



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

Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 7.30pm in Pencombe & Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Councillors Present;

Cllr. J. Lewis
Cllr. C. Hadley

Cllr. T. Brazier
Cllr. D. Legge

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

Members of the Public: 8 members of the public attended.

15/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Burge & Thomas

16/24 Declarations of Interest and written requests for Dispensation

None received

17/24 Approval of the draft minutes of the meeting of 23rd January 2024

The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman

18/24 Matters arising not otherwise covered in the minutes.

The Chairman reported that he had received quotations from the Cumbria Clock Co. for work on the church clock-

Major service £2360

Fit auto winder £6560

Annual service £195

All prices +VAT

The Chairman felt that these prices were quite high and that the possibility of funding some of the cost through grants would be explored.

Cllr. Legge reported that the Bell Ringers' group has been set up and that he had initiated the fitting of a rope handrail into the bell tower up to the bell ringers' room. The Chairman commented that the ladder from the bell ringers' room into the bell tower was a hazard and past efforts to obtain a grant had not yet borne fruit. However, for safety some work would be needed to improve access to the bell tower.

Verbal update from the Ward Councillor

The Ward Councillor Bruce Baker reported that-

- Section 106 funds (contribution from developers) currently stood at £12m. S106 would be replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) pending the outcome of consultation. Pencombe Group Council had no developments which qualified for access to this S106 fund.
- The grant schemes for 2024-25 have been published and additional funding had been allocated-



Lengthsman £250k rising to £500k; PROW £250k rising to £500k; Drainage (new grant) £500k

- The County has budgeted £10m to assist with road repairs.
- Children's Services had been inspected by OFSTED again. Whilst not yet at the necessary standard there have been improvements.
- Herefordshire Council is working with the football ground to agree a long-term lease for the ground.
- 15 projects have received £22m via the Stronger Herefordshire bid in a variety of areas.
- He had written to Balfour Beatty about the damaged safety barrier at Abell's farm, Little Cowarne. There was no date yet available for a repair. Cllr. Hadley stated that the repair should be covered by insurance and Cllr. Baker would progress the case again with BB.

20/24 Queries or concerns from local residents to the Ward Councillor

Residents did not raise any queries.

21/24 Planning report from Cllr. Colin Hadley

Cllr. Hadley reported that -

New applications

240146 Maidenhyde Farm, Pencombe, HR6 0NH

Application for prior notification for proposed roads for farm machinery.

Prior approval
not required

Existing applications

There are no outstanding applications in the Parishes

22/24 Update on the Parish Hall from Mrs Janet Legge-

- About 40 people attended the last LinC lunch and film
- The heating boiler remains a problem so replacement is likely. Quotes are being sought but look to be in the region of £7,000. In principle the Council agreed to purchase the boiler and the Hall would make a donation.
- Thanks to Eddie Prince and Tim Mobey for their work installing an external tap and clearing drains around the Hall. Mr Prince reported that some work around the Hall drains is required and the Clerk advised that the Hall surveys the area and sends the Council a list of required works.
- On the 23rd March there will be an afternoon tea event accompanied by a jazz singer.
- The Hall will host a networking meeting for Hall operators on 9 May.

23/24 Finance

The RFO reported that-

Bank balance on 21/02/2024 -Unity Trust current account £18,569.46



Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.55	Clerk's December 2023 salary
2	A M Drew	363.55	Clerk's January 2024 salary
3	Autela	48.32+VAT	Q3 payroll charges
4	HMRC PAYE	272.60	Q3 PAYE charge
5	HALC	481.62+VAT	HALC annual subscription
6	Viking Direct	24.99+VAT	Sparrington Noticeboard
7	Viking Direct	69.32+VAT	Laser printer cartridge (allocated to NDP)
	Total	1622.95+VAT	

Income received since last meeting –

£50.00 N C Pegler Ltd, Monumental Mason. Memorial to Tracee Samantha FLOWER

Payments for Authorisation

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	A M Drew	363.35	Clerk's February 2024 salary
2	Viking	162.22+VAT	NDP noticeboards and note books
3	Zoom video conferencing	129.90+VAT	For NDP Refund to Clerk
4	HALC	230.98+VAT	Cllr. training 13 Feb 2024
5	Post Office	420.00	NDP workshop printing (1230 pages & 85 photos). Refund to Clerk
6	D C Garden Services	1220.00+VAT	Ditch works December 2023 - January 2024
7	Jane Legge	183.75	NDP delivery work
8	Royal British Legion	50.00	Donation for wreath
	Total	2760.20+VAT	



Note item 8. No donation has yet been made to RBL for the Remembrance Day wreath.

