

Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held electronically by Zoom on 11 March 2021 at 7.45 pm

Present:

Cllr J Rogers (Chair), Cllr D Burleigh , Cllr T Gammell, Cllr A Goodman, Cllr S Maple, Cllr M Parkin, Cllr N Rowe

In attendance:

Mr Edward Roberts (Parish Clerk)

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**20-195 To receive and accept apologies for absence.**

No apologies had been received.

**20-196 Public Participation**

Three members of the public attended, along with Cllr Claire Strong. The main topic was that of the state of the track at Great Green and its repair. It was pointed out that the parish council's course of action was extremely limited as the track was part of the official village green and public money could not be spent on its maintenance. It was agreed that an exchange of information should take place between the residents and the parish council and determine what action might be taken.

**20-197 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.**

Cllr Maple re-stated his memberships of both the Tennis and Sports and Social Club committees.

**20-198 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 11 February 2021 as a true and accurate record.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 February 2021, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed.

**20-199 To receive Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary and to approve accounts for payment.**

- a. Bank account as at 28 February 2021: Unity Trust Account £51,160.02
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £30,959.98, as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement (Appendix A) be made.

**20-200 To receive the Clerk's report.**

The Clerk reported that the purchase order had been sent to Setter for replacement of the rotting poles at Colemans Close play area. This had been acknowledged, but there was currently no start date for the work.

The initial batch of audit documentation had been prepared, ready to be sent to IAC Audit. A further batch would be required at year end. The S106 payment for the Great Green bus shelter work had been paid into the bank and a copy invoice for the work on the

Recreation Ground play area had been sent to NHDC. This had been acknowledged and that tranche of \$106 would be paid before the end of the financial year.

Cllr David Barnard had granted another £45 towards litter picking equipment and £500 had been received from Rands Education towards the refurbished play area.

Various emails had been received, including two applications to be placed on the allotments waiting list and a number of residents who were interested in receiving trees to plant in their gardens.

**20-201 To receive the RecDev Working Group report and updates on “George’s Half-pipe”.**

Cllr Maple went through the report – Appendix C. He had circulated the report and included plans and concept drawings of possible designs for the new pavilion. The council agreed that a formal opening ceremony for the new play area would not be possible under current Covid regulations, but an informal photo opportunity on the evening of 29 March 2021, when groups of 6 would be permitted, was agreed. The text of an article for inclusion in the parish magazine was agreed by all present.

**20-202 To approve IAC Audit to conduct the internal audit of Pirton Parish Council accounts for 2020-21.**

Proposed by Cllr Rogers, seconded by Cllr Rowe and **APPROVED** by all present.

**20-203 To approve a grant of £250 towards car park maintenance at Pirton Recreation Ground.**

Proposed by Cllr Gammell, seconded by Cllr Burleigh and **APPROVED** by all present.

**20-204 To approve the purchase and maintenance of the domain name pirton.org at an initial cost not to exceed £30.00.**

Cllr Goodman spoke on this, emphasising the requirement for the village and the relatively low cost to the parish council. Proposed by Cllr Burleigh, seconded by Cllr Rogers and **APPROVED** by all.

**20-205 To approve the expenditure of a sum not to exceed £300.00 on the production of a web “Front Page” for the pirton.org domain.**

Cllr Goodman explained the research she had carried out and that the cost was likely to be significantly less than this as the Pumpkin Club had offered to support the scheme. The parish council would pay the hosting fees. Proposed by Cllr Gammell, seconded by Cllr Burleigh and **APPROVED** by all.

**20-206 To consider a reduction in the first 6-month rental payment (due 1 April 2021) by the Tennis Club in light of the restrictions imposed by the Government’s Covid-19 regulations.**

Cllr Maple outlined the situation and suggested that a similar reduction to last year’s should be considered. Proposed by Cllr Rowe and seconded by Cllr Goodman, that a reduction of 50% in the first 6 months fees be permitted. **AGREED** by all, less Cllr Maple, who, as a Tennis Club committee member did not vote.

**20-207 To consider and approve a course of action following receipt of the Parkinson Partnership report on the handling of VAT for the proposed new pavilion build.**

Following discussions, it was proposed by Cllr Gammell and seconded by Cllr Maple, that the council formally adopt the advice and recommendations made in the report. This proposal was **AGREED** by all. It was also agreed that a revised working group structure was now required to drive the project forward and that the Clerk, in conjunction with Cllrs Rogers and Maple, should produce a draft document prior to the next meeting of the parish council.

