulated) - Signed for January/February 2018. Balance agreed as £9139.40 in cash book.
11. **Planning:**
 - a. Plans circulated since last meeting – **See item 18.**
 - b. Decisions received since last meeting –
17/01888/FUL - Rowley Farm, Pensax, Abberley, Worcester, WR6 6AG - Covered storage area over existing concrete base. **Approved by MHDC.**
 - c. Plans for comment on tonight –
18/00244/FUL - Fartown, Pensax, Abberley, Worcester WR6 6AE – Demolish existing machinery storage building and construct a replacement machinery store building. After much discussion it was agreed by all to send comments stating historic use of the shed was as a poultry shed. No objections subject to appropriate change to workshop being applied for. Concerns regarding any increase in traffic in narrow lane.
 - d. **Update - 14/01586/FUL – APP/J1860/W/15/3133352 – Ridding Coppice, Worles Common, Stockton.**
MHDC update - Legal services have prepared an Order which will be sent to landowner when site as had a further visit by Enforcement Officer.

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12. **Road report -**
 - a. **Lengthsman** – Penn Hall Lane to be cleared.
 - b. **Problems to report** – B4202 potholes, lying water.
 - c. **Grit bins for Parish** – Clerk has asked WCC if they can meet Cllr at suggested sites, no response to date.
13. **Welcome Pack for Residents** – to discuss at next meeting.
14. **Smartwater initiative from Police** – a few residents who attended January meeting had contacted Clerk. It was agreed Chairman to put flyers in magazine to generate more interest for Annual Meeting in May.
15. **WW1 Centenary Celebrations** – residents are organising an event. PC may be asked to grant funds.
16. **Party in the Park 24th June 2018, Tenbury** (circulated) – after discussion it was agreed by all the PC fully support such events but did not feel they could use the precept to support this years event.
17. **Correspondence for information** –
Email correspondence circulated - list in minute's folder.
Training dates as circulated.
MHDC Parish Forum – 9th April – 5.30 – 8pm at Malvern
18. **Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting.**
Plans circulated by email -
13th February 2018 – APPEAL - WFDC - APP/R1845/W/17/3189794 – 16/0441/FULL : WFA1492 – Land at Whytehouse Farm, Greenway, Rock DY14 9SJ – 20 starter homes and other ancillary works. It was agreed to make no comments as per the initial consultation response from the PC.
Payment 24th October 2017 (omitted from 20th November 2017 minutes) – Came & Co (Insurance 2017-18) agreed by email, quotations circulated 19th October 2017 and all agreed to this being accepted.
19. **Councillors' reports and items for the next agenda.**
Agenda items – Broadband, Pensax Village Hall, BT Box, Welcome pack for residents, Smart-water, WW1 Celebrations, Caravan sited in field off Stockton Lane.
20. **Date of next meeting - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 7pm at PENSAX VILLAGE HALL –
MONDAY 21st MAY 2018 -
to be followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting**
21. **Cllrs to agree to close meeting to the Public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.**
22. **Internal Auditor** – Previous Auditor cannot audit accounts for 2017-18. Clerk uses Mrs P Howell, retired accounts person to audit other PC accounts. Mrs Howell is willing to become Auditor for Pensax PC at a cost of £50.00. It was agreed by all to use Mrs Howell at the agreed fee subject to the Chairman speaking to her and being happy that she is independent of Clerk and is competent to do the audit.
23. **Lengthsman 2018-19** – It was agreed to renew contract with Mr R Whiteman at £14.00 per hour.
24. **Mowing Contract for War Memorial 2018-19** – It was agreed to renew contract with Mr D Nunn at agreed rate of £12.00 per cut, twelve cuts yearly. Further cuts to be authorised by Clerk with PC approval.
25. **Meeting closed** – 8.43pm

Signed----- Date 21st May 2018
Chairman

Cllrs comments to County Cllr –

Q - The number of new houses being built will put a strain on hospitals and GP surgeries. Are these matters taken into account when large planning applications are approved? The needs of people should be considered. Council Tax may fund some of the increase. PC Chairman going to SWDP meeting tomorrow, will raise this issue.

A – County Cllr felt it was a planning matter for MHDC. Clerk will look at SWDP, it is thought to include reference to such issues.

