

Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held on 8 July 2021 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm

www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Present:

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

In attendance:

Mr Edward Roberts (Parish Clerk)

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**21-54 To receive and accept apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Barnard and Cllr Claire Strong. The latter stated that she might be able to attend later, but would not be there at the start.

**21-55 Public Participation**

Five members of the public were present, with Cllr Strong arriving at 8.40pm. Matters raised from the floor were development of the water tower site on Priors Hill, planning matters for the barn development at West Lane Farm, the provision of average speed cameras and the situation with regard to Wright's Farm.

The new owners of the water tower site were seeking approval from the Parish Council for their project to build a house, following demolition of the tower. It was explained that the Parish Council could take no viewpoint until plans had been submitted for any development. Cllr Burleigh stated that the site was outside the development boundary for the village and permission was unlikely to be granted.

On West Lane Farm, there was puzzlement over the contents of a letter sent by NHDC that stated "pre-approval" had been given for the development of the barn. It was not clear where this lay under either Qa or Qb applications. Further enquiries needed to be made with the planners. This was further discussed under item 21-61a.

The subject of average speed cameras on Hitchin Road was brought up. The main problem would be the expense, but it was agreed that they were effective in reducing traffic speed. A petition was ongoing and the resident had arranged a meeting with the appropriate authorities.

Future use of the Wright's Farm site was discussed and what progress had been made towards putting forward a case for the site to be a community asset in the village, rather than being sold off for future development.

**21-56 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.**

Declarations of interest were received from Cllr Maple in respect of his membership of the Sports & Social Club Committee.

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

**21-57 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 10 June 2021 as a true and accurate record.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10 June 2021, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed.

**21-58 To receive Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary and to approve accounts for payment.**

- a. Bank account as at 30 June 2021: Unity Trust Account £62,939.27.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £2171.74, as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement (Appendix A) be made.

**21-59 To receive the Clerk's report.**

The Clerk began by drawing the attention of Councillors to the Net Position financial report circulated prior to the meeting, listing expenditure against budget for the various Cost Centres.

The Clerk updated the Council following correspondence with the external auditors PKF Littlejohn. They were confused over the apparent discrepancy across the years in answers to the "Trusts" question on the AGAR. This was in regard to the Recreation Ground Charity and the auditors had now been provided with the minutes from the trustees meeting finally dissolving the charity in May 2020.

One final demand had been issued for a Great Green parking permit. This was dealt with during the meeting by the Chairman.

In accordance with the internal audit observations, the last 3 months bank statements were presented to the Chairman for signature.

A letter had been sent to the PSSC following last month's meeting, agreeing to pay £140 a quarter for the next 12 months use of the Urbaser bin. No acknowledgement had been received.

10 x litter picking kits had been collected from Buntingford and were ready for future use. Reports of dog bin damage at Wood Lane were investigated and proved to be unfounded. A new backboard for the basketball hoop at the Recreation Ground had been ordered and delivered to Cllr Maple, who was thanked for installing it.

**21-60 To receive the RecDev Working Group report**

Cllr Maple had previously circulated the report (Appendix C) which he went through, highlighting the main points. There was no further discussion.

**21-61 Planning**

- a. To consider Planning Applications (Appendix B). Cllrs Burleigh and Rowe addressed the applications and generally there were no objections from the Council. On the barn at West Lane Farm, it was agreed that further explanations should be sought from the planners following the withdrawal of the previous application and the apparent "pre-approval". It appeared that there was some confusion over the correct interpretation of development under Qa and Qb which needed clarification.
- b. To receive an update on the local plan. The report was still awaited.
- c. To receive an update on Cala Homes. Cllr Burleigh was to draft a letter regarding outstanding issues such as the grubbed out hedge, bat boxes and the attenuation pond.
- d. To receive an update on Spitfire Homes. Cllr Maple had had no direct contact with the site, but it appeared from a local resident that there was little chance of Spitfire doing any maintenance on the muddy footpath. A definitive answer would be forthcoming in August.
- e. To receive an update on Blakeney Homes. It appeared from a local resident that setting out had commenced for the extra two dwellings that had not yet received planning

permission. Cllr Burleigh was to investigate. Cllr Maple mentioned that no extension to the temporary footpath closure order had been received. Cllr Rowe would contact HCC.  
f. To consider the situation with regard to Wrights Farm. A meeting had been held with interested parties from the village and talks continued over the possible community use of the land. Cllr Strong clarified the current and future positions with regard to planning

**21-62 To receive updates on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits.**

The SID application was in and a TRO had been received to extend the 30mph limit on Holwell Road. Cllr Goodman would ask if this order could be extended to other roads leading into Pirton. The transport survey had been sent to NHDC and over 130 responses had so far been received. Drive Safe volunteers had been recruited and were just waiting for authorised supervision. Cllr Burleigh would possibly be available to attend the Highways Liaison Committee meeting on 21 July.

