

PEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held Wednesday 18th February, 2009 in the Parish Hall
7.15 pm viewing Planning Application, 7.30 pm Main Business

Present:

Cllr. G. Evans - Chairman
Cllr. P. Thomas
Cllr. Mrs. P. Lloyd
Cllr. A. Stokes
Cllr. D. Owens
Cllr. Mrs. S. Smith

Cllr. K. Duggan
Cllr. R. Pierce
Cllr. Mrs. J. Mifflin
Cllr. R. Phillips
Cllr. J. Purslow

C15 Apologies and Reasons for Absence -, Mr. Clive Hall – Highways Manager
Cllr. K. Myers – On Holiday
Cllr. B. Morgan – No reason given

C16 Announcement of any interests from councillors - None Declared

GUEST SPEAKERS, Robert Walker (Snr. Conservation Officer) & Russell Price (Amey – Design Team – Contracting Division)- To discuss the proposed village street lighting renewal scheme

ACTION

Robert began by explaining that the Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide adequate Street lighting on a renewal/replacement basis of every 25-30 years. It also has to take into account Conservation issues and to have special regard to an area that is as special as Pembridge, and which has a high quality street.

The following features are those which must be taken into account:-

- Lighting appearances/practicality
- Height – crucial; current poles being in scale
- Colour of posts – need to be black
- Quality of light – standard orange would be too harsh
Softer peach/white lights would suit buildings better
- Location of posts : buildings
- Style – traditional or modern – modern for preference
- Tidy up opportunity, i.e. poles & signs can be brought together; see if there are any historic fittings to preserve

Traditional styles of lamps better in urban metropolitan situations as they are bigger. Modern styles are smaller, more compact, better quality of light, easier to maintain.

Russell Pryce went on to explain how the various agencies are collectively involved, from Local Government and supply organisations, as well as the distributing network (Central Networks) who have to undertake the electrical connections.

There are several reasons for having highway lighting although it is not compulsory; i.e. It reduces the fear and perception of crime
Increases leisure after dark
Provides safer routes to school for children on dark mornings and afternoons
Creates a quality environment

The existing lighting scheme here in Pembridge dates back for many years, and everyone agreed that it is essential. The existing concrete lamp posts are crumbling and need to be replaced. Existing brackets on buildings need replacing. Spacing may have to be altered in some places because of the difficulties of lack of space/narrow pavements etc. Modern lighting should reduce night-light of the sky, although reflection cannot be stopped, but reduced by the use of individual lamp deflectors (this would prevent ingress into homes). This work is in H. Council's Highways Maintenance Programme for 2008/09.

It was explained that in some parishes of Powys the decision had recently been taken to turn off street lighting at night to reduce costs. Other opportunities such as use of dimmers and part-night turn off were considered.

It was explained that it would be necessary to close the road whilst the replacement work is undertaken to protect the workforce.

Russell then suggested that the councillors look at various A3 sized photographs of Pembridge village with different styles of lights superimposed on them, to enable a choice of Style to be made. Russell stated that it was important to remember that the style that is chosen would be in place for between 25-30 years.

After quite some discussion and deliberation a proposal was made for acceptance of a modern style, with an upright lamp with a metal shaped cover over to reduce upward diffusion into the sky. **This was described at Style (i) on the specific photograph.**

A vote of hands was taken, and motion carried by majority in favour.

ALL

This choice meant that there would no longer be any lamps attached to properties in future.

Whilst it was recognised that best value should be considered, particularly in today's financial climate, some of the councillors enquired whether it would be possible to include a couple of other areas in the village with improved lighting as part of this project if at all possible, i.e. down Bridge Street, which carries a lot of traffic to the industrial estate where a 24 hour continental shift working pattern is used at Kingspan, as well as by the Market Hall, and near to the School entrance (as part of the safer route to school scheme). One further request was made, and that is, could the lighting commencement point at the eastern entrance to the village be brought a little further east, as at that point, at Townsend Farm there is now a touring caravan park which has several thousand visitors to it each year, many of whom would benefit from improved lighting there. This is a consideration for tourism as well as for the historic village and its conservation.

Clerk was requested to write to the Highways Section outlining the councillors views as above, and to request a trialling first of one or two styles of lamps in the village.

HH

C17 Minutes of last Meeting & Matters Arising – 21st January, 2009

There were no matters arising.
The Minutes were then approved and signed.

