

# Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in  
Pirton Village Hall on 12 October 2023 at 7.45 pm

[www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk)

**Present:**

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

**In attendance:**

Mr Edward Roberts (Parish Clerk)

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**23-93    To receive and accept apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from Cllr Maple.

**23-94    Public Participation**

County and District Cllr D Barnard and District Cllr C Strong were present, along with one member of the public. The latter attended to answer any questions the Council had on the New Pavilion Working Group report in the absence of Cllr Maple.

**23-95    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 Cllrs Burleigh and Goodman as members of Wild About Pirton, and Cllrs Burleigh and Parkin as members of the Wrights Farm Working Group.

**23-96    To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 14 September 2023 as a true and accurate record.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14 September 2023, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed.

**23-97    To receive Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary and to approve accounts for payment.**

- a. Bank account as at 30 September 2023: Unity Trust Account £113,736.93
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £5249.35 as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement (Appendix A) be made.

**23-98    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 despite numerous attempts, he had still not managed to get an answer on the progress of the loan approval application from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. He would keep trying.

A date had been agreed for an interim internal audit to take place in November.

North Herts Council had been contacted regarding the missing bin at the Great Green bus stop, but no further progress had been made. Similarly, a new bin liner was needed at Colemans Close play area, but the company concerned were having problems sourcing one.

Several residents had contacted the Council regarding overhanging tree branches and these would be addressed.

Damage to the roundabout in the Recreation Ground play area due to age had been reported to the Council but our normal contractor could not tackle repairs at this time. Cllr Rogers would try to find someone to effect a temporary repair to the wooden top surface. It is not considered to be a safety risk.

**23-99 To receive the New Pavilion Working Group report.**

In Cllr Maple's absence, the report had been circulated by a member of the Working Group (Appendix C). Cllr Rogers read through the report. District Cllr Strong opined that the current £50k grant from North Herts Council could not be carried forward to 2024. Cllr Maple would address this on his return. Cllr Burleigh agreed to look into charity status for fundraising in order to broaden the available sources, but made the point that professional advice would be needed to draw up any charity document.

Cllr Rogers would contact the Chairman of the Sports & Social Club who had offered to draft an initial Memorandum of Understanding between the Parish Council and the Club. Such a document would form a starting point for further discussions.

Proposed by Cllr Burleigh and seconded by Cllr Rogers, that the quotes for the soil investigation and services survey be accepted, at a total spend of £7000 + VAT. **AGREED** by all present.

**23-100 Planning.**

- a. To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A). Draft responses had been circulated by Cllrs Burleigh and Rowe. These were agreed and would be forwarded by the Clerk.
- b. To receive an update on Blakeney Homes. Nil
- c. To receive an update on West Lane Farm. Nil
- d. To receive an update on Wright's Farm. See Item 23-105.

**23-101 To receive an update on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits.**

The Council was in favour of Option 1 as detailed in the consultation from Herts County Council, although the number of speed humps seemed excessive. County Cllr Barnard agreed to take the Council's comments back to the County Council and suggested that two speed tables or a maximum of four speed humps might be possible. All present were in agreement with this course of action.

Cllr Barnard departed at 9.25pm

**23-102 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group**

Cllr Goodman had circulated her report and covered publicity for the Community Action Day, the next newsletter and the pirton.org website review.

**23-103 To finalise the next newsletter.**

Little progress had been made since the last meeting in the absence of Cllr Maple. It was likely that publication and distribution would be delayed until December, although the range of topics to cover was agreed.

**23-104 To receive an update on the next Community Action Day on 15 October.**

Cllr Goodman had circulated a comprehensive email setting out the planned tasks and responsibilities for the day. It was agreed that Cllr Rowe would lead on activities at Blacksmiths Pond, Cllr Rogers at the Recreation Ground and Cllr Goodman at Toot Hill.

Thanks were to be minuted to Cllr Rowe for the unstinting work he had carried out, preparing the benches and the rails at Blacksmiths Pond for oiling and painting.

