

Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in
Pirton Village Hall on 10 November 2022 at 7.45 pm

www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Present:

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

In attendance:

Mr Edward Roberts (Parish Clerk)

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### 22-123 To receive and accept apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from Cllr Burleigh and District Cllr Strong .

### 22-124 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

### 22-125 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.

Declarations of interest were received and recorded from Cllr Goodman as a member of Wild About Pirton, Cllr Parkin as a member of the Wrights Farm Working Group, Cllr Maple as a member of the PSSC.

### 22-126 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 13 October 2022 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 October 2022, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed.

### 22-127 To receive Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary and to approve accounts for payment.

- a. Bank account as at 31 October 2022: Unity Trust Account £77,491.19.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £1883.79, as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement (Appendix A) be made.

It was suggested that the Clerk write to the Pirton Sports and Social Club regarding payments for room hire and bin emptying, which could be better utilised for the new pavilion fund.

### 22-128 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.

He reported that the Local Government pay award had been agreed, resulting in his hourly rate increasing to £13.70 per hour wef 1 April 2022. Back pay would be claimed

next month. Donations to the new pavilion fund now stood at £6062.92, with a further £1300 to come from the PSSC Fireworks night. Pledges are currently £2500.

The Clerk met with the North Herts building surveyor on 10 November to discuss the replacement of the fence at the allotments, where the boundary abuts 20 Davis Crescent. Contractor parking and access were agreed.

The Clerk attended the AGM of CDA Herts on 4 November and now had a better appreciation of the work they do in and for the community.

**22-129 To receive the New Pavilion Working Group report.**

Cllr Maple had previously circulated the report (Appendix C). Work continued with Sport England and the ECB to try to resolve the stop on the planning application. A meeting will be held on 17 November. More money may be available from the Football Foundation, but this needs investigating further. The North Herts Council grant application was moving forward well.

There was some discussion over the possibility of getting a substantial donation from an individual, after whom the pavilion might be named. The Council agreed in principle that this could be done, but stressed that the minimum donation would have to be £50k.

There was still a need for members of the Funding Working Group and this would be advertised more fully.

Proposed by Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Bright, that a contract be let to TGMS for a maximum of £2000 (ex VAT) to produce drawings and feasibility for additional cricket wickets if required. Such a contract to be dependent on the outcome of talks with Sport England and the ECB. **APPROVED** by all present.

Discussions moved on to funding and loans for the project. Proposed by Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Maple, that a loan of £35,000 over 30 years be taken out with the Public Works Loan Board to provide funding for the next stage. **APPROVED** by a majority vote, with one abstention. Research was to be undertaken to ascertain the best way of handling this loan as part of the overall borrowing requirement.

**22-130 Planning.**

- a. To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A). Cllr Burleigh had circulated draft responses to the applications from the Planning Working Group and these were agreed. The Clerk was to send them off to the planners once the final drafts were received.
- b. To receive an update on the Local Plan. The Plan had been adopted by North Herts Council on 8 November 2022.
- c. To receive an update on Blakeney Homes. Nil
- d. To receive an update on West Lane Farm. Cllr Rogers confirmed that the farm was up for sale.
- e. To consider the situation with regard to Wright's Farm. Cllr Goodman had circulated her report on the meeting with HCC following the successful petition which raised more than 100 votes with regards to "Restore the chalk stream meadow at Wrights Farm, Pirton". Minutes will be produced by Wild About Pirton.

**22-131 To approve a donation of £200 to the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance.**

Proposed by Cllr Goodman and seconded by Cllr Rowe, that a donation of £200 be sent to Essex & Herts Air Ambulance. **APPROVED** by all.

**22-132 To approve the renewal of the village greens grass cutting contract with Andrew Burton for 3 years from 1 April 2023 at the current rate of £160 per cut..**

Proposed by Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Goodman, that the contract be renewed on the terms stated. **APPROVED** by all present.

**22-133 To receive updates on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits.**

Cllr Parkin had circulated her report. Cllr Goodman was to write to Highways regarding the lack of white lines on the Shillington Road. Residents were to be encouraged to write as well if they had concerns. Village groups and societies were to be reminded that placing signs on road junctions was not only illegal without the permission of the landowner, but was also a hazard as it restricted visibility.