C18 Financial Report (Clerk)

Reconciliation of bank accounts has taken place.
Toilet Cleaner's monthly payments will increase from April onwards as previously agreed.

Balances at end January 2008

Current Account:	£12,889.88
Tracker Account:	£5,918.70
Post Office Savings Account:	£10,949.04

Receipts since last meeting:

BT Wayleave £8.82

Payments made since last meeting:

Bank charge for stopping a cheque: £8.00

Requests for Payment:

HALC – Training places x 3 £70.00
Toilet cleaner & bins – February £195.50
Zen Internet for annual hosting fee +
annual domain name fee £61.35 S137
HALC Fee for providing an electronic version
of Standing Orders £11.75

All above transactions were agreed by all.

C19 Planning

Application that was considered this evening:

DCNW2009/0228/L The Curl, Marston Lane, Pembridge
+ DCNW2009/0226.F Replace existing front porch with new timber
framed porch and erect new double garage and store
and extend existing drive

Comment: No Objection

Application recently Approved:

DCNW2008/2894/L Marston View, Marston, Pembridge
Proposed porch to main entrance

Comment: No Objection

Application awaiting a decision:

DCNW2009/0084/F The Yeld, Lyonshall, Kington
Proposed building to enclose generator

Comment: No Objection

Meeting Closed for the next two items

C20 Parishioners Questions

No parishioners present.

C21 Ward Councillor's Report

Regional Minister's Visit

Ian Austin MP visited Herefordshire last Friday and we took him to Universal Beverages Ltd and discussed their investment plans linked to the Cider/Drinks Industry, afterwards we visited Haygrove Farms Ltd and examined their polytunnels, fruit farming and employment concerns. We took him on a tour of ESG, visited Opella (a manufacturing company making products for domestic market) met with other Rotherwas businesses and representatives of the Cabinet and Higher Education.

He was impressed with the degree of partnership working between the Council, AWM, Chamber of Commerce and others.

Debbie Gittoes of Artic Circle informed the minister they had just won a contract from Morrison for refrigerator equipment worth one million pounds. They would not have bid for the contract before we built the Rotherwas Road as the units wouldn't get under the bridge.

Revenue and Capital Budget 2009/10

The Council and our schools remain poorly funded from government in comparison to other authorities. The economic downturn has affected the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The projected income is down by 2 million pounds. 500K from loss of income including planning fees and car parks, while the income from financial management even after rescheduling of borrowing will be down by 1.5 million pounds. All directorates will absorb all increased non pay costs within their existing budgets and will also operate a 3% efficiency target from last year.

In capital budgets terms funding is being steered to support increased pressure on homelessness agenda with a mortgage rescue scheme, low cost home ownership scheme, empty property activity as well as supporting investment in leisure centre, Buttermarket and City Shops Front scheme.

In order to balance the budgets a Council Tax of 3.9% is proposed with 1 million pounds borrowed from reserves and repaid back next year.

West Mercia Police are setting a precept increase of 4.9% and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority also 4.9%.

Public Consultation

Every four years the Council and the PCT carry out a consultation on spending priorities for evidence to the Audit Commission. Services where decisions have already been made (e.g. weekly rubbish collection and cancer screening) were excluded as was funding for schools, as that money is ringfenced. Top three improvements the residents replied were measures to tackle traffic congestion, support for families to protect vulnerable children, and adult social care.

The survey also stated no cuts in maintenance for highways, support for carers, dementia and other mental health services. There was less support for the Arts, Libraries, Museums and subsidised bus services.

On the PCT side, better access to dental care, better services to prevent and treat strokes, support to prevent falls and help for the long term ill to be supported at home, came up top.

Snow

The Council and Amey staff worked to keep the main routes open during the recent bad weather. Each gritting costs the Council £9,000 and on some days there were 4 gritting runs. We carefully managed our supply of salt and met all the requests for grit boxes in my Ward that I was made aware of.

The contract with Amey is being reviewed and while maintenance spend will remain, up to 30 jobs will be lost in the reorganisation.

Meeting was Reopened**C22 Closure of Pembridge Post Office – Update - Chairman**

The Amenity Trust, at its recent meeting, agreed the parking site for the outreach van in the MM car park, and has subsequently signed the Deed of Variance with H. Council.

The current PO counter service in the Shop will cease operating on Wednesday 11th March. The Clerk was requested to check with PO Ltd. as to the proposed start date and operating hours of the mobile outreach service, which will be run by Kington Post Office.