**20-208 To discuss the proposal by Blakeney Homes for a permanent diversion of Pirton Footpath 05.**

Cllr Gammell stated that it appeared that Blakeney Homes had had a re-think on the removal of the footpath and that he was content with the new route. This was not supported by others, although it was agreed that the suggested route was an improvement and was welcomed by the council. Cllr Burleigh reminded the meeting that there was a long waiting list for footpath diversions to be considered, so there was no rush for action.

**20-209 Planning.**

- a. To consider Planning Applications (see Appendix B). Cllrs Burleigh and Rowe were to draft a response to the single application received.
- b. To receive an update on the Local Plan. Cllr Strong reported that a modification had been received from the inspector and that this would go to cabinet. It would go out to consultation after the elections.
- c. To receive an update on Cala Homes. Cllr Rogers reported that she had still not received any contact from Cala management, regarding the siting of a dog waste bin at the development. She would continue to try to find someone to talk to. Cllr Burleigh had failed to find any of the bird and bat boxes that should have been installed and would contact the planning department to ask about them. She also intended to bring up the subject of the hedge removed early in the building work by Cala.
- d. To receive an update on Spitfire Homes. There was nothing to report from Cllr Maple, but he hoped to be able to contact someone after 29 March, when some Covid restrictions would be eased.
- e. To receive an update on Blakeney Homes. The Clerk had received an email concerning future road works at the site as mentioned in his report. Cllr Strong stated that the planning application for the 8 dwellings had not yet been decided.
- f. To consider the situation with regard to Wright's Farm. Cllr Parkin had put in another Freedom of Information (FOI) request and was waiting for a response.

**20-210 To discuss the proposed 20mh speed limit.**

Cllr David Barnard was still pushing this matter forward. There had been some interest in using Speed Indicator Devices to remind motorists of their speed. It was agreed that Cllr Goodman, in conjunction with Cllrs Rowe and Parkin, would fill in the 'expressions of interest' form and send it off prior to the deadline of 2 April 2021.

**20-211 To co-opt Viv Tyler as a member of the Communications Working Group.**

Proposed by Cllr Burleigh, seconded by Cllr Gammell and **AGREED** by all.

**20-212 To confirm the membership of Committees and Working Groups and approve updates of Documents 14 (Terms of Reference) and 14a (Committee Membership).**

Cllr Burleigh had produced a document suggesting changes and noted that the Recreation Ground Development Working Group would have to change in order to drive the project forward and for the parish council to take more of a lead. There would have to be a shift of ownership and responsibilities. It was agreed that a meeting to discuss this should take place in the next 7 to 14 days.

**20-213 To approve liaison and co-working, where relevant, between the Parish Council and the Improving Biodiversity Around Pirton (IBAP) community action group.**

Cllr Goodman went through the reasons for the existence of IBAP, its aims and objectives. This was well received by councillors and Cllr Rogers agreed that the parish council would support and advise as necessary.

**20-214 To approve the final draft of a licence between Pirton Parish Council and Pirton Sports and Social Club.**

Cllr Maple confirmed that this was on hold pending the resolution of the VAT issue.

**20-215 To discuss proposals for temporary or permanent improvements to access routes into the Recreation Ground.**

Cllr Maple ran through the paper he had circulated (Appendix D). Cllr Burleigh stated that a great deal more information was required in order to discuss this properly. Cllr Maple was thanked by the Chairman for broaching the subject and asked if there really was a need for alternative access. Cllr Maple emphasised that this would only be temporary.

A second suggestion, from a resident adjacent to the current access track, had proposed that an approach be made to Blakeney Homes for the use of their new road as a better access to the Recreation Ground. Cllr Burleigh stated that a similar suggestion had been made some years ago, that legal advice had been taken, residents consulted and the final outcome had been that the current access should be retained.

**20-216 To receive an update on the replacement of the interpretation board at Blacksmith's Pond.**

Cllr Gammell reported that he was still waiting for a quote from a third party via the CRoW service.