**22-134 To agree the installation of high visibility yellow backed give way and advance give way signs on Priors Hill, prior to the installation of a Speed Indicator Device in Pirton.**

Proposed by Cllr Rogers and seconded by Cllr Goodman that the motion be approved. **AGREED** by all. *Note that this is a condition for the installation of a Speed Indicator Device.*

**22-135 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group.**

Cllr Goodman had circulated her report. The Parish Council's thanks were extended to Helen Hofton who had uploaded a page of very interesting information about the Bury and Toot Hill onto the Pirton.org website.

**22-136 To discuss parking in Pirton and suggest ways of reducing its impact on pedestrians..**

Cllr Parkin had raised several points in an email. With no real sanctions or powers at their disposal, there was little concrete that the Parish Council could do to discourage parking on pavements and in other inappropriate areas. The Council does, however, actively pursue enforcement of planning guidelines regarding parking spaces for new dwellings and on planning applications for extensions.

**22-137 To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parish Paths Partnership (P3). Cllr Rowe had written to Andrew Burton to chase up Footpath 005 and to gain permission to cut back the broken and potentially dangerous posts on Footpath 013 at the exit to the Recreation Ground. It is hoped that Mr Burton will visit in due course.
- b. S106 Projects. Nil
- c. Village Environment. Nil
- d. Bury Trust. A draft Conservation Management Plan had been circulated by Cllr Maple. Cllr Rogers pointed out that fumigating rabbits was not only inhumane, but also dangerous to other mammals.
- e. Village Hall. The committee was still looking at options for renovating the main hall floor.

**22-138 To suggest items for the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday, 8 December 2022 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm.**

- a. Cllr Goodman raised the matter of installing recycling bins at the Recreation Ground.

**Meeting Closed: 22.35 pm.**

Appendices

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

Appendix B – Planning Applications

Appendix C – New Pavilion Working Group Report

## Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

## Pirton Parish Council

### Bank Reconciliation at 31/10/2022

Cash in Hand 01/04/2022

**ADD**

Receipts 01/04/2022 - 31/10/2022

**SUBTRACT**

Payments 01/04/2022 - 31/10/2022

**A Cash in Hand 31/10/2022**

(per Cash Book)

Cash in hand per Bank Statements

|                                   |            |           |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Petty Cash                        | 31/10/2022 | 0.00      |
| Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust | 31/10/2022 | 77,511.19 |

**77,511.19**

Less unrepresented payments

20.00

**77,491.19**

Plus unrepresented receipts

**B Adjusted Bank Balance****77,491.19****A = B Checks out OK**

## Payments

| Code                     | Description          | Supplier                             | Net             | VAT          | Total           |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Website/IT               | Website Hosting      | TEEC                                 | 129.99          | 26.00        | 155.99          |
| Other                    | Donation             | Pirton Pre-School                    | 25.00           |              | 25.00           |
| Room Hire                | Room Hire            | Village Hall                         | 18.50           |              | 18.50           |
| Room Hire                | Room Hire            | Pirton Sports and Social Club (PSSC) | 36.00           |              | 36.00           |
| Street Cleaner           | Bin Rental           | Pirton Sports and Social Club (PSSC) | 149.50          |              | 149.50          |
| Salary                   | Salary               | Edward Roberts (Clerk)               | 609.60          |              | 609.60          |
| Room (Office Expenses)   | Expenses             | Edward Roberts (Clerk)               | 30.00           |              | 30.00           |
| Telephone                | Expenses             | Edward Roberts (Clerk)               | 20.00           |              | 20.00           |
| Postage & Mileage        | Expenses             | Edward Roberts (Clerk)               | 16.20           |              | 16.20           |
| Tax                      | Tax & Employers NI   | HMRC Clerk's Tax                     | 152.40          |              | 152.40          |
| Employer's NI            | Tax & Employers NI   | HMRC Clerk's Tax                     | 0.60            |              | 0.60            |
| Street Cleaner           | Street Cleaning      | Tony Smart                           | 170.00          |              | 170.00          |
| Village Greens           | Village Greens Grass | Andrew Burton                        | 320.00          |              | 320.00          |
| Training                 | Councillor Training  | HAPTC                                | 150.00          |              | 150.00          |
| The Royal British Legion | Donation             | The Royal British Legion             | 30.00           |              | 30.00           |
|                          |                      |                                      | <b>1,857.79</b> | <b>26.00</b> | <b>1,883.79</b> |

