



PENCOMBE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Pencombe Group Parish Council
held on

Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at 8pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

Cllr. J. Lewis	Cllr. T. Brazier
Cllr. C. Hadley	Cllr. D. Legge
Cllr. T. Burge	Cllr. P. Thomas

In Attendance: Ward Cllr. Bruce Baker, Allan Drew Parish Clerk

Members of the Public: 7 members of the public attended.

41/24 Apologies for absence

All Councillors present.

42/24 Declarations of Interest and written requests for Dispensation

None received

43/24 Approve the draft minutes of the meeting of 26th March 2024

The draft minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman

44/24 Matters arising not otherwise covered in the minutes.

The Tree Warden, Alison Fenner, presented her comments on the Bitterley Hyde Woodland Management plan. In summary she concluded that the proposals are good and presented a fair balance between conservation and business needs. Here only comments are-

- if possible, some planting of Black Poplars should be considered.
- some additional Elm trees would be worthwhile planting assuming the disease resistance issue is verified.

Ms Fenner would write a summary of her conclusions and send it through to the Clerk.

45/24 Verbal update from the Ward Councillor.

Councillor Baker reported that-

Assaults on Council Enforcement Officers were increasing. A shooting case has resulted in an arrest being made.

Children's Services are still being criticised by OFSTED in this case in respect of children leaving care at the age of 18. Council staff are working to improve the situation and there is a partnership with Leeds City Council to provide assistance.

A new Head of Planning, Ms Kelly Collins-Thomas, previously of Worcestershire Council, has been appointed. She will start work at Herefordshire in July.

£57,000 has been allocated to provide computers for public use in the County's libraries.

The Forward Partnership of nearby local authorities, mentioned in previous minutes, is now up and running.

Herefordshire and Hereford City FC have agreed a long term lease on the football ground.

A planning application has been received for the Shires close to Ullingswick for a caravan site. It may have a relevance to Little Cowarne.



The new Local Plan is under consultation and 16,000 houses are required by 2041.

46/24 To receive any queries or concerns from local residents to Council & Ward Councillor.

The A49/A417 junction was discussed and Cllr. Baker confirmed that National Highways had an improvement project in their plan. The Chairman raised the point that a local farmer, Mr Mercer, had already agreed to let the Council have some land to move the road junction up to the roundabout just north of the existing junction and so combine the difficult junction with an existing roundabout (at the Marlbrook factory).

Cllr. Baker had heard of this proposal quite some time ago and thought that the idea had been abandoned. However, he would keep Council abreast of any developments.

47/24 Planning report from Cllr. Colin Hadley

Cllr. Hadley reported that-

There is one new application-

240749 Application for a Lawful Development Certificate to establish that planning permission DCNC2003/2219/F has been lawfully implemented and is therefore extant.

No comments were required on this application since it was essentially a technical planning matter to determine that the consent granted in 2004 remains in force.

Existing applications

Other than 240749 there are no outstanding applications in the Parishes

48/24 To receive: an update on the Parish Hall from the Chair of the Hall Trustees

Mrs Legge reported on a number of maintenance matters-

- she thanked Messrs. Prince and Mobey for their excellent work on the drain immediately to the north of the Hall.
- the fire alarms have all been tested.
- insurance has been renewed.
- electrical inspections and PAT testing has been completed.

On other matters-

- the recent LinC lunch was attended by about 40 people.
- July is the Silver Jubilee of the Parish Hall and special events will be proposed.
- on 9th May the Hall Trustees will host a networking meeting of other Trustees for Halls within the locality.
- the Trustees are keen to link the Parish Hall and Council websites.
- the handrails from the hall down to the car park need some attention.

Mr Frank Nicholson, presented his report on the replacement boiler for Parish Hall.

At the last Trustees meeting it was agreed that a new boiler should be fitted as soon as possible. The current boiler is now 25 years old and has been rebuilt a number of times. Parts are difficult to obtain and there is an intermittent fault which has not proved possible to rectify. There is also a very small oil leak somewhere which can be smelt but not located. There are ongoing discussions about financing this project and an application is to be made to the Arkwright Trust for support. The Council supports the Hall through an annual grant which will again be available this year to help with the boiler replacement. Finally the Hall Trustees have built up a fund over the years for just such an event.



Mr Nicholson had obtained three quotations from suitably qualified companies and the decision is to award the project to Grange Heating.

There are some risks with this project-

The existing oil tank uses a pipe run to supply oil and is also 25 years old. A pressure test will be carried out as part of the project and if the pipe fails it may have to be replaced.

Mr Nicholson recommended that the project is fully agreed and it can be completed during the May half term.

On financing the plan is-

£2000 from Hall funds

£2000 from Arkwright Trust – an application to the trust has been made.

£2000 from Parish Council which is typically the sort of annual funding to the Hall.

If the Arkwright Trust application is not fully successful the position will be re-visited.