**23-105 To discuss topics and agree suitable dates for a meeting with Hertfordshire County Council on the future of Wrights Farm.**

A number of topics were suggested that needed to be raised at any meeting with Herts County Council on the future of Wrights Farm. It was agreed that the Council did not object in principle to development of the farmhouse site as it is within the village development boundary, but was not in favour of housing development outside the development boundary, including the listed barn. Questions still remained over the future of the barn. The chalk stream environment also needed to be raised.

Dates for forwarding to HCC were agreed as the mornings of 18 or 19 October 2023. These would be forwarded by the Clerk.

**23-106 To discuss factors that may affect the level of precept required for 2024-25 prior to the Budget Meeting in November.**

Cllr Rowe asked if there was a need to adjust the precept for 2024-25, especially taking into account the increased costs of loan repayments and the future of the build. The Clerk, as RFO, pointed out that with a 12 month pause on the project, it was unlikely that any loan repayment would be due before the October 2024 to March 2025 period. He had done some preliminary work on the budget for 2024-25 and had included one loan repayment at today's rate of £10.6k. This was affordable at the present rate of precept.

**23-107 To consider the latest draft of the Bury Trust Conservation Management Plan.**

This item was held over to November.

**23-108 To discuss leaving uncut specific areas of Great Green to encourage wildlife habitats.**

It was agreed that Great Green, as the central village green and place of recreation, should continue to be cut as in previous years.

It was considered that Chipping Green was a better candidate for any attempts at re-wilding. Cllr Burleigh suggested that in light of the shady aspect of much of this green space, advice should be sought from Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust. Cllr Goodman would contact them. It was also suggested that the newsletter could be used to canvas opinion on any scheme.

**23-109 To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parish Paths Partnership (P3). Cllr Rowe had still not received any response regarding Footpath 005.
- b. S106 Projects. Nil
- c. Village Environment. Cllr Goodman had circulated a summary of the current need to cut back some tree branches around the village. It was agreed that the task should be divided between a professional who had volunteered to carry out the work on the Action Day and the Council's Tree Warden. Cllr Rogers would speak to the latter about the tree on the triangle at the bottom of the High Street. This was not on Parish Council land.
- d. Bury Trust. Funding had been applied for by Cllr Parkin to cover the costs of maintenance over the next 5 years. Some work on the water trough will be needed in the near future. The trustees will meet on 12 November for a walk round the Bury to ascertain what repairs are required.

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e. Village Hall. Cllr Parkin reported that quotes were being sought for a kitchen and commercial cooker, the sign off for the build was nearly complete and the quiz night had been a success.

**23-110 To suggest items for the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday, 9 November 2023 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm.**

It was suggested that any items should be sent to the Clerk.

**Meeting Closed: 10.35pm.**

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 30/09/2023

|                                   |            |                   |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Cash in Hand 01/04/2023           |            | 66,699.36         |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| <b>ADD</b>                        |            |                   |
| Receipts 01/04/2023 - 30/09/2023  |            | 64,556.03         |
|                                   |            | 131,255.39        |
| <b>SUBTRACT</b>                   |            |                   |
| Payments 01/04/2023 - 30/09/2023  |            | 17,518.46         |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| <b>A Cash in Hand 30/09/2023</b>  |            | <b>113,736.93</b> |
| (per Cash Book)                   |            |                   |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| Cash in hand per Bank Statements  |            |                   |
| Petty Cash                        | 30/09/2023 | 0.00              |
| Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust | 30/09/2023 | 113,736.93        |
|                                   |            | <b>113,736.93</b> |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| Less unrepresented payments       |            |                   |
|                                   |            | 113,736.93        |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| Plus unrepresented receipts       |            |                   |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| <b>B Adjusted Bank Balance</b>    |            | <b>113,736.93</b> |
| <br>                              |            |                   |
| <b>A = B Checks out OK</b>        |            |                   |