## Receipts

| Code          | Description          | Supplier          | Net           | Total         |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| New Pavilion  | Donation             | GoFundMe          | 145.15        | 145.15        |
| New Pavilion  | Donation             | Caroline Nicholls | 100.00        | 100.00        |
| New Pavilion  | Donation             | Vanessa Cole      | 48.30         | 48.30         |
| Miscellaneous | Bury Trust Insurance | Bury Trust        | 95.35         | 95.35         |
|               |                      |                   | <b>388.80</b> | <b>388.80</b> |

## Appendix B – Planning Applications

| Reference                        | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i <b>22/02745/FPH</b>            | <p>8 Docklands, Pirton</p> <p><i>Part two storey and part single storey side and rear extensions following demolition of existing conservatory. Insertion of three rooflights to front roof slope to facilitate conversion of loft space into habitable accommodation and entrance porch canopy.</i></p> <p>Comments to Ben Glover by 19 November 2022</p> |
| ii <b>APP/X1925/W/22/3301143</b> | <p>Pirton Water Tower, Priors Hill, Pirton</p> <p><i>Erection of one detached 4-bed dwelling including creation of vehicular access off Priors Hill following demolition of existing water tower.</i></p> <p>Comments to Planning Inspectorate in triplicate by 30 November 2022</p>                                                                       |

## Planning Decisions (for information only)

| Reference              | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i <b>22/02217/FPH</b>  | <p><b>14a High Street, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Two storey rear and side extensions following demolition of existing garage. Erection of single storey outbuilding to facilitate 1-bed annexe. Alteration of fenestration.</i></p> <p>Permission granted 11 October 2022</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| ii <b>22/02401/FPH</b> | <p><b>The Bungalow, Little Lane, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Extensions and alterations to existing roof including insertion of three front dormer windows and one rear rooflight to facilitate loft conversion to create habitable space at first floor level. Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory and outbuilding. Front open sided porch and external rendering. Erection of detached double garage.</i></p> <p>Permission granted 2 November 2022</p> |

## Appendix C - New Pavilion Working Group Report

**New Pavilion Working Group report to PPC 10 November 2022**

1. The Working Group has met formally 12 times to date.
2. The key objectives for the current phase (2) of work are:
  - To achieve Planning permission for an acceptable design
  - To raise sufficient funding for the construction
- Planning permission**
3. Although Sport England are “fully supportive of the new pavilion” they have raised a Holding Objection to the Planning Permission application (there are no other objections). This relates to cricket boundaries.
4. There has been little progress over the last month. A meeting was held with a representative from Herts cricket, and a meeting is arranged with him, and ECB on 21<sup>st</sup> November. We have sought a further meeting with Sport England. As they want ECB to be present, we anticipate this meeting being after 21<sup>st</sup> November.
5. Pending the meeting with Sport England it would seem sensible (to avoid delay) to approve spending up to £2k (ex VAT) for a pitch feasibility study which is what Sport England have said will be required for them to remove their holding objection. If the meeting with them finds an alternative way forward, this study would not be required.
6. Another alternative would be to appeal against the lack of a planning decision, cause the submission to go to the Planning Committee, and seek to persuade them to grant permission despite Sport England’s objection. If we pursue this route it may reduce our chance of obtaining a grant from Sport England or ECB (although there may be no chance anyway).
- Funding**
7. The NPWG is drafting a funding plan taking account of the recent c25% cost estimate increase. A cost estimate of £894k is assumed in line with the latest cost plan. The plan assumes funding:
 