**20-217 To agree a date for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held before 1 June 2021.**

Despite the Covid restrictions in force, the Clerk stated that there was a legal requirement for an Annual Parish Meeting to be held. This could be via Zoom, or outside with a maximum of 30 people after 17 May 2021. The 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021 was agreed as a suitable date, subject to the Covid regulations in force at the time.

**20-218 To receive an update on the proposed village survey to ascertain transport needs.**

Cllr Parkin stated that HCC wanted to have a meeting to establish the requirements and start the process. They wanted to understand the problems and ambitions in the village. Cllrs Maple and Burleigh would attend the meeting with Cllr Parkin.

**20-219 To discuss the future of the Youth Council monies held in Project Pots, in light of the decision not to go ahead with the renovation work at the Methodist Chapel hall.**

Cllr Burleigh reported that no decision had yet been made regarding the renovation work, contrary to what had been suggested. The parish council would retain the monies until a firm decision on the way forward had been made.

**20-220 To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parish Paths Partnership (P3). Cllr Rowe reported that the nothing had actually been done regarding the posts on Shillington Road as the original report of the issue had been lost. He has once again submitted a new report to Highways.
- b. S106 Projects. Nil.
- c. Village Environment. Cllr Burleigh reported on her dealings with HCC regarding the damage to the Heritage Verge on Hitchin Road. They were looking into her concerns and a meeting had been suggested by Cllr David Barnard. On the Rectory Manor tree planting over the scheduled monument, her FOI request had resulted in all the correspondence going back 3 years being provided. It transpired that nothing had been done during that time to investigate the matter. Cllr Burleigh would be taking it further. Cllr Gammell stated that when Covid regulations permit, work will commence on clearing the ditches.
- d. Bury Trust. Cllr Maple reported that the Trust is now seeking new quotes for the renovation work to Jack's Path and that discussions had taken place regarding the placing of a bench on Toot Hill.
- e. Village Hall. Cllr Parkin reported that Play Aloud was now back and that the management committee was looking funding avenues.

Prior to the next item, Cllr Gammell announced his retirement from the Parish Council. He intended staying on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and maintaining an interest in Blacksmiths Pond. He was thanked for all his work on behalf of the Council by Cllr Rogers.

**20-221 To suggest items for the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday, 8 April 2021 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45pm, or electronically as advised.**

- a. Cllr Rowe suggested that a recruitment drive needed to be conducted to find new members for the council.
- b. A suggestion was made to co-opt the Tree Warden onto the Arboreal Working Group. Cllr Rogers to check to see if he was willing.
- c. A presentation on “Plastic-free Hitchin” was offered and accepted by the council.

**Meeting Closed: 11.02pm.**

Appendices

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

Appendix B – Planning Applications

Appendix C – RecDevWG Report

Appendix D – Recreation Ground Access Routes

## Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

**Pirton Parish Council Financial Statement****Payments**

| <b>Code</b>            | <b>Date</b> | <b>Description</b>          | <b>Supplier</b>        | <b>Net</b>       | <b>VAT</b>      | <b>Total</b>     |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Playground             | 11/03/2021  | Rec Play Area Refurbishment | Setter Play Equipment  | 22,998.13        | 4,599.63        | 27,597.76        |
| Salary                 | 11/03/2021  | Salary                      | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 700.80           | 0.00            | 700.80           |
| Room (Office Expenses) | 11/03/2021  | Expenses                    | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 30.00            | 0.00            | 30.00            |
| Telephone              | 11/03/2021  | Expenses                    | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 20.00            | 0.00            | 20.00            |
| Postage & Mileage      | 11/03/2021  | Expenses                    | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 22.35            | 0.00            | 22.35            |
| Tax                    | 11/03/2021  | Tax & Employers NI          | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | 175.20           | 0.00            | 175.20           |
| Employer's NI          | 11/03/2021  | Tax & Employers NI          | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | 19.87            | 0.00            | 19.87            |
| Training               | 11/03/2021  | Councillor Training         | HAPTC                  | 30.00            | 0.00            | 30.00            |
| CPRE                   | 11/03/2021  | CPRE Subscription           | CPRE                   | 36.00            | 0.00            | 36.00            |
| Sports Pavilion        | 11/03/2021  | VAT Report on Pavilion      | Parkinson Partnership  | 600.00           | 0.00            | 600.00           |
| Street Cleaner         | 11/03/2021  | Street Cleaning             | Tony Smart             | 170.00           | 0.00            | 170.00           |
| Parish Paths           | 11/03/2021  | Strimming Paths             | Steve Kitchiner        | 558.00           | 0.00            | 558.00           |
| Groundsman             | 11/03/2021  | Groundsman Duties           | Steve Kitchiner        | 1,000.00         | 0.00            | 1,000.00         |
|                        |             |                             |                        | <b>26,360.35</b> | <b>4,599.63</b> | <b>30,959.98</b> |