**21-63 To receive an update on the production of a newsletter in July.**

Cllr Maple had circulated an email with suggested topics and a time line. It was agreed to increase the print run to take account of the new residents at both Comice Meadows and Priors Hill.

**21-64 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group.**

Cllr Goodman reported that work continued to progress on the “village website”, with suggested changes implemented. Further work would take place next week and training for the administrators was to be agreed and arranged. (Full minutes are at Appendix D).

**21-65 To receive an update from the Arboreal Working Group.**

Cllr Parkin reported that NHDC had put out a call for residents to bid for trees and that three sizes were available. The mound at the Recreation Ground had been suggested as a suitable site to plant new trees.

**21-66 To consider the planting of wild flowers and the re-wilding of green spaces in Pirton.**

Previously, Wild about Pirton had agreed on a number of sites, but things had gone quiet. Cllr Rogers suggested she contact the owner of West Lane Farm to see if planting was possible on the bank that had been excavated to form the new access road.

**21-67 To consider a response to the Affinity Water Drought Plan Consultation.**

It was agreed that the Clerk should circulate the document again.

**21-68 To discuss the proposed clearing of the ditch on Walnut Tree Road by Mr Tom Gammell and a group of volunteers.**

Cllr Parkin had contacted Mr Gammell and with the passing of the Spring window for the work, he considered that it was now too dangerous for volunteers, so was looking into mechanical methods of clearing the ditch. It was reiterated that from the perspective of HCC there was no problem with the ditch. It appeared that ownership of the ditch was still not clear. The Clerk was to send a copy of the Land Registry map to Cllr Burleigh.

At this point, Cllr Strong left the meeting (10.10pm).

**21-69 To discuss what constitutes acceptable posts on the PPC Facebook pages.**

It was agreed that only Parish Council business should be discussed on the pages. Inappropriate or offensive personal comments should be taken down. Overall a pragmatic attitude should be taken, with consultation if required.

**21-70 To discuss the possible provision of a litter bin on the Cala Homes path from Holwell Road to Hambridge Way.**

It was agreed that the provision of litter bins was not a Parish Council responsibility.

**21-71 To receive a report from Cllr Maple on his discussions with the PSSC regarding VAT repayments.**

Cllr Maple summarised the discussions with the PSSC. They had agreed that it would be sensible to have a meeting in an attempt to resolve the issue, but there were still fundamental disagreements regarding any sums owing. Cllr Maple recommended an annual review of the state of the PSSC funds to see how much could be repaid, but this had yet to be agreed. A notional £1000 a year for 10 years was a suggestion.

The PSSC was due to reopen on 31 July, but there were problems with the hot water system for the changing rooms, meaning that they could not be used. A quote for a replacement hot water system had come in at £2800. It was agreed that as the PSSC had been in receipt of Covid grant monies to support the business and the fact that their finances were currently at a sustainable level, the cost should be borne by the Club. Cllr Burleigh made the point that the changing rooms were used only by sports clubs and did not benefit the whole village.

It was agreed that a meeting between the Parish Council and the PSSC should take place in the next couple of weeks prior to the reopening of the Club.

**21-72 To approve amendments to the following documents:**

- a. Code of Conduct Doc 002. **APPROVED** by all present.
- b. Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy Doc 016. Held over to August.

**21-73 To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parish Paths Partnership (P3). Nil
- b. S106 Projects. Nil
- c. Village Environment. There had again been a complaint about dog waste being put into the general litter bins at the Recreation Ground. Cllr Rogers agreed to research and obtain suitable stickers to encourage dog walkers to use the correct bins.
- d. Bury Trust. Nil
- e. Village Hall. Nil

**21-74 To suggest items for the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday, 12 August 2021 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm.**