|                                                  |       |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Section 106                                      | £180k |
| Football Foundation                              | £225k |
| Other grants, donations and fund raising         | £200k |
| (Other grants                                    | £125k |
| Sponsorship/donations                            | £65k  |
| Fundraising                                      | £10k) |
| Loan taken out by the PPC, repaid by the precept | £289k |
8. An application has been made to NHDC for £50k of funding. We met with 3 representatives from NHDC. They said that we have a good case, a good application and they could see no reason that we wouldn’t get the £50k. The expectation is that we will be asked to attend (virtually) a panel meeting w/c 21<sup>st</sup> November. The funding pot has c £60k left but will not be replenished once this money has been allocated.
9. A request for grant funding for up to 10% of the anticipated cost has been made to Rand’s. They are not able to help with a grant towards construction but would consider a grant application to help fund loose fittings, furniture or specific equipment.
10. A crowd funding page with Gofundme has been set up for donations, and the Parish Clerk is able to receive these donations for the New Pavilion Fund. To date £520 has been donated (but c3% is taken as a charge).
11. Following the delivery of a letter seeking donations, sponsorship and fundraising along with the Newsletter to all houses in Pirton £7,040 has been donated or pledged.
12. Donations have dried up in the last couple of weeks, and we will need to trigger further income.
13. A fund-raising gig is booked for 26<sup>th</sup> November with a band whose previous incarnation as the Shambles was a successful local band.
14. Other fundraising activities are being planned, including a quiz (similar to the Rotary Christmas quiz), black tie dinners, and an evening with a famous footballer.
15. The next steps for fund raising are:
  - Apply for grants from other groups including Sport England and ECB
  - Write to local groups/clubs requesting donations/sponsorships



Write to larger organisations (including CALA, Spitfire, Blakeney, Luton airport, Sainsbury's etc) seeking donations/sponsorships

Organise more fund-raising events

16. We need more resources to assist with fundraising, ideally a team of 4 or more. Although we have an agreed Terms of Reference for a funding working group, we do not yet have any people to form the group.

#### **Costs**

17. We have requested budgetary quotes from 6 companies, with responses expected by the 18<sup>th</sup> November. We have received one response so far, with a figure of £824,175 which is in line with our expectations (£894k).

#### **Funding for the next stage**

18. Once we achieve planning permission, the next stage is to do the detailed design, obtain building regulation approval, and then tender for a construction contractor. At the September PPC meeting it was agreed in principle that the c£30k required would be raised by a loan from the Public works Loan Board. The breakdown of the c£30k (which excludes VAT) is shown below:

|                                 |                |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Soil report                     | £1.5k          |
| Ground Penetrating Radar survey | £1.5k          |
| Building regs plan fee          | £651           |
| Architect and engineers         | £24,415        |
| PWLB Loan fee                   | £300           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>£28,366</b> |

In addition, it would be sensible to allow for a pitch feasibility study at £1748 (ex VAT), and an allowance for a quantity surveyor of up to £5k. After the remaining bill (£1500 ex VAT) for the current stage is paid there will be £1142 of funding remaining (excluding the £9k that it was agreed to use from other funding pots temporarily). The total required for the next stage would then be £33,972, and **it is recommended that a loan be taken for £35k** to allow for a small amount of contingency.

19. Other costs that will be required early on in the following phase include:

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Gas pipe location        | £1k   |
| Building regs inspection | £1.2k |
| Demolition notice        | £295  |
| Asbestos report update   | £1k   |
| Planning conditions      | £?    |

#### **Loan and bridging loan, precept**

20. Subject to achieving planning permission, and raising sufficient funding, and if the schedule is achieved, provision will need to be made for the PPC to take out a long-term loan, and a bridging loan during the next financial year (2023-24).
21. The long-term loan is currently envisaged as £289k. The maximum bridging loan would be £540k, but is expected to be considerably less. NHDC have indicated that if we are successful with the £50k grant that we have applied for, 10% would be withheld until construction completion, and the remaining 90% would probably be payable in 2 tranches of 45%, with one at the start, and one part way through. We anticipate a similar arrangement with the Football Foundation, and think that there is a reasonable chance of obtaining stage payments from the Section 106 funds. A realistic bridging loan maximum may be £300k.
22. While the loan approval needs to include the anticipated bridging loan it is intended that this would be repaid after 12 months (the earliest that a repayment can be made).
23. The key issue for the PPC at this time is what level to set the 2023-24 precept at to cover new pavilion funding. This needs to be agreed at the annual budget meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November.
24. As of 31<sup>st</sup> October annual repayments (£k) for the long term PWLB loan would be:

|          | 250k  | 289k  | 300k  |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| 20 years | 19.32 | 22.33 | 23.18 |
| 30 years | 15.81 | 18.28 | 18.97 |
| 40 years | 13.96 | 16.14 | 16.75 |

|          |       |       |       |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| 50 years | 12.68 | 14.65 | 15.21 |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|

The Development Plan assumed a £250k loan over 40 years, and the repayments at that time (Nov 21) were £10.40k pa. The interest rate increase has led to an increased repayment of £13.96k pa now – a 34% increase.

