

Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in
Pirton Village Hall on 9 January 2025 at 7.45 pm

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Present:

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

In attendance:

Mr Edward Roberts (Parish Clerk)

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### 24-173 To receive and accept apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from Cllr Parkin and District and  
County Cllr Barnard.

### 24-174 Public Participation

One member of the public attended as an observer with no matters raised from the floor.  
District Cllr Strong attended and gave a brief update on the main concerns of North Herts  
Council. These included the budget, car park charges, the new waste contract, leisure  
centre improvements, planning and the consultation on a unitary authority.

### 24-175 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, Cllr Burleigh as a member of the Wrights Farm Working  
Group and Cllr Maple as a member of the PSSC.

### 24-176 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 12 December 2024 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 December 2024, be  
approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed.

### 24-177 To receive Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary and to approve accounts for payment.

- a. Bank account as at 31 December 2024: Unity Trust Account £79,040.72
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £2704.90 as detailed on the monthly  
Finance Statement (Appendix A) be made.

### 24-178 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 reminded the meeting that the deadline for the precept request was 31 January 2025.

He noted that action should have been taken to repair the light at the Recreation Ground car park, but in any case he would report it again.

There was no further information regarding the proposed installation of the bench on Hambridge Way. The damage to the concrete post at Great Green had been caused by the bin lorry, liability had been admitted and it would be repaired. There was no explanation for the missing sign to the Recreation Ground on Walnut Tree Road. Cllr Rowe offered to write to HCC.

The Clerk announced that after 6 years he would be relinquishing his post with effect from 30 April 2025. He had spoken to the Chairman and would submit his formal letter by the end of January, thus giving the required 3 months notice. The Chairman asked that the Council's thanks for his excellent service be minuted.

**24-179 To receive the New Pavilion Working Group report.**

Cllr Maple had circulated the report (Appendix C). The application to the Football Foundation (FF) had been supported by letters from the local MP, Hertfordshire Cricket and Hertfordshire FA. The panel was due to meet on 16 January and a decision should be received the same day.

Cllr Maple would contact the FF to see if they recommended a supporting letter from the Parish Council to the panel chair.

Interest rates for the loan had, unfortunately, not decreased as had been expected. An Extraordinary Meeting to be held on 16 January would consider this when agreeing the budget and setting the level of precept for 2025-26.

Cllr Strong was asked to look into the possibility of stage payments from the S106 monies sitting with North Herts Council.

**24-180 To finalise the budget for 2025-26, taking into account the interest payments on the £400,000 loan and the level of the Council's reserves.**

This item was deferred to the Extraordinary Meeting to be held on 16 January 2025.

**24-181 To agree a precept figure for 2025-26.**

This item was deferred to the Extraordinary Meeting to be held on 16 January 2025.

**24-182 To consider the provision of a Performance Bond for the new pavilion contractor.**

It was agreed that this would be an extra expense for the project and would provide only a 10% return of budget if activated. Cllr Rowe was still in favour of a bond. A final decision was deferred to the Extraordinary Meeting to be held on 16 January.

**24-183 Planning.**

- a. To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A). Cllr Burleigh spoke on the application for an extension to 7 Cromwell Way. She would send a draft response to the Clerk.
- b. To receive an update on West Lane Farm. Cllr Rowe had nothing to report. He had written to the relevant people and was chasing them again. Cllr Strong agreed that there should have been full planning applications for the barns.
- c. To receive an update on Wright's Farm. Cllr Parkin had circulated the details of the recommendation from North Herts Council for refusal of the application. It was to be considered at the planning control meeting on 16 January. Cllr Strong would support the refusal.

**24-184 To receive an update on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits.**

There was no new information on this topic. Cllr Barnard had asked for an update from Highways, but had not yet received a reply.

**24-185 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group.**

Cllr Goodman noted that there was little to report, although she was liaising with Cllr Maple over an update to the new pavilion details on the website.

**24-186 To consider the findings of the annual play area inspection reports and any actions required.**

The Clerk ran through the main findings that had been reported as Medium Risk. It was agreed that Setter should be contacted to quote for the remedial work required.

**24-187 To receive an update for repairs to the railings and posts at Blacksmiths Pond.**

With the constant flooding and poor weather there was nothing to report on this item.