Q – **B4202** by Upper and Lower Hollins continues to break up due to lying water. Potholes are filled but do not last, 3 accidents this winter due to water/state of road. Clerk to report issues on website.

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Q – B 4202 – can road be upgraded to a priority route due to amount of HGV traffic. Cllrs felt it should be a priority gritting route.

A - County Cllr advised PC can make a request to WCC for upgrading of road via himself.

Q - A443 – The access onto this road for residents of Menith Wood is very dangerous due to speed of traffic and limited visibility.

A - County Cllr advised the road is being looked at in many places due to safety issues.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Council affairs – March the 1st brought the dreadful and totally unexpected news of the death of our interim chief executive, Steve Stewart. He was only 64 and had made a huge contribution since starting last May, when our previous CEO, Clare Marchant had left to run UCAS. Steve was just coming to the end of his service with us, before our new permanent Chief Executive, Paul Robinson started work today, the 19th March. He has been the CEO of Derby City Council, where he has run a unitary authority with a large budget and staff, comparable to this county. In the last month or so, we have recruited other senior members of the management team. They are the Chief Finance Officer, Michael Hudson from Wiltshire, the Chief Commissioning Officer, Andrew Spice from Sussex, and the Interim Director of Adult Social Care Services, Avril Wilson from West Sussex. While there was never planned to be a handover period with both men in place, Steve's death casts a bit of a shadow over Paul's new job in WCC. We wish the whole team well in getting started in post, and providing the vision and leadership needed for the large County Council staff, and all those in the County that rely on the council for services and encouragement. Some people have questioned why so many senior staff have left at this time. In each case they have gone on to bigger and better jobs, indicating we had chosen high flying people originally, and that their careers had been advanced by their service in the County Council.

SWDP revisions – Following its publication in 2016, the SWDP has been the basis for deciding the pattern of house building across south Worcestershire. Recently, the three councils involved have been considering revising the plan in the light of the impending publication of the second National Planning Policy Framework.

While this concerns the County Council more from the infrastructure viewpoint, I have been keen to take part in the discussions. My impression is that while organic small-scale growth of communities is desirable, it could be that larger new settlements may be necessary. Should one or two "new towns" of around 5,000 dwellings be required, the location of such developments is crucial. Any strong feelings on such plans would be welcome by your local district councillor and the planning departments. Recently Tenbury Town Council considered an application to build 72 houses off Oldwood road opposite the high school. I suggested that it would be advantageous to the school to have more young families in its catchment area. In addition, it is unrealistic to suppose that homes should only be allowed close to where there is an unmet need for employees. Minimising travel distance to work is desirable, but often unrealistic, and could be seen as a reason for allowing rural areas to become depopulated. In this context it is interesting to note the application for 20 starter homes in Rock. This is an area where our planning of housing is often criticised and it will be interesting to see how it progresses.

In general, I suggest we should be prepared for organic growth of our villages and hamlets, as well as a growth in jobs in rural areas. Another aspect is the need for better broadband which is essential and I have to report steady if slow progress at reaching the last 5% or so of premises not yet served by Superfast Broadband.

Tenbury Public Realm - The bad weather has delayed the completion of the Public Realm work in Tenbury. The latest news is that the red tarmac which was supposed to be starting tonight, Monday the 19th, will now not be scheduled until next week, the 26th – assuming our weather returns to normal. The road will be closed from 19.00 and will open again at 06.00. This operation should only take 3 nights, and the 20 mph roundels will be painted on the road surface at the same time. There are still one or two items of street furniture outstanding as Tesco has not yet fulfilled all its obligations under the S278 agreement it signed. As a result WCC is having to apply for release of some of Tesco's bond, to cover the outstanding work, and it does mean that the raised table outside Tesco's will not be replaced next week.

Speeding - I see you have a report on your community Speedwatch project on the agenda. I hope the extra signage indicating pedestrians on the road has had some effect, but I can imagine that the perception is that speeds are still too great. The Safer Roads Partnership lists a large number of sites where it deploys its equipment and these are listed on its website. The B4202 through Pensax is not mentioned and while I know their resources are greatly stretched, it might be worth approaching them about stationing one of their vans or motorcycles along the road at some time. Deterrence can be effective.

Cllr Ken Pollock, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2BZ