Interest rate changes and therefore repayments could change again before the main loan needs to be taken out – spring/summer 2023.

The precept currently (2022-23) supports a budget of £8.5k for the new pavilion. (£0.5k was provided from other budgets.)

The NPWG recommends a loan period of 30-40 years (the majority for 30 years). With the current situation this would require funding to cover c£18.5k per annum, ie an increase of £10k pa.

The longer the period of the loan, the lower the repayments will be, although the total cost increases. However, inflation will reduce the real cost of the repayments over the longer term.

Based on an estimated tax base for 2022-23 (690) the Precept required to support the loan would require parishioner payments of:

| Annual budget | Av Band D payment pa | Av Band D payment pm | Av Band D increase pm | Av Band D increase % |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| £8.5k as now  | £63.59               | £5.30                | 0                     | 0                    |
| £14.5k (+6)   | £71.30               | £5.94                | 64p                   | 12.13                |
| £16.5k (+8)   | £73.87               | £6.16                | 86p                   | 16.17                |
| £18.5k (+10)  | £76.44               | £6.37                | 107p                  | 20.21                |

The Average Band D payments have varied over the last few years, with changes shown below along with the precept increases and the tax base (which causes variation):

| Year                         | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24                         |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Tax base                     | 561     | 623     | 612.4   | 680.6   | 690?                            |
| Precept increases            | 0       | £2k     | £4k     | £2k     | +£6k,<br>+£8k,<br>+£10k         |
| Cumulative precept increases | 0       | £2k     | £6k     | £8k     | £14k,<br>£16k,<br>£18k          |
| Av Band D payments           | -1.9%   | -4.76%  | +12.33% | -5.54%  | +12.13%,<br>+16.17%,<br>+20.21% |

Calculations for 2023-24 have been made using an estimated tax base of 690. This needs confirmation before the annual budget meeting.

It is likely that there will be further small increases in the tax base in future years which would reduce the Av Band D payments for a given precept.

The compound changes in Av Band D payments from a base of 2018-19 are:

| Year                        | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24                         |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Av Band D payments          | -1.9%   | -4.76%  | +12.33% | -5.54%  | +12.13%,<br>+16.17%,<br>+20.21% |
| Compound Av Band D payments | -1.9%   | -6.57%  | +4.95%  | -0.87%  | +11.15%,<br>+15.17%,<br>+19.16% |

The increase of c20% over the 2018-19 level is equivalent to less than 4% per annum on average.

The increase could be spread over a couple of years to reduce the immediate impact, but there are disadvantages – the full annual repayment will be required for the first year, and we may need a more detailed consultation process with villagers.

It is not entirely clear as to how much consultation is required in addition to that already done, for example in respect of the £8k budget increase from the precept to date. However, in the interests of full transparency it is recommended that the PPC considers how to communicate/consult before committing to the long-term loan (spring/summer 2023).

The increase in the precept doesn't need further consultation as this is not committing the long-term loan and spend. If the project didn't proceed, the precept could be adjusted downwards next year to compensate. Although this would have taken money from parishoners in 2023-24 (less than £13 for average band D payments), it could be effectively repaid in 2024-25.

25. The mechanism for obtaining a PWLB loan may mean seeking approval for the maximum amount of the loan required, say £600k, although the money can then be drawn down in tranches. However, the Debt Management Office "will allow a minor authority to replace a fixed rate loan with another fixed rate loan, subject to the authority gaining a borrowing approval letter for the new borrowing". Once a loan has been agreed, the rate of interest is fixed for the duration of the loan.
26. The £35k loan would be effectively the first tranche of the long-term loan, and therefore taken out over 30-40 years. The annual repayments as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 would be:

| Loan period | Repayment pa |
|-------------|--------------|
| 20 years    | £2.70k       |
| 30 years    | £2.21k       |
| 40 years    | £1.95k       |
| 50 years    | £1.78k       |

27. 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.
- c. APPROVE (subject to confirmation) the letting of a contract to TGMS for a maximum of £2k (ex VAT) to produce drawings and feasibility for additional cricket pitches if required, to allow Sport England to withdraw their holding objection.
- d. APPROVE the taking out of a long-term loan of £35k from PWLB to provide funding for the next project stage.
- e. CONSIDER the proposal for a precept increase for 2023-24 and REQUEST any further information/analysis that may be required to allow a decision to be made at the Annual budget meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Simon Maple