**24-188 To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parish Paths Partnership (P3). Nil,
- b. S106 Projects. Nil
- c. Village Environment. On the flooding, Cllr Rogers would contact the local MP again with a view to organising a multi-agency meeting. Cllr Strong suggested getting the Environment Agency involved. Cllr Maple noted that a working party to clear the detritus from the ditch on Walnut Tree Road was needed prior to the ditch being dug out. This could be arranged for late February. The ditch should be cleared first to see if it then drained. Cllr Rogers stated that a long term plan was required. Cllr Burleigh noted that the Pirton sign on the approach to the village on Hitchin Road was almost rusted through and needed replacing. HCC needed to be informed. She also suggested that No Parking signs should be placed on Little Green as parked vehicles were damaging the surface.
- d. Bury Trust. There would be a meeting next week.
- e. Village Hall. Nil
- f. Play Areas. Nil, but see item 24-186.

**24-189 To suggest items for the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday 13 February 2025 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45pm.**

- a. The construction contract agreement, assuming that the Football Foundation funding was approved.
- b. Funding authorisations for the new pavilion.
- c. Provision of No Parking signs for Little Green.
- d. Organisation of a day for bench maintenance.
- e. Arrangements for a replacement for the Clerk.

**Meeting Closed: 9.28 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 31/12/2024

|                                   |            |  |           |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--|-----------|------------------|
| Cash in Hand 01/04/2024           |            |  |           | 79,496.56        |
| <b>ADD</b>                        |            |  |           |                  |
| Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024  |            |  |           | 90,293.69        |
|                                   |            |  |           | 169,790.25       |
| <b>SUBTRACT</b>                   |            |  |           |                  |
| Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024  |            |  |           | 90,749.53        |
| <b>A Cash in Hand 31/12/2024</b>  |            |  |           | <b>79,040.72</b> |
| (per Cash Book)                   |            |  |           |                  |
| Cash in hand per Bank Statements  |            |  |           |                  |
| Petty Cash                        | 31/12/2024 |  | 0.00      |                  |
| Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust | 31/12/2024 |  | 79,040.72 |                  |
|                                   |            |  |           | <b>79,040.72</b> |
| Less unrepresented payments       |            |  |           |                  |
|                                   |            |  |           | 79,040.72        |
| Plus unrepresented receipts       |            |  |           |                  |
| <b>B Adjusted Bank Balance</b>    |            |  |           | <b>79,040.72</b> |
| <b>A = B Checks out OK</b>        |            |  |           |                  |

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

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

## Payments

| Code                   | Date       |                    | Supplier                            |   | VAT             |               |                 |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Water                  | 18/12/2024 | Allotments Water   | Castle Water                        | Z | 28.31           |               | 28.31           |
| Bank Charges           | 31/12/2024 | Bank Charges       | Unity Trust Bank                    | Z | 6.00            |               | 6.00            |
| Salary                 | 09/01/2025 | Salary             | Edward Roberts (Clerk)              | Z | 684.36          |               | 684.36          |
| Tax                    | 09/01/2025 | Tax & Employers NI | HMRC Clerk's Tax                    | Z | 171.00          |               | 171.00          |
| Employer's NI          | 09/01/2025 | Tax & Employers NI | HMRC Clerk's Tax                    | Z | 13.43           |               | 13.43           |
| Room (Office Expenses) | 09/01/2025 | Expenses           | Edward Roberts (Clerk)              | Z | 30.00           |               | 30.00           |
| Telephone              | 09/01/2025 | Expenses           | Edward Roberts (Clerk)              | Z | 20.00           |               | 20.00           |
| Postage & Mileage      | 09/01/2025 | Expenses           | Edward Roberts (Clerk)              | Z | 12.15           |               | 12.15           |
| Room Hire              | 09/01/2025 | Room Hire          | Village Hall                        | Z | 21.25           |               | 21.25           |
| Street Cleaner         | 09/01/2025 | Street Cleaning    | Tony Smart                          | Z | 208.40          |               | 208.40          |
| Rental to NHDC         | 09/01/2025 | Allotment rent     | North Herts District Council (NHDC) | Z | 100.00          |               | 100.00          |
| Sports Pavilion        | 09/01/2025 | Q S Fees           | RLP Surveyors                       | S | 1,175.00        | 235.00        | 1,410.00        |
| <b>Total</b>           |            |                    |                                     |   | <b>2,469.90</b> | <b>235.00</b> | <b>2,704.90</b> |