Total for payment £2760.20+VAT as appropriate.

Council agreed these payments.

Predicted Outturn 2023-24

Line No.	PENCOMBE GPC BUDGET 2022-23	Budget 2023-24	Year to date 2023-24	Forecast Outturn 31 March 2024	Variance from Budget	Notes
	Income					
1	Precept	18300	18300.00	18300	0.00	
2	Cemetery	1000	600.00	700	-300.00	
3	Grants	13000	7615.00	12767	-233.00	NDP-£7615; Annual mtce.- £2576; Nom. Task £257
4	Other Income	200	145.63	650	450.00	Includes field rent & receipt of Sparrington kiosk
5	VAT Reclaim	3334	3334.66	3334	0.00	
6	Total Income	35834	29995.29	35751.00	-83.00	
7	Clerk	4044	3635.03	4355	-311.00	Pay award arrears for 2022-23 of £1/hour
8	Bank Charges	72	54.00	72	0.00	
9	Administration	500	617.22	750	-250.00	Election costs to Herefordshire Council
10	Insurance, audit, professional	685	1011.70	1012	-327.00	PKF Littlejohn, external auditor
11	IT	340	100.00	100	240.00	
12	Cemetery Rates	329	329.34	329	0.00	
13	Training and development	200	0.00	231	-31.00	
14	Equipment	500	0.00	0	500.00	
15	Maintenance	3500	4135.00	4200	-700.00	Cumbria Clock Co. £495, Adrian Hope £585
16	HMRC	1000	1430.17	1430	-430.00	Pay award & extra NDP hours
17	Other Exp.	100	617.44	670	-570.00	Contribution to Coronation events £500; Daffodil
18	TOTAL Day to DAY	11270	11929.9	13149	-1879.00	
	Special Projects				0.00	
19	NDP	10000	5752.20	7400	2600.00	Progress has been slower than expected in 2023-
20	Lengthsman	5500	624.00	6500	-1000.00	Grant monies not yet spent
21	Sparrington kiosk	150	1116.75	1117	-967.00	Off set by donations in "Other Income" of ~ £500
22	Pencombe kiosk	100	0.00	0	100.00	
23	Village Car Park	2500	2618.30	3000	-500.00	
24	TOTAL SPECIAL PROJECTS	18250	10111.25	18017	233	
25	Total Expenditure	29520	22041.15	31166	-3025	
26	Reclaimable VAT in expenditure	2000	1631.91	3500	1500	Not included in this year's results. Will appear as 2024-25
27	Surplus	6314	7954.15	4585.00	-1729.00	

N.B. Negative variances are adverse

There is a predicted surplus of £4585 for this year. £2000 of this will be used to create a reserve against future by-elections as was resolved when setting the precept in March 2022.

The budget for 2024-25 will be discussed and agreed at the March meeting.



24/24 Lengthsman Scheme/Grass cutting:
To receive: a Cllr. Tony Brazier reported-

The Lengthsman has completed the routine annual maintenance of the ditches etc as specified in the works order. The undergrowth around the corner railings opposite the cemetery has also been cut back significantly improving visibility at that corner.

This work is covered by the Herefordshire grant of up to £2526 and the Lengthsman's invoice is for £1220+VAT. The Clerk has queried this with the Lengthsman since there was no mention of the cemetery work in the invoice and clarity about the remaining grant money is necessary.

It is possible there is still more than £1000 to spend on this work. One possibility is that a gully sucking machine could be used to good effect in some areas around the Parish using this funding.

The Nominated Task for which Council receives matched funding was to concrete the ramp at the bottom of the Parish Hall. That work was completed earlier in February and an invoice of £4900+VAT is expected shortly.

The Lengthsman contract and the grass cutting contract are now due for renewal from 1 April. D C Garden Services have advised that a seventh cut during the season should be implemented (currently six cuts). The price would remain as present at £520+VAT After discussion it was resolved that-

- The first cut would be requested for early April.
- Subsequent cuts to be made monthly up to September.
- A seventh cut would be agreed for October if growing conditions required.
- The grass cutting contract with DC Gardening Services would be renewed.

