

# PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Pensax Parish Council held in Pensax Village Hall at 7.00pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019

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

**In Attendance:** Clerk, District Cllr Paul Cumming

1. **Apologies:** None.
2. **Declaration of Interest:**
  - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs are reminded to keep their registers up to date.
  - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – None declared.
  - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – None declared.
3. **Dispensations** –
  - a. To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) – **None requested.**
4. **Public Question Time** – See notes at end of minutes.
5. **County Cllr Report** – Apologies received see report at end of minutes.  
**Dist Cllr Report** – Report at end of minutes.
6. **Minutes** of Parish Council Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
7. **Progress reports for information:**
  - a. **BT Box** – Cllr has asked Menith Wood residents for suggestions for future use, ideas were information point, book/plant swap, defibrillator point. To be discussed at Parish Meeting in May.
  - b. **Elections 2<sup>nd</sup> May** – Cllrs were given forms to fill in if they wish to stand for election. Clerk to send village email message out about elections and meeting dates.
  - c. **Welcome Leaflet/Website** – Cllr still waiting for updates from Menith Wood residents.
  - d. **Assets of Community Value** – Cllr has asked residents in Menith Wood for their views. It was felt if the property came on the market there would not be enough financial support to buy it and do it up. District Cllr advised the process of registering the Cross Keys again would be hard to justify due to lack of community use over the last five years. It was agreed to contact Lindridge PC for their views but Pensax PC would not be taking any further action.
8. **Reports on Meeting attended by Clerk or Councillors** –  
**13<sup>th</sup> February - Election event** – Clerk attended
9. **Finances** -
  - a. **Payments made** – Mrs S Burrows (Photocopying Elections papers) = £15.00, DD (Information Commissioners Office) = £35.00.
  - b. **Payments received** – Pensax Village Hall rent 2017 and 2018 = £10.00.
  - c. **Bank Reconciliation** (circulated) - Signed for January/February 2019. Balance agreed as £10327.27 in cash book.
10. **Planning:**
  - a. Plans circulated since last meeting – **None.**
  - b. Decisions received since last meeting – **None.**
  - c. Plans for comment on tonight – **None.**
  - d. Planning queries with MHDC –
    - **Enforcement Action – Ridding Coppice, Worles Common, Stockton** – An Appeal has been lodged but MHDC have not yet received any further details.
    - **Caravan and field shelter sited in field at Pensax Road, Stockton end** – It has been confirmed the caravan is being used for agricultural purposes so planning permission is not required.
    - **18/00244/FUL – Fartown, Pensax, Abberley, Worcester WR6 6AE – Demolish existing machinery storage building and construct a replacement agricultural machinery storage building** (retrospective). MHDC CEO had responded to the PC letter of concern regarding the retrospective planning approval. CEO felt his officer

## PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

had made the correct decision. Dist Cllr is to monitor the application to ensure the conditions of the approval are met by 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

**11. Road report -**

- a. **Lengthsman** – Work ongoing, second training session on 26<sup>th</sup> March, LM booked in.
- b. **Problems to report** – Pensax Road - hedges have been cut but residents feel there is a safety issue as they need to be trimmed back further, same concern on Menith Wood road. Clerk will contact WCC for advice.

- 12. B4202 Speeding issue** – Few residents had responded to Clerk following consultation. Replies stated it was felt to be a large expense for small parish, flashing signs had been suggested but the cost is £2000.00+ per sign. It was agreed to put on Parish Meeting agenda but Cllrs feel costs are too high. Clerk to see when the shared Vehicle Activated Sign is due in Parish.

- 13. Annual Parish Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> May** – Refreshments to be given prior to start of meeting, agenda items, Assets of Community Value, Speeding, BT Box, Pensax Village Hall.

**14. Policies to be considered for adoption as circulated -**

- a. **Public Question Time Policy**
- b. **Communications Policy**
- c. **Media Policy**
- d. **Grievance and Disciplinary Policy**
- e. **Grant Policy** – to be reviewed annually.  
It was agreed by all to adopt policies as drafted, Grants Policy to be reviewed annually, other policies reviewed three yearly or earlier if required.

- 15. Clerks Review** – Chairman and Cllr Weston to agree date with Clerk before next meeting.

**16. Correspondence for information –**

Email correspondence circulated - list in minute's folder. Training dates as circulated.  
CALC Training dates, Election information  
MHDC Planning Training – 4<sup>th</sup> July – 5.30-7.30pm  
Pensax Church Grant Funding enquiry  
Old Chapel Menith Wood Grant Funding enquiry

**17. Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting.**

**Payments made 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019** – WCC (Salt for highways) = £140.00  
**Penn Hall Lane, Menith Wood - removal of hedge** – reported to MHDC.

**18. Councillors' reports and items for the next agenda.**

**Agenda items** – Pensax Village Hall, BT Box, Welcome Leaflet/Website, Clerks Review,  
**16/00455/HOU - New House Farm, Stockton** – Concerns regarding building being built too close to highway.  
(see notes below)  
**Pensax Village Hall** - Cllr representative had met with Trustees to discuss electrical work which has to be done, Trustees have funds for the work. Cllr to speak to Trustees regarding AGM for Hall, possibly same night as Annual Parish Meeting.