Nil

**Meeting Closed: 23.03 pm.**

Appendices

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

Appendix B – Planning Applications

Appendix C – RecDev Working Group Report

Appendix D – Communications Working Group Minutes

## Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

## Pirton Parish Council

**Bank Reconciliation at 30/06/2021**

|                                   |            |           |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Cash in Hand 01/04/2021           |            |           | 51,563.00        |
| <b>ADD</b>                        |            |           |                  |
| Receipts 01/04/2021 - 30/06/2021  |            |           | 22,444.33        |
|                                   |            |           | 74,007.33        |
| <b>SUBTRACT</b>                   |            |           |                  |
| Payments 01/04/2021 - 30/06/2021  |            |           | 11,068.06        |
| <b>Cash in Hand 30/06/2021</b>    |            |           | <b>62,939.27</b> |
| (per Cash Book)                   |            |           |                  |
| Cash in hand per Bank Statements  |            |           |                  |
| Petty Cash                        | 30/06/2021 | 0.00      |                  |
| Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust | 30/06/2021 | 62,939.27 |                  |
|                                   |            |           | <b>62,939.27</b> |
| Less unrepresented payments       |            |           | 0.00             |
|                                   |            |           | 62,939.27        |
| Plus unrepresented receipts       |            |           | 0.00             |
| <b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>      |            |           | <b>62,939.27</b> |
| <b>A = B Checks out OK</b>        |            |           |                  |

## Payments

8 July 2021 (2021-2022)

| Code                                 | Date       | Description            | Supplier               | Net             | VAT         | Total           |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Water                                | 18/06/2021 | Allotments Water       | Castle Water           | 44.86           | 0.00        | 44.86           |
| Website/IT                           | 22/06/2021 | Village Website        | Matt Porter Web Design | 150.00          | 0.00        | 150.00          |
| Bank Charges                         | 30/06/2021 | Bank Charges           | Unity Trust Bank       | 18.00           | 0.00        | 18.00           |
| Groundsman                           | 08/07/2021 | Groundsman Duties      | Steve Kitchiner        | 630.00          | 0.00        | 630.00          |
| Chiltern Society                     | 08/07/2021 | Annual Subscription    | Chiltern Society       | 30.00           | 0.00        | 30.00           |
| Salary                               | 08/07/2021 | Salary                 | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 558.08          | 0.00        | 558.08          |
| Room (Office Expenses)               | 08/07/2021 | Expenses               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 30.00           | 0.00        | 30.00           |
| Telephone                            | 08/07/2021 | Expenses               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 20.00           | 0.00        | 20.00           |
| Postage & Mileage                    | 08/07/2021 | Expenses               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 25.20           | 0.00        | 25.20           |
| Tax                                  | 08/07/2021 | Tax & Employers NI     | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | 139.60          | 0.00        | 139.60          |
| Street Cleaner                       | 08/07/2021 | Street Cleaning        | Tony Smart             | 170.00          | 0.00        | 170.00          |
| Village Greens                       | 08/07/2021 | Village Greens Grass   | Andrew Burton          | 320.00          | 0.00        | 320.00          |
| Countryside Development Agency (CDA) | 08/07/2021 | CDA Herts Subscription | CDA Herts              | 36.00           | 0.00        | 36.00           |
|                                      |            |                        |                        | <b>2,171.74</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>2,171.74</b> |

## Receipts

| Code            | Date       | Description | Supplier  | Net             | VAT         | Total           |
|-----------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Parking Permits | 16/06/2021 | Parking     | H Henry   | 5.00            | 0.00        | 5.00            |
| Parking Permits | 24/06/2021 | Parking     | A Willmot | 5.00            | 0.00        | 5.00            |
| Parking Permits | 28/06/2021 | Parking     | J Glasson | 5.00            | 0.00        | 5.00            |
| VAT Reclaimed   | 02/07/2021 | VAT Reclaim | HMRC VAT  | 5,350.04        | 0.00        | 5,350.04        |
|                 |            |             |           | <b>5,365.04</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>5,365.04</b> |

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

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

## Appendix B – Planning Applications

| Reference        | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i 21/01769/FP    | <p><b>Pirton Post Office, 63 – 65 High Street, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing single storey rear extension.</i></p> <p>Comments to Thomas Howe by 8 July 2021 (extended to 12 July)</p> <p><b>No objections but comment on apparent lack of WC.</b></p>                                                                                                                                 |
| ii 21/01828/FPH  | <p><b>5 Pollards Way, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Two storey side and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing side elevation extension. Provision of vehicular access to property via dropped kerb and vehicle crossover.</i></p> <p>Comments to Andrew Hunter by 15 July 2021</p> <p><b>No objections but comment on loss of front garden and materials for new driveway. Also awareness of old tree in hedge line.</b></p> |
| iii 21/01942/PNQ | <p><b>West Lane Farm, West Lane, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Prior Approval Class Q Agric to Dwelling : Conversion of existing barn into four 2-bed dwellings</i></p> <p>Comments to Ben Glover by 24 July 2021</p> <p><b>Consultation required for clarification of several points. All previous points stand.</b></p>                                                                                                                            |
| iv 21/01967/FPH  | <p><b>1 Apostles Close, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Erection of detached greenhouse and shed and install a window to the existing walls of detached garage</i></p> <p>Comments to Ben Glover by 30 July 2021</p> <p><b>No objections, but why the need for planning?</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| v 21/01974/FPH   | <p><b>25 Bunyan Close, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Erection of a 1.8 metre fence to existing boundary, adjacent to the highway</i></p> <p>Comments to Ben Glover by 30 July 2021</p> <p><b>No objections, but Highways need to be consulted.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                               |

