

PEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held Wednesday 16th February 2011 in the Parish Hall
7.15 pm viewing Planning Application, 7.30 pm Main Business

Present: Cllr. G. Evans (Chair), Cllr. P. Thomas, Cllr. R. Phillips (until 8pm), Cllr. R. Pierce
Cllr. Mrs. S. Smith, Cllr. P. Rogers, Cllr. D. Owens, Cllr. A. Stokes
Cllr. Mrs. P. Lloyd, Cllr. J. Purslow, Cllr. K. Duggan + 2 members of the public

E015 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

Cllr. K. Myers – On Holiday, Cllr. Mrs. J. Mifflin - Unwell

E016 Announcement of any interests from councillors - None Declared

E017 Minutes of last meetings/matters arising from them – 12th January & 2nd February

Amendment of final item on 2nd February Minutes – proposed ring fenced sum should be £5,000 not £10,000. Clerk to amend.

Parish Plan – somehow, either acetates of notes need to be prepared in advance of the Public Meeting on 9th March, or a computerised presentation is needed. Cllr. Pierce offered to prepare and deliver a computerised presentation for Cllr. Mrs. Lloyd.
Minutes then Approved.

ACTION

HH

Meeting Closed

E018 Ward Councillor's Report brought forward on Agenda :

Herefordshire Council Budget 2011/12 – Summary of points of Leader's speech to Council on 4th February 2011 Previously e mailed to all councillors

This is the eighth and most difficult set of budget proposals that I, as Leader have had to present to the Council for approval. Last year the Government borrowed one pound in every four it spent and the UK currently spends £43 billion pounds on debt interest, which is more than the country spends on its schools. The new coalition government inherited the worst set of accounts since 1945 and has stated tackling Britain's deficit is its top priority. Anticipating the problems ahead we, as a conservative administration, have been preparing for reductions for over 18 months. It was clear by the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review in October that the scale of the reductions would be great. But every local authority in the country has been caught out by both the front loading of the cuts in the first year and the redistribution of the formula grant. The Council will receive reductions in funding from the Government over the next three years of 13.3% in 2011/12, 8.6% in 2012/13 and 1.9% in 2013/14. Our new financial strategy, voted through by the administration on 4th February, is designed **to meet the £10.3 million required savings in the coming financial year and £5.8 million in the following year.**

The Council will take up the Government's offer of a grant to freeze the Council Tax for 2011/12 at the levels of 2010/11.

To meet the 10.3 million pounds of savings and the requirements of Herefordshire Council's medium term financial plan we established a set of principles of Valued Services, Cutting Red Tape, Supporting the Vulnerable, Cutting Costs, seeking local delivery and personal responsibility.

We have planned our sharing of administration services with the Primary Care Trust and the County Hospital for some time, and can now lift that off in April – saving over £33 million over 10 years (the savings will also support the County Hospital's financial and functional viability). We have employed a larger number of agency workers than we would normally do and more short term contracts in order to reduce the potential redundancy bill to the authority.

Herefordshire Council will reduce its workforce by over 12% over the next two years with 250 full time posts (FTP) out of a total of 1700 FTP's. We will reduce our managers by 25%.

In line with other local authorities we will borrow from our reserves to ease the frontloading, replacing the funds within our medium term financial plan. In 2010/11 the Council received 70 separate grants, most of which were ring fenced by government. This year we will have only 6 ring fenced grants – the remainder either absorbed into the main grant or cut completely. Those grants that have disappeared will not be replaced and the jobs associated will be deleted. The aim is to cut the cost of services, rather than the services themselves. We have an unprecedented level of government cuts that we have to absorb but we are doing everything we can to minimise the impact on those front line services that are valued across the county.

The Government have listened to the representations of Councils and the need to invest not only in the National Health Service but also Social Care. The budget for Adult Social Care Services next year will see a net increase of £3.5 million, including £2.4 million from the Primary Care Trust. The department will still be subject to finding savings by reviewing car packages and contracts and reductions in administration. The work of this area continues to grow and in the last year the number of older people clients rose by 7% to over 4,500.

The abolishing of 13 specific grants totalling £1.1 million will result in Children's Services reductions in central staff, transport (particularly post 16), savings in making more local and early interventions and redesigning the youth service by allowing more involvement and service level agreements with the voluntary sector. The number of looked after children in the Council's care rose in 12 months from 155 to 211 in December. Placements in the County can cost approximately £400 per week, while out of county placements are upward of £1,000 per week.

Despite the cut in our Highways grants the maintenance and repairs of our Highways will remain a priority for the administration. There will be no cut in the Lengthsman's Scheme or Parish Paths.