**19. Date of next meeting – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MONDAY 20<sup>th</sup> MAY 2019 7PM  
PENSAX VILLAGE HALL**

**to be followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.15pm or at close of Parish Meeting if later.**

**20. Meeting closed – 8.26pm**

Signed----- Date 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
Chairman

---

### DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

There are 112 empty homes, Council Tax to double for these properties, most are in MHDC area. South Worcestershire Development Plan being revised, due to be completed end of year. See also Item 11d above regarding planning decision for 18/00244/FUL.

# PENSAX PARISH COUNCIL

**Concerns from Cllrs - 16/00455/HOU - New House Farm, Stockton** – Concerns regarding building being too close to highway. Dist Cllr Cumming advised Clerk to contact Dist Cllr for the Stockton Parish to see if the matter has been reported to MHDC. Dist Cllr Cumming to be copied into the email.

---

## COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

**Budget Proposals** - Last month at full council, the budget was approved. While the outline of the proposals is well known, there were some significant changes. Various amendments from the Labour group and the 2017 group were tabled for consideration but were unsuccessful. Given that they proposed very minor changes to the budget, they could be taken as an indication that, overall, the budget was acceptable to all parties.

There was a notice of motion criticising the rates of charging for car parking at the Worcester Royal Infirmary, but this was rejected on the grounds that the problem was more one of capacity than exorbitant charging. When the hospital was built, provision for parking was limited to 75% of the numbers expected to need access to the hospital, building in an under-provision for parking.

**Worcestershire Parkway and SLR4** - Since your last council meeting, we held a press briefing at the new Worcestershire Parkway railway station. We were keen to outline the progress being made towards completion of the work this summer and then, after the extensive and detailed “entry into service” process, the station should be fully functional by the end of the year. This support for public transport is just part of our county wide policy to promote public transport, seen as complementing work on roads, to accommodate private cars and goods vehicles. In the capital programme we aim to see enhancements at several railway stations and in particular improved parking facilities. In addition, work has recently clearing the embankments of the southern link road between the Ketch and Powick roundabouts, for the widening of the causeway to allow the dualling of the road. This has involved removing the vegetation on the south side of the bank, done at this time to avoid the bird nesting season. Final approval of the government grant of £54.5 million came through recently, giving the project the green light to proceed towards an expected completion date in 2021. There will be a new separate Carrington Bridge, as well as one halfway along the 1.2 miles of causeway, to accommodate floodwater. The whole section will become four lanes, and the path on the north side will be widened to allow for more walking and cycling. During this year, three bridges will be built over the more northerly sections of the link road, one for farm traffic and the others to allow easier and safer crossing of the road by walkers and cyclists. It is worth noting that this development will give improved travel times from the west to the M5, junction 7, and for the reverse journey. Completion of the ring road to the north, while obvious on paper, would need a further sum of around £200 million, and a large number of houses to be built to the north west of the city, to generate many millions of pounds through Section 106 agreements. This is not likely to happen in the next decade, during which time we will be able to assess the benefit to the city itself of the diversion of traffic to the Southern Link Road.

**Local issues** - I trust that the resurfacing of the B4202 between Abberley and Clows Top has gone ahead as scheduled for last week without problems and that the new surface is an improvement. I would be keen to hear whether the various repairs have been successful and whether speeding is still a problem on sections of the road.

**School Funding** - There has recently been national attention on the question of school funding. As a former governor of Tenbury High School and Great Witley Primary, I am familiar with the pressures schools are under and I am sure we would all agree that they should be supported in all feasible ways.

Last Thursday week, I gave a RE lesson for year 6 pupils at Oldbury Park Primary School in St John's. It was on humanism, and the attention and interest shown by these 11 years olds was impressive. They were all very polite and well disciplined, making it a highly rewarding experience. At the same time the Guardian published a long piece on school funding, giving instances of the sort of measures some schools have had to follow to make ends meet. They wrote: *In North Yorkshire, one secondary school is raising funds by holding extra non-uniform days – six a year, at the end of each half term – potentially earning an additional £3,000 for the school's funds.* Guardian readers clearly know that it costs each pupil a pound a day to be allowed not to wear a school uniform! I did not... *Hours are being reduced at both the start and end of the day to save money. In Birmingham many primary school pupils are being sent home at lunchtime on Fridays; pupils at one Kent grammar school are being asked to come in late one morning.* I do not understand why money is saved if pupils attend for a shorter week. Staff are all bound to be on full time contracts, heating costs would be barely altered, and the amount of variable costs in paper and pens saved would be trivial. We know that school pupil numbers are going up, but how much more does it cost to teach a class of 30 over one of 29? I don't normally make political points, but in this crucial area, I would advise clear thinking and fact based reporting. Oldbury Park Primary School seemed to me to lack nothing in resources or staff and was smart, well supplied with materials, and apparently very successful. I hope it is typical of Worcestershire schools.

**Cllr Ken Pollock, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2BZ**