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### Payments

| Code                   | Date       | Description          | Supplier               | VAT Type | Net             | VAT           | Total           |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Bank Charges           | 30/09/2023 | Bank Charges         | Unity Trust Bank       | Z        | 18.00           |               | 18.00           |
| Sports Pavilion        | 12/10/2023 | Q S Fees             | RLP Surveyors          | S        | 3,030.00        | 606.00        | 3,636.00        |
| Website/IT             | 12/10/2023 | Website Hosting      | Matt Porter Web Design | Z        | 184.80          |               | 184.80          |
| Salary                 | 12/10/2023 | Salary               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | Z        | 613.85          |               | 613.85          |
| Room (Office Expenses) | 12/10/2023 | Expenses             | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | Z        | 30.00           |               | 30.00           |
| Telephone              | 12/10/2023 | Expenses             | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | Z        | 20.00           |               | 20.00           |
| Postage & Mileage      | 12/10/2023 | Expenses             | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | Z        | 16.20           |               | 16.20           |
| Tax                    | 12/10/2023 | Tax & Employers NI   | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | Z        | 153.40          |               | 153.40          |
| Employer's NI          | 12/10/2023 | Tax & Employers NI   | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | Z        | 1.28            |               | 1.28            |
| Room Hire              | 12/10/2023 | Room Hire            | Village Hall           | Z        | 37.00           |               | 37.00           |
| Village Greens         | 12/10/2023 | Village Greens Grass | Andrew Burton          | Z        | 320.00          |               | 320.00          |
| Street Cleaner         | 12/10/2023 | Street Cleaning      | Tony Smart             | Z        | 218.82          |               | 218.82          |
| <b>Total</b>           |            |                      |                        |          | <b>4,643.35</b> | <b>606.00</b> | <b>5,249.35</b> |

### Receipts

| Code          | Date       | Description | Supplier      | VAT Type | Net           | Total         |
|---------------|------------|-------------|---------------|----------|---------------|---------------|
| VAT Reclaimed | 18/09/2023 | VAT Reclaim | HMRC VAT      | Z        | 355.77        | 355.77        |
| New Pavilion  | 18/09/2023 | Donation    | Charles Gibbs | Z        | 20.00         | 20.00         |
| New Pavilion  | 18/09/2023 | Donation    | William Testa | Z        | 10.00         | 10.00         |
| New Pavilion  | 18/09/2023 | Donation    | T C Dye       | Z        | 20.00         | 20.00         |
| New Pavilion  | 19/09/2023 | Donation    | Tennis Club   | Z        | 340.00        | 340.00        |
| <b>Total</b>  |            |             |               |          | <b>745.77</b> | <b>745.77</b> |

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Appendix B – Planning Applications

| Reference        | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i 23/01970/FPH   | <p><b>1 West Lane, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Two storey side and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing single storey side extension</i></p> <p>Comments to Thomas Howe by 1 October 2023 (extended to 16 October)</p> <p><b>No objections but advice should be taken on archaeology</b></p> |
| ii 23/02022/FPH  | <p><b>6 Bury End, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Single storey rear extension</i></p> <p>Comments to Ben Glover by 28 October 2023</p> <p><b>No objection in principle, but a number of concerns.</b></p>                                                                                                                |
| iii 23/02023/LBC | <p><b>6 Bury End, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Single storey rear extension</i></p> <p>Comments to Ben Glover by 28 October 2023</p> <p><b>No objection in principle, but a number of concerns.</b></p>                                                                                                                |

Planning Decisions (for information only)

| Reference      | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i 23/01857/PNR | <p><b>West lane Farm, West Lane, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Change of Use of agricultural building to offices</i></p> <p>Prior approval refused 2 October 2023</p>                                                                     |
| ii 23/01309/FP | <p><b>Pirton Water Tower, Priors Hill, Pirton</b></p> <p><i>Installation of 21m high telecom mast prior to demolition of existing redundant water tower (amended description).</i></p> <p>Permission refused 11 October 2023</p> |

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Appendix C - New Pavilion Working Group Report

**New Pavilion Working Group report to PPC 12 October 2023**

1. The Working Group has met formally 23 times to date.

Design

2. As reported in September the cost estimate by the QS showed a construction/demolition cost of c£1.3m, and with fees etc. a total cost of c£1.5m. for the current scheme and therefore the professional team are working up a smaller squarer design, without the Meeting Room.