HH**C23 Parish Lengthsman Scheme - Chairman**

The application has been approved. Two copies of an Agreement between H. Council and the Parish Council were signed this evening, and the Clerk will ensure that these are returned to H. Council for processing promptly; and then await further advice. A Training Day for our chosen Lengthsman and Administrator has been arranged for 20th April. Clerk will also speak to Lyonshall PC with a view to possibly sharing their Lengthsman and inviting their administrator as a guest speaker on the subject to a later meeting of this P. Council.

HH

ACTION

C24 Housing Needs Survey/Affordable Housing Update - Clerk

Tina Woods has supplied the new survey results, and is in direct discussion with Jonathan Brookes regarding the housing needs for Pembridge. Both Tina and Jonathan will be attending the next PC meeting – 18th March. Copies of the survey have been provided to the Parish Plan Review Group. Clerk has copies if needed.

C25 BT Broxwood Phone Kiosk “Adoption” by Parish Council - Clerk

An Agreement has been sent by e.on Central Networks electricity distributor for signature, agreeing to a connection of supply to the Parish Council's unmetered electricity equipment at the locations listed in the Inventory. Clerk is first making enquiries as to the average cost for this service, through the billing company, nPower; but they are unable to provide this information. On examination of the Agreement, it was decided that there would be too much responsibility placed on the Parish Council in such ways as having to obtain an annual health and safety certificate, etc. that it was decided not to have the kiosk illuminated. Clerk was requested to write to e.on Central Networks advising this.

HH

C26 Village Green Progress Report – Cllr. Pierce

The application for grant funding for 4 information boards has been submitted.

Planning and Conservation approval is being sought for the positioning of the boards on the V. Green with an application about to be submitted to the Planning Department of H. Council which will take several weeks to finalise.

The school children will be involved in the planting work, and construction of the boardwalk will commence in March.

RP/HH

C27 Parish Matters Arising/Correspondence for Action

a) **PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL GROUP PHOTOGRAPH – 7pm WED, 15TH APRIL IN HALL** ALL

b) The annual Rospa playground inspection will take place w/c 14th April. Nothing further has been heard regarding the necessary repair works which have been requested, and the Clerk will follow this matter up. HH

c) West Mercia Police would like to relay the following messages for you to pass on:

* Number of homes burgled has halved over the past four years

* The county is a safe place to enjoy a night out –fewer fights occurring

* Levels of crime in county have continued to fall – county is an even safer place to live & work

d) St. Michael's Hospice Flower Festival – ‘A Cornucopia of Silver’ (Their Silver Anniversary) Fri, Sat. Sun. 17th, 18th 19th July 10-4.30pm at Lyde Arundel, Canon Pyon Road, Hereford

e) Cleaning of the War Memorial, was confirmed would take place soon by Cllr. Purslow.

f) Letter of complaint received from a resident re Aircraft Noise whilst approaching/leaving the airfield & flying low over the village. An e-mail has also been received from a resident on the same topic. It was noted that more complaints are being received regarding this noise, and the situation may well worsen. (Cllr Purslow & Cllr. Phillips following up).

g) 22nd Edition of the Funding Directory is available from Clerk if required.

h) Sponsorship by the parish council of 2 Floral Classes to take place this summer in the village was proposed, discussed and agreed by all:-

2 x £15 First Prizes & 2 x £10 Second Prizes:-

1) The best Hanging Basket

2) The best Garden Frontage as seen from the pavement

Judging will take place in July. A feature would be placed in the parish magazine.

HH

CHANGES IN THE AIR:-

Power of Well Being The long awaited Power of Well Being is now available to all parish and town councils who meet the specified criteria. It is to be published any day now. Councils wishing to use the new power must be advised by a suitably qualified clerk who has undergone training in how to interpret the new rules.

Herefordshire branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks will shortly be invited to provide training sessions for Clerks on the practical implications of this important new power, in conjunction with HALC.

Community Empowerment Bill Already in the parliamentary pipeline is the Community Empowerment Bill which could see, among other things, electors casting their votes in supermarkets and being entered into prize draws (turn out to vote and win a holiday of a lifetime) as well as alderwomen given the same civic recognition as aldermen. The Bill also paves the way for the parishing of London.

C28 Next Meeting

Wednesday 18th March 2009 at 7.15pm in the Parish Hall

Guest Speakers on recent Housing Needs Survey, and Affordable Housing project in the village.

Meeting Closed at 10.00pm