The loss of 20% of our Concessionary Fares Grant (Shropshire 34%, Oxfordshire 51%) will mean we need to revert to the statutory start time of 9.30 am. Carers travelling with disabled people will be able to continue to travel for free during the free period. We will borrow from our reserves to ensure we can continue to run the existing bus routes while engaging in a proper consultation with communities and users as to how these savings can be made in the most sensible and fair way.

Savings of over 15% in our contracts with the Courtyard and HALO will be made over the next 2 years and the Council will form a Cultural Trust. The budget also means that unlike many other areas of the country, Herefordshire will hold on to its main libraries, but the mobile library service will undergo a review. We have long held a policy in our market towns of joining up the Library with other services to help support the overall business case.

The Capital programme includes £18 million to support schools, £10 million for highway maintenance, £2 million for Ledbury Masters House and £1 million each for Hereford Leisure Pool and Broadband.

While these reductions need to be seen in an overall national context, nonetheless they will have an impact in Herefordshire. The County's annual earnings are less than £20,000 p.a. which is 25% below the national average. To that you must add the high increased costs of energy in recent months. The pressure on rural households, business and public services of recent fuel increases must not be forgotten and I will write to our two local MPs to lobby for this to be understood by HM Coalition Government.

Our medium term financial plan is a joint one with our partners in the NHS and reflects our commitment to protect and improve valued services to the people of the County.

On 4th February the medium term financial plan was passed by the administration with no other alternative budget or amendment proposed by any opposition groups. They all abstained and failed to reveal any plans for finding the £10 million savings.

ROGER PHILLIPS - LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The budget for Schools, which is separate to the Council's, indicated that the per pupil allocation for 2011/12 will remain the same as 2010/11 at £4,002.11 per pupil. It is important to note that considerable previously specific grants have been rolled into the standards fund. The predicted shortfall in Herefordshire Schools budget is estimated at £1.5 million, £500,000 due to falling numbers, and £1 million due to spending commitments.

The pupil premium will be £430 per child for free school meals and £200 for service for children.

Final school budgets are determined following the decision of the Schools Forum (a statutory body in all Councils made up of Schools reps who recommend the funding formula for our schools).

Cllr. Phillips led on to advise the Parish Council that it will need to decide which local services it could take over responsibility for next year when the Precept is determined. Such services as the running of the Public Toilets, or assisting with subsidies for local bus services. Perhaps the public toilets could be handed back from H. Council to the P. Council or Amenity Trust to run them. Neighbourhood plans to be added to Development plans.

With the forthcoming local elections on 5th May, all councillors should be aware to request the latest edition of the Electoral Register after it is published in early March, to ensure that the correct numbers are placed on the nomination forms against the people selected as nominees. New 'School' directional sign will be placed on the E Side of New Inn.

E019 Parishioners Questions: None

The meeting was then Re-opened

E020 Financial Report (Clerk)

Reconciliation of bank accounts for January has taken place.

Precept/Budget requirement for 2011/12 has been finalised at £18,000.

Vice Chairman's summary of recent meeting had been sent to all councillors to assist.

Request for funding for Pembridge Good Neighbour Scheme :

CAP Printer has been sold for £280 (less advertising costs: TBA).
 Agreed that a Letter of Appointment to Internal Auditor will be sent.

Balances at end January 2011

Current Account:	£19,553.08
Tracker Account:	£5,925.33
Post Office Savings Account:	£11,347.79

Receipts since last meeting:

None

Payments made since last meeting:

None

Requests for Payment:

Cleaner – public toilets & bins for February	£232.53
Lengthsman Administrator's final quarter salary	£129.25
New Bin Liner	£39.62
WMS Electricity for public toilets amended invoice awaited	TBA
Toilet Consumables	£190.70
Phone Kiosk replacement glass & special paint	£35.62
Entry Fee for Pembridge In Bloom Competition 2011	£10.00

All above transactions were approved by all.

E021 Planning**NO APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION THIS EVENING**

Applications commented upon at the Special Meeting held on 2nd February:

DMN/110012/F Moor Court Farm, Lyonshall. HR5 3JZ
 Proposed general agricultural building
COMMENT: No Objection

DMN/102767/F Former Carpet Warehouse, West Street, Pembridge HR6 9DX
 Demolition of former carpet warehouse and construction of
 Single dwelling. **AMENDED PLANS**
COMMENT: The Parish Council is in favour of the construction of a single dwelling
 on the site, however it objects to the proposed type of brick to be used,
 the timber cladding and the brick wall, as these are considered to be
 unsympathetic to the general design of the village.

E022 Lengthsman Scheme Update – Cllr. Stokes

There is quite a considerable underspend for the year to date.

Three jobs have been identified that need to be done shortly, and these have been agreed.