The design reduces the circulation area, and size of roof. This will have brick cladding, low sloping roofs, and gas heating. The high-level estimate for this is £900k construction/£1m total, which is consistent with the proposed funding plans below.

This would require a resubmission of planning permission, and additional design and QS work. It is proposed to present the options in November together with the revised programme and cost, with the recommended budget to obtain planning permission.

The PPC may wish to consider several design options that would involve extra cost and funding such as the meeting room, air source heat pumps/sustainability and a pitched roof over the lounge area.

3. The working group now recommends undertaking the services survey and ground investigation as these are required for any development, to close a key cost risk and allows fixing of the location, which may allow the works to the cricket pitch to be avoided and possibly the existing Pavilion continue during part of the construction.

4. Quotes have been requested and the PPC is requested to approve the cost of £7,000.

Soil survey, EPS, Desktop £895  
Investigations £3,270

Total £4,165

Services Survey, updated tenders say £2,500  
Contingencies £335

**Total cost to be recommended £7,000**

The total cost the Parish Council to approve is £7,000 + VAT

Funding

5. The potential fundraising has been considered assuming a £250,000 grant from the Football Foundation with the PPC loan, other Funding expected and targeting an extra £130,000 gives a total of £1m.

With the increase in interest rates an increased precept would be required to

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cover the £300,000 loan the PPC may also wish to consider an increased amount to reflect the design options on the Pavilion and a funding contingency.

6. The number of grants that we can apply for is restricted as we are not a charity.

7. Following PPC approval for the formation of a charity, this being established is now a critical item to give the potential for the extra fundraising and to enable the Football Foundation application by October 2024.

8. A further meeting with the Football Foundation is to be held on 9th November. Discussions remain positive, and we are considering the request for more than the £250k previously assumed. This will be dependent on the cost of the revised scheme. The process will be longer, and the hurdles will be higher. The key areas will be:

- Demonstrating value for money (rather than aesthetics)
- Increasing involvement by women and girls (some good progress made on this)
- Increasing cultural diversity of users (this may be difficult)
- Increasing use by elderly and people with disabilities.
- Demonstrating Multi Sport Offer.

2024 is the last round under the current Foundation funding agreement and it is possible that funding priorities could change after then ideally, we would therefore avoid that risk if possible.

Fund raising events:

- 9. Fox Hat are playing a fund-raising gig on 21st October – please encourage people to come down for this, with no entrance fee.  
A Burn’s night supper is being planned for 26th January 2024 tickets will be available in November.  
The Football teams are holding a Quiz Night on 18th November.

10. The proposed Christmas card with our Architect’s impression of the new building, with snow and Father Christmas with sleigh and reindeers, is on hold until the pavilion design is completed.

11. A request will be made to NHDC to allow a 12-month delay to our taking up of the £50k grant, which currently requires us to start drawing down money in December 2023. There is a risk that we could lose this money.

Management arrangements

12. A meeting was held on the 7th September between the PPC and PSSC to consider management arrangements for the new pavilion. The meeting was very positive and there was a lot of common ground. Next steps were identified and it’s recommended that these are progressed.

Storage

13. The Football Foundation have funding to provide a 75% grant towards containers for storage (independent of our pavilion grant application). The PSSC have proposed that they organize the acquisition of two 20-foot containers to be positioned in the corner of the car park by the playground, and

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ditch.

14. The PPC have confirmed their agreement and Lea Sports will make the application.

15. There would still be a requirement for further storage, near the tennis courts/MUGA for the cricket club, and possibly further football club storage as part of the development.

16. 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 the cost for the soil investigation and services survey.

d. ADVANCE the work up of the details for the formation of a charity to raise funds for the pavilion.

Simon Maple