Mrs Legge requested that the bank within the village Hall boundary is not cut until August. Mr Mottram thought that the bank from the highway up to the Hall driveway should also not be cut until August. The Chairman commented that "to cut or not to cut" was a dilemma because of the opposing views residents hold. A compromise could be to leave the Hall bank as requested but to cut the highway bank.

Cllr. Hadley suggested a further compromise that the bank should be cut early in April but not again until August. The early cut would help keep the grass in check and assist the wildflowers to come though better. This suggestion met with general approval and was agreed by Council. Mr Mottram added that the daffodils on the bank in the square should also not be cut. A "Do not mow" sign was also suggested.

It was resolved that the Lengthsman contract with DC Gardening Services would be renewed.

25/24 Neighbourhood Development Plan

Cllr Legge reported that a residents' workshop was held on 19 February and Ms Jane Legge gave her report to Council as follows-

The main objective of the workshop was to give the residents of the Group Parish the opportunity to review and discuss the suitability of the ten sites identified as possible for development.

The workshop was attended by fifty-four residents who were split into nine groups to discuss the sites. They were asked to capture their views on whether they supported the sites or not and capture any comments or concerns they had.



This information was then fed back by a representative from each group at the end of the workshop.

Site summary

P1 – overall agreement from the groups as small development, with no identified impact on the village.

P2 – mixed comments. Majority of residents supported the site, but concerns were raised about access and water run-off. AECOM report is showing site as 3.07 hectares – is this correct?

P3 – overall agreement from the groups as small development. One group raised concerns about flooding and surface water.

P6 – mixed comments (almost 50/50). For those that support the site, they think that the site would be good for affordable housing and a shop. Those that do not support the site, it is on the grounds of spoiling the rural view, that twelve houses are too many for this site and concerns over drainage and flooding.

P7 – this site raised the most concern within the groups. Overall, the opinion was that there were too many houses proposed for the site and part of it should be retained to provide the village with a green open space for villagers to enjoy. Concerns were also raised about the proximity to the wildlife corridor (the stream), flooding and drainage. Another major concern was around access to site, light, and noise pollution, too much pressure overall on the village infrastructure. For those that supported it, affordable housing (at a reduced number) would be welcomed.

P9 – again, a lot of concern was raised about this site. This included the number and type of dwellings, access to the site, water run-off and too much pressure on the village infrastructure. For those that supported it, it was on the basis that the number of proposed dwellings was reduced, and they complimented existing bungalows in High Orchard in their design.

P10 – overall agreement from the groups as a small development, however, dwelling would need to sympathetic to existing views and the roof line in keeping with existing dwellings. For the group that did not support the site, it was on the basis that it is not within the village boundary.

P12 – overall agreement from the groups as a continuation of the village. Comments raised were regarding extending the 30mph zone to incorporate the site. For the group that did not support the site, it was on the basis that it is not within the village boundary/30mph zone.

P13 - mixed comments (almost 50/50). For those that support the site it was because it was a small development with good access. Those that did not support the site, it was on the basis that it was outside the village boundary, and it would use good arable land.

P14 – overall agreement from the groups with no major concerns raised.

Conclusion

Overall, the residents supported the small developments within the village, but concerns were raised regarding the larger sites and the impact that they would have on the village.

The residents agreed that the larger sites would put too much pressure on the infrastructure of the village including (but not limited to) access to the sites, roads, drainage, sewerage, flooding, wildlife corridors, pedestrian safety (if the number of vehicles increased), current rural views being spoilt, light and noise pollution. They also worried that larger sites would create their own communities, rather than integrating into the existing village community.

It was felt that the infrastructure of the village would need to be improved first before it could support any development.



There was concern about inaccuracies in the report and residents questioned why some apparently suitable sites had been rejected and others marked as possible when they appeared unsuitable. These issues would be collected and raised with AECOM. The Clerk reported that the Design Code activity would start imminently.

26/24 Provision of a village car park.

Cllr. Tony Brazier reported that – the Clerk has submitted a revised planning application to Herefordshire Council. The drawing is along the lines of the one shown to Council at the January meeting and moves the entrance onto the C1110 at the highpoint just inside the 30 mph limit signs. The layout of the car park has changed from “portrait” to “landscape within the 0.5 acre envelope. The hedge along the C1110 will be moved rather than removed so a survey may not be required.

27/24 To consider: Matters for discussion at the next meeting

Date of next meeting Tuesday 26th March 2024

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed (Chairman)..... *W. Brazier* Date. *26-03-2024*