## Receipts

| Code         | Date       |          | Supplier     |               | VAT |               |
|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|---------------|-----|---------------|
| New Pavilion | 19/12/2024 | Donation | Jo Mifflin   | 100.00        |     | 100.00        |
| New Pavilion | 09/01/2025 | Donation | Inese Bokisa | 19.17         |     | 19.17         |
| <b>Total</b> |            |          |              | <b>119.17</b> |     | <b>119.17</b> |

## Appendix B – Planning Applications

|   | Reference           | Detail                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | <b>24/02828/FPH</b> | 7 Cromwell Way, Pirton<br><br><i>Single storey rear extension</i><br><br>Comments to William Thompson by 12 January 2025<br><br><b>No objections but some comments</b> |

## Planning Decisions (for information only)

|   | Reference           | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | <b>24/02341/FPH</b> | The Lodge, Shillington Road, Pirton<br><br><i>Two storey rear extension including first floor side balcony platform, dormer windows and rooflights. External cladding</i><br><br>Permission granted 12 December 2024 |

## Appendix C - New Pavilion Working Group Report

**New Pavilion Working Group report to PPC 9 January 2025**

1. The Working Group has met formally 35 times to date (the meeting scheduled for early January was cancelled).

**Football Foundation grant application**

2. Following some final questions, we understand that the paper was submitted to the FF panel on the 17<sup>th</sup> December. The grant application was reduced to the earlier figure of c£480k from the £522k that had been discussed.
3. Growth in the number cricket teams and tennis teams was included in the application, and the pathway to achieving 2\* and potentially 3\* accreditation for the football club was laid out.
4. Letters of support from Alistair Strathern MP, Hertfordshire cricket, and Hertfordshire FA were sent to the FF.
5. On the 7<sup>th</sup> January we were asked a few more questions (on building hire income, player subscriptions and for a draft programme of use of the main hall). There had been lots of praise for our fund-raising efforts and the work done to value engineer the project to reduce costs.
6. The panel are due to meet on 16<sup>th</sup> January, and we should hear their decision on that day.
7. Unusually for this sort of process we don't have an opportunity to present to the panel, nor do we see the paper that is prepared based on our application. We could send a letter to the chair of the panel from the PPC setting out our case. This could have a positive or negative effect.

**Contracting for construction**

8. The Working Group have considered the cost and benefit of a Performance Bond to provide contractual protection to the PPC during construction. The Group did not recommend proceeding with this, but the PPC will make a decision at the 9<sup>th</sup> January meeting.
9. The current view is that the cost may be c£5k for a £100k bond which would potentially cover c10% of the contract price.
10. Seven points have been raised on the Building Regulations design approval, and Simon Knight is dealing with these.
11. A meeting was held with the contractor and QS on 11<sup>th</sup> December which was helpful. VE items, and other matters to conclude for contracting were discussed.
12. The draft contract documents were circulated to Councilors on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

**Costs and funding**

13. If we are successful with the FF grant there will be a need to raise more funds to cover deferred items, but we will have a year to do this.
14. Following the budget in October interest rates have increased rather than decreasing as previously expected. On the 7<sup>th</sup> January the PWLB rate was 6.07%. The rate had been 5.17% on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. The rate on which the precept for 2024/25 was based was 5.37%. Consideration of increasing the precept to cover the higher interest rate will be discussed at the EGM on the 16<sup>th</sup> January.
15. Cash flow and Parish Council reserves will also be discussed at the EGM. It is likely to be necessary to obtain S106 money ahead of construction completion.

**Management Arrangements**

16. A license is now required between PPC and PSSC for the day-to-day management of the pavilion.
17. A draft was circulated to both PSSC and PPC. Comments need taking into account and then a legal check is required.

**Storage**

18. The electricity supply to the storage building was removed on the 13<sup>th</sup> December.



19. The remainder of the storage building roof was then removed before Christmas, and demolition of the garage section was done in early January.
20. The remainder of the building will be demolished shortly.
21. 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. DECIDE whether to send a letter to the FF panel chair.
  - d. DECIDE if a Performance Bond should be pursued for the Construction Contract.
  - e. PROVIDE any comments on the draft construction contract.

Simon Maple