**Income**

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Description</b>       | <b>Supplier</b>                     | <b>Net</b>      | <b>VAT</b>  | <b>Total</b>    |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Grants      | 18/02/2021  | Bus Shelter S106 payment | North Herts District Council (NHDC) | 620.00          | 0.00        | 620.00          |
| Grants      | 10/03/2021  | Grant Litter Picking     | Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)  | 45.00           | 0.00        | 45.00           |
| Grants      | 10/03/2021  | Grant Rec Play Area      | Rands Education                     | 500.00          | 0.00        | 500.00          |
|             |             |                          |                                     | <b>1,165.00</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>1,165.00</b> |

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 11 March 2021

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pirton Parish Council

### Bank Reconciliation at 28/02/2021

|                                                   |                      |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Cash in Hand 01/04/2020                           | 57,722.73            |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| <b>ADD</b>                                        |                      |
| Receipts 01/04/2020 - 28/02/2021                  | 44,504.29            |
|                                                   | 102,227.02           |
| <b>SUBTRACT</b>                                   |                      |
| Payments 01/04/2020 - 28/02/2021                  | 51,067.00            |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| <b>Cash in Hand 28/02/2021</b><br>(per Cash Book) | <b>51,160.02</b>     |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| Cash in hand per Bank Statements                  |                      |
| Petty Cash                                        | 28/02/2021 0.00      |
| Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust                 | 28/02/2021 51,160.02 |
|                                                   | <b>51,160.02</b>     |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| Less unrepresented payments                       | 0.00                 |
|                                                   | 51,160.02            |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| Plus unrepresented receipts                       | 0.00                 |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| <b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>                      | <b>51,160.02</b>     |
| <br>                                              |                      |
| <b>A = B Checks out OK</b>                        |                      |

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| Signed: _____ |
| Dated: _____  |



## Appendix B – Planning Applications

| Reference      | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i 21/00687/FPH | <b>91 High Street, Pirton</b><br><br><i>Insertion of first floor window to existing (east) side elevation and two storey side extension following demolition of existing south elevation extension.</i><br><br>Comments to Thomas Howe by 31 March 2021 |

## Planning Decisions (for information only)

| Reference | Detail |
|-----------|--------|
| i Nil     |        |

## Appendix C - RecDevWG Report

**RecDev Working Group report to PPC 11 March 2021**

1. The Working Group has met formally 18 times to date. The group has two key activities:
  - a. To develop proposals for a revamped playground area
  - b. To develop proposals for a new pavilion

**Playground area**

2. Work is now completed and the playground should reopen on 13<sup>th</sup> March.
3. The playground will be closed while the works take place. This should be for 2 weeks - again, subject to the weather.
4. Communications have been sent out to the village via Facebook to advise on the reopening.
5. A press release has been produced to send to the press, following reopening.
6. David Barnard has provided a £500 grant towards the works.
7. The Rands foundation have agreed to provide a grant of £500 towards the works.
8. It is suggested that the grants received be used to reduce the call on the S106 money that is for both play areas and the new pavilion.
9. An indicative costing for replacing the fencing has been received. For a wooden palisade rail fence and gates the estimate is £4880, and for a metal bow top fence and gates the estimate is £9800. Given the funding gap for the new pavilion this is not considered to be a priority at this time.