- 1) Clear the vegetation and litter on the right hand side of road to Shobdon the full length of the railings approx 200yards from the footpath sign to the first farm gate,
- 2) Repair the verge damage caused by lorry on Moorcourt lane approx half way up,
- 3) Clear the right hand side of Bridge St of weeds and mud/stones from the junction with A44 to the bridge.

E023 Allotments Update – Cllr. Purslow

The Arrowvale Group has decided to negotiate on their own, arrange finance, and sign a lease with a local land owner, and no longer require the assistance of the Parish Council. They may have a requirement for some funding from the Parish Council to provide necessary capital items, details awaited.

E024 Pembridge in Bloom – Cllr. Stokes

Cllr. Stokes had recently attended a meeting of the Herefordshire and Wye Valley in Bloom group. He has paid a £10 subscription fee for Pembridge to join. There is the possibility of a £400 grant being received, and the Parish Council was requested, when received, to hold this money for the group to use later in the year. Agreed. £100 already being held.

AS/HH**E025 Pembridge Good Neighbour Scheme – Cllr. Stokes**

There are four interim committee members, and a signed Constitution has been put in place. A treasurer has been appointed, Wendy Douglas, so the group can now apply for a bank account. Set up costs have been budgeted at around £600 - £700, to include insurance CRB checks (although there is no charge for these until April), printing of leaflets and posters, and a pay-as-you-go mobile phone.

H. Council has been approached regarding the possibility of some grant funding being made available; and there is the possibility of something being available from the Community Pride budget – a copy of the Constitution has been sent in, and a response is awaited.

It is hoped that the Art Market may donate £100, and a further donation request was made to the Parish Council. After consideration, a proposal was made by Cllr. Thomas that £100 be donated to the Scheme, at an appropriate time once the bank account has been opened. This was approved by all present.

HH

It is hoped that there are around 14 volunteers to the Scheme, and these will attend a meeting in the Bearwood Chapel at 6.30 pm on 2nd March.

It is hoped that the Scheme will officially be launched in April 2011.

Cllr. Stokes ended by requesting that the Scheme be considered for inclusion into the Parish Plan.

E026 Parish Matters Arising/Correspondence for Action

1) Local resident's concern about damage to steps by through traffic to rear of New Inn. A request has been made to Amey to repair the step, and Highways are considering the traffic issues there, and they will respond in due course. Repair of step has now been logged by Amey. A written comment has been received regarding the traffic issues, and has been circulated to councillors by e mail. A copy of the response from Amey will be sent to the local resident who originally raised this point.

HH

Clerk was requested to write again to Amey to ask if a full structural survey and repair, could be done of the large kerb stones in the vicinity.

HH

2) Land Registry has confirmed the completion of registration in Parish Council's name of the strip of land lying to the south of 8 Parsons Walk, Pembridge. HR6 9EP (M. Meadow).

HH

A copy of the Registration will be sent to Cllr. Owens and Cllr. Evans as Chairman of the Amenity Trust which owns the Millennium Meadow.

3) Complaint of noise from helicopters at Shobdon Airfield. A letter has been sent to the Planning Department to consider, and their reply was read out. It was agreed that a copy of this response should be sent to the original complainant. It was noted that H. Council's Planning Department are further investigating some aspects of this situation.

HH

4) Next Parish Council group photograph will be taken of the newly elected P. Council at the 18th May Parish Council meeting.

5) S.I.D. deployment in the village will be a month later than planned on each of the four occasions that it has been booked for in 2011. It is currently deployed for the month of February.

ACTION

6) Electricity charges for the public toilets are being checked, and a further meter reading will be submitted to WMS at the end of February. In the meantime, following a recent meter reading, a replacement invoice will be sent for the usage during November 2010.

Cllr. Purslow offered to repair the broken meter door, and to fix the replacement bin.

JP

7) Consideration of a salary rise for public toilet cleaner & bin emptier to be deferred to the next meeting, as this may be linked in to the taking on of a separate Village Cleaner.

8) Letter from resident concerning large number of advertising signs within the village. The meeting determined that this is out of the Parish Council's jurisdiction, or that of the Lengthsman, and that the matter should be passed to the Community Protection team at H. Council, that deals with fly posting. Clerk will respond to resident also.

HH

9) HALC Next Northern Area Meeting - 23rd February at 7.30 pm in Town Council office, West Street, Leominster.

E027 Next Meeting

Wed. 16th March 2011 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Hall

Tue. 1st March – Meeting to plan Royal Wedding parish social event. 7.30 pm in Parish Hall.

Public Meeting to discuss Parish Plan Review – Wed. 9th March in Parish Hall at 7.30 pm

Meeting Closed at 9.30 pm