**Planning Decisions** (for information only) - Nil

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 8 July 2021

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

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



## Appendix C - RecDev Working Group Report

**RecDev Working Group report to PPC 8 July 2021**

1. The Working Group has met formally 23 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

**New pavilion**

2. The work for this phase of work is nearing completion. As required by the remit the Development Project Plan is being written up for presentation to the PPC.
3. The draft report is currently taking a conservative view on the likely costs, depending on what is included in scope eg storage, car parking, remedial work to the access road, possible new cess pit/alternative drainage. The cost is suggested as being in the range £600k - £700k.
4. The Working Group recommends that the process of supplying an initial pack to gauge the likelihood of receiving a grant is used for all potential funding bodies.
5. Once the Concept design work is completed, and approved by the PPC, two key activities can commence:
  - Communications of the proposal to the community
  - Fund raising can commence
6. The Summer Fair is an opportunity for engaging villagers in the proposals. A stall has been booked for the PPC to publicise the project and start the engagement and assessment of Villager's views (as well as other matters such as recruitment of Councillors). The date has been postponed from 10<sup>th</sup> July to 4<sup>th</sup> September. It may be possible to use other events as well, eg the reopening of the PSSC on 31<sup>st</sup> July.
7. The three key issues going forward if the PPC accept the proposed Development Project Plan are:
  - Securing the funding
  - Achieving sufficient support from Villagers
8. The PPC agreed that Jill Rogers will join the group for the next phase of work. A new remit will be required, and key points will be suggested in the Development Project Plan.
9. The PPC will need to consider how it will judge whether there is sufficient support from Villagers to proceed, particularly if significant funding is raised by a PPC secured loan.
10. 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

## Appendix D – Communications Working Group Minutes

## PPC Communications working group meeting Wednesday 30th June 2021

Updated Thursday 8th June after call with Matt Porter

Attendees: Marilyn Parkin, Amanda Goodman, Vivian Tyler

Apologies: Helen Hofton - although AG had met HH separately on 28th June to gather comments

1. Initial draft website created by Vanessa/Matt Porter and reviewed together via Zoom
2. Overall very happy with initial look and feel of website
3. Comments made by everyone and logged by AG to talk directly with Vanessa Porter to make amends - plan is to have meeting on 6th July
4. Vanessa Cole (Pumpkin Club) has been made aware of current progress and plans via email
5. HH to gather clubs/societies content and pictures - AG has created separate Google folder for this to be collated
6. Key points to note:
  - a. Need a Pirton Logo at top of pages - [CWG to find logo](#)
  - b. The word "Menu" on ipad/iphone/android handsets etc
  - c. Highlight text - dark blue on teal is not a good contrast for those hard of sight
  - d. Look to reorder Facilities & Organisations buttons in line with agreed changes to text
  - e. Need disclaimer re: accuracy of information at the bottom of each web page
  - f. Do we want cookies? - decided that this is a definite no - [8th July - MP asked us to reconsider/review as need to investigate what implications this will have for GDPR](#)
  - g. Some of text colour needs looking at on Events text reference
  - h. Look at possibility of amending PIRTON text
  - i. No real photo responses to Viv's advert in the Parish mag - need to check when live about copyright/agreement of photographer's images on website
  - j. Change depth of main pictures on each of 3 pages
  - k. Add text to the front of the buttons where the facilities/clubs etc., are a picture only or the wording is very small e.g., for The Fox or Motte and Bailey
  - l. [Make Pumpkin club logo and text much smaller at the bottom of the page and make the depth of the bottom blue banner less deep](#)
  - m. Need to identify when is best time to be trained - agreed that CWG should be trained first and then clubs/societies without website can have specific training for them (AG to arrange that and deliver to them)
    - i. [Matt to get Vanessa Porter's website guide shared to the Google share drive](#)
    - ii. [Changes as agreed to be made w/c 12th July](#)
    - iii. [Aim to have training \(c. 1 hour\) w/c 19th July - AG to come up with key agenda points](#)