**New pavilion**

10. Thanks to the PPC increasing its contribution to £7k, contributions have been identified totaling the required £15k for the first tranche of work, although some of these are subject to confirmation on VAT treatment.
11. The PPC have now received a report into VAT treatment for the project and this will be discussed at the 11<sup>th</sup> March meeting.
12. There are 3 key options currently under consideration for the new pavilion design:
  - A single storey building with pitched roof
  - A two storey building with sloping roof
  - A fall back option of a limited new build shower and toilet block adjacent to the existing building (if insufficient funding is raised)
 Initial sketches from the concept design work are attached for the first two options.
13. Based on the advised building cost for the first option a draft budget has been produced (attached) which shows that for a building that is 20% larger than current the overall estimated cost is c£600k including a notional £30k for car park works. This is in line with the funding proposal produced previously.
14. A two-storey building may be cheaper per m<sup>2</sup> of floor area, would allow a smaller footprint, and provide better views from the top floor, but accessibility provision may increase costs significantly.
15. Once the Concept design work is completed, and approved by the PPC, and subject to how to proceed regarding VAT, two key activities can commence:
  - Communications of the proposal to the community
  - Fund raising can commence
16. A draft article for the Parish Magazine is attached. If agreed by the PPC this can be submitted on the 12<sup>th</sup> March for inclusion in the 12<sup>th</sup> April magazine.
17. Access for construction may be an issue as there is a limit on lorry length that can turn into the access road from Walnut Tree Road. Consideration of alternative access arrangements has been made, and a separate paper has been produced for PPC to consider.
18. The PPC is requested to:
  - a. NOTE the contents of this update.
  - b. PROVIDE any comments or direction on the matters contained in this update.

Simon Maple

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 11 March 2021

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Working budget for new pavilion**

Assuming top end of proposed funding range - £620k

|                    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| Contingency at 10% | -£56k  |
| Demolition         | -£50k  |
| Car Park           | -£30k? |
| Budget figure      | £484k  |

If build cost is £1.7k/m<sup>2</sup> **285m<sup>2</sup>**

If current building is 230m<sup>2</sup> this is a 24% increase in size.

Other possible sizes – 324m<sup>2</sup> 41% increase in size

- 360m<sup>2</sup> 57% increase in size

Proposal – aim for 20% increase in size to 276m<sup>2</sup> (unless additional funding becomes available):

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Build cost at £1.7k/m <sup>2</sup> | £469k        |
| Contingency at 10%                 | £47k         |
| Car park                           | £30k         |
| Demolition                         | £50k         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | <b>£596k</b> |

SCM 2 March 2021

Appendix D –Recreation Ground Access Routes

**PSSC proposal to PPC for changes at the Recreation Ground**

1. Upgrade works are taking place at the Recreation Ground:
  - a. The Playground upgrade is now completed
  - b. Concept design work is underway for the new pavilion
  - c. Minor changes have been made to increase car parking capacity
  - d. Plans are being made to replace the storage building
2. A proposal for replacing the storage building with screened containers will be made to the PPC as a cost-effective option for dealing with the existing PPC owned storage building which is in a very bad state of repair and is in danger of falling down.
3. Access to the Recreation Ground for lorries needed in the rebuilding of the pavilion, and replacement of the storage building will be needed, and the existing access road has limitations on the length of lorry that can be accommodated. Alternative options have therefore been considered.
4. The proposed option is to widen the access on the southern boundary of the Recreation Ground. This access connects to an unmade road on Mr Roger’s land, which leads to Hitchin Road via a gateway.
5. This access route (see picture below) is believed to be an emergency access route to the Recreation Ground, although it has not been used as such in recent memory (if at all).



6. The works needed would be some trimming of the vegetation, some sleepers or similar to widen the access over the ditch, and some surface dressing.
7. The PSSC is prepared to pay for this in conjunction with arrangements with Mr Rogers.
8. Mr Rogers is keen that this access should also be used for walkers, rather than the one in the south east corner (less than 100m away), which leads onto Mr Rogers’ field, which has seen damage from walkers particularly over this winter (see picture below). He proposes to block that access route as part of the works to the southern access.

|                               |
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| Signed: _____<br>Dated: _____ |
|-------------------------------|



9. It appears that the access in the south east corner may be a Right of Way, and of course if true this would require permission to be granted for the change. However, Mr Rogers does not believe that this is a Right of Way, and therefore believes that he is entitled to close it.
10. If a Right of Way is confirmed, would the PPC support seeking to have the RoW moved to the alternative access?
11. The PPC is requested:
  - a. To AGREE to the proposed access works
  - b. To PROVIDE its view on supporting a change to the Right of Way

Simon Maple  
On behalf of PSSC

|               |
|---------------|
| Signed: _____ |
| Dated: _____  |