Cllr. Baker confirmed that there were no grants available from Herefordshire but the National Lottery might help.

The Chairman raised the issue of full dependence on oil but accepted that, as of today, other more sustainable forms of heating were not very suitable for the needs of the Hall.

Council resolved unanimously to support the proposal.

Update on combined Hall/Council/village website.

Cllr. Burge had attended a meeting on combining the websites and there was agreement that such a combination was a worthwhile move. There was favourable comment on the new HFSP site which included a .GOV.UK site and the Clerk reported that this site was developed by Tangled Web at a cost of £500.

Council agreed that a working group of Mrs Legge, Mrs. Hodges, Cllr. Burge and the Clerk would meet to research the project and report back.

49/24 Finance

The RFO reported that-

Bank balance on 19/04/2024-Unity Trust current account £15,608.36

Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.55	Clerk's March salary
2	HMRC PAYE	272.60	Q4 PAYE (pay in April 2024)
3	Jane Legge	225.00	NDP work (AECOM sites report errors)



4	Seton	60.94+VAT	Rubber paint for hall car park kerb Refund to Clerk
5	D C Gardening Services	250.00+VAT	Cut back vegetation at roadside railings opposite Pencombe Cemetery
6	Cemetery non-domestic rates	329.34	Payable April 2024
7	A M Drew	450.00	30 extra NDP hours @ £15/hour
8	Turnwater	980+VAT	Drain cleaning & jetting
9	D C Gardening Services	870+VAT	Ditch clearing iro Little Cowarne Church
	Total	3801.43+VAT	

Income received since last meeting –

05/04/2024 Tony & Karen Davies	£50.00	Kiosk donation
19/04/2024 Herefordshire Council	£9150	Precept Pt 1

TOTAL

£9200.00

The RFO had issued an invoice for £5026 to Herefordshire Council for the return of the monies spent on grant funded work.

Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.48	Clerk's April salary
2	A M Drew	302.64	Salary arrears from 1 April 2023. As agreed at Jan 2024 meeting minute 9/24
3	A M Drew	358.80	Extra NDP hours. As agreed at March 2024 meeting
4	Autela	65.28+VAT	Q4 payroll invoice
5	Groundworks	6352.53	Return of unspent NDP grant
6	Herefordshire planning application fee	289.00	Re-fund to Clerk
	TOTAL	7731.73+VAT	



Total for payment £7731.73+VAT as appropriate.

Council agreed these payments.

VAT for 2023-24

The VAT reclaim covering the year 2023-24 is for £3496 and has been submitted.

50/24 Cllr. Tony Brazier reported on current Lengthsman work.

An invoice for the grant re-imburement has been submitted to Herefordshire Council for the sum of £5026. As of 19 April there had been no payment made.

The first grass cut of the year took place in early April as requested.

The final Lengthsman bill for 2023-24 of £870+VAT was paid on 9 April 2024. This was for the Little Cowarne ditching work.

Expressions of interest for the 2024-25 Lengthsman, PROW and drainage grant schemes have been submitted. Although not yet allocated it is possible that these grants could reach £8000 and if so would result in considerable improvements in the Group Parishes.

51/24 Annual Parish Meeting

After some discussion it was agreed that the Chairman of the County Council, Cllr. Roger Phillips would be a good speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting. The date was agreed for 4th June 2024 and the Clerk would contact Cllr. Phillips regarding his availability.

Jane Legge suggested that residents could also assess the NDP photographs for inclusion in the draft plan.

52/24 Neighbourhood Development Plan

Cllr. David Legge reported that-

The design code work has started and is being carried out by AECOM. The outstanding grant monies from 2023-24 of £6372 will be returned as required and a closure report provided.

53/24 Provision of a village car park.

Cllr. Tony Brazier reported that-

The revised planning application has been submitted to Herefordshire. Since the boundaries for the revised application are different from the previous application a new fee was payable. However, the planning validation team requested further information on the new application which has been supplied and hopefully validation will follow shortly.

54/24 Working Group questionnaire



Cllr. Burge summarised the results from the working group questionnaire issued to all residents. There were about 70 respondents and two main conclusions were clear-

1. 60% of respondents thought that the Pencombe red phone kiosk should be used to house the defibrillator. Defibrillator training is also required. There are no first responders in the area and some should be recruited.
2. A 20mph speed limit would be a benefit to the village. Cllr. Baker undertook to make enquiries about how.

The matter of the missing sign at the eastern entrance to Pencombe was also raised. The Clerk has reminded Colin Smith about the request for a replacement.

The damage to the Causeway was mentioned and it was hoped that the new grant would cover this work.

Cllr. Hadley confirmed that he had forwarded information regarding the damage to the fence outside Abel's farm to Cllr. Baker.

55/24 To consider: Matters for discussion at the next meeting

Date of next meeting Tuesday 28th May 2024

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

25/4/24
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[Handwritten signature]