

## **PEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
Held Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014 in the Parish Hall

**Present:** Cllr. G. Evans (Chair) Cllr. T. Bennetto, Cllr. R. Phillips, Cllr. A. Stokes,  
Cllr. Mrs. C. Evans, Cllr. P. Thomas, Cllr. P. Rogers, Ms. C. Fothergill,  
Cllr. Mrs. J. Mifflin, Cllr. D. Owens, Cllr. A. Pace

**H050 Apologies:** Cllr. M. Ratcliffe, Cllr. K. Duggan

**H051 Announcement of any interests from councillors :** None.

**H052 Guest Speaker – Allan Lloyd from Healthwatch Herefordshire**

**ACTION**

Allan explained that he is a lay person with an interest in health matters who is good enjoys speaking, then listening and ensuring that individuals' views are heard. He has attended this evening to do just that, and to prepare a full report that will be presented to the Health Board on 6<sup>th</sup> May, as well as other organizations, both in and outside of the county, as well as the Care Quality Commission. The new Hereford Radiotherapy Unit will open in July, and extra equipment will be added in later years.

There are general national problems in the National Health Service; and Hereford County Hospital is too small to be financially viable. The national funding formula works against rural hospitals, especially those with ageing populations such as ours. The same problems apply in Worcester and Shrewsbury areas, and over 50 other similar towns across the country.

To be successful and attain Foundation status each hospital must achieve both:

A Clinical target and a Financial target. Hereford fails on reaching its Financial targets; therefore the formula must change for hospitals like Hereford to continue. To achieve this, possibly there is the need to link with a foundation hospital in partnership, i.e. Gloucester, to ensure that the financial situation is more viable. However, a sense of urgency has disappeared until possibly after the next General Election.

There appears to be a need for more nursing input from overseas, and to reduce the numbers of bank and agency nurses currently being used, to reduce costs. Hereford Hospital is essential; it is too isolated to be closed. The new cancer specialism there helps it to retain its status. Also its stroke consultants have been doubled to two, but this is still insufficient.

Radical changes will inevitably occur to Community Hospitals.

NHS funding has seen a general 18% increase in funding over 6 years to 2012, but GPs have seen a decrease of funding of 8%. Kington practice doctors have had a 30% reduction in salaries, whilst their workload has increased to keep patients out of hospital. Doctors are being stressed at all 24 surgeries in the county. There are currently vacancies for 12 GP's with 2 being at Kington practice.

There may be a silver lining, in that last week it was publicly stated that Taurus Healthcare Limited received a bid of £3m partly for Herefordshire surgeries to remain open 7 days a week between the hours of 8am to 8pm, which will also apply to Kington surgery, until funding expires (this is a one-off payment). It is hoped that the £3 million will increase appointments throughout the year, across the county by 90,000 (about 3,750 more appointments at each surgery or money to be distributed where it is needed most). Dr. R. King was part of the group that requested this bid. It is hoped that it will also enable new GP's to be offered comparable salaries with those of other counties, and the proposed improvements must succeed. The Kington practice cannot improve except by receipt of such funding. If for any reason it fails, then ripples will spread... such as the clogging of A & E departments by patients who should be attending their GP's instead.

The proposed extra opening hours at surgeries should assist everyone greatly. If the system is to improve, the voice of patients is a very important consideration. Dr. Lloyd wished to stress that Healthwatch Herefordshire monitors the health and social care of all the county's patients – adults and children, and has a legal responsibility, and is totally independent.

The Public questions were then invited.

- \* What will happen after the £3m is used up?
  - If it has been successful then finances will come from other sources.
- \* Who manages the £3m?
  - Taurus Healthcare Ltd. – not GP's.
- \* There should be a system for accountability/inspections of practices to ensure their efficiency levels (non specific).
  - Healthwatch's inspection results will be in the public domain.

**It was acknowledged that all the following concerns that were raised will be reported :-**

- \* There seems to be something specifically wrong at the Kington practice, as no other local surgeries have a 3-week wait for appointments and then up to 2 hrs wait to be seen by the doctor.
- \* Concern about long hours the doctors are working, with regard to clinical/patient safety.
- \* Doctors should keep appointments down to 10 minutes per person, to run more efficiently.
- \* Have amalgamated surgeries caused problems of scale so that they are being managed poorly and running in a counter productive way?
- \* Recently the Kington surgery was closed on one day without prior notice, between 1.30 and 4.30pm. A recorded 'phone message simply said that the surgery was closed. It has also been noted that the Pembridge surgery has been closed some days when it should be open.
- \* The main concern of several residents seemed to be a lack of good procedures, organisation and training. In other words – poor management.
- \* Perhaps there should be more drop-in centres such as that near to Asda in Hereford.
- \* Doctors have sometimes arrived late in the morning – after the allotted appointment time.
- \* Could some telephone calls to patients with test results etc. be given by other trained staff rather than taking up doctors' precious time?
- \* When will new doctors be interviewed for posts?
- \* There are insufficient 'phone lines/receptionists to man the 'phones between 8-9am as it takes too long to get an appointment, and sometimes when you ring after 9am all the appointments have been taken.
- \* Complaints to receptionists and other staff are just being passed by them on to the doctors to resolve, instead of them dealing with issues themselves.
- \* Some locum Nurse Practitioners are being used – perhaps to cover for the shortage of doctors.
- \* It can take up to 3 days to receive a prescription medicine after it has been requested.
- \* Mistakes are being made with prescriptions with issue of incorrect medicines/dispensations.
- \* Communication between Pembridge and Kington surgeries is very poor. Lack of communication or acknowledgement has been experienced.
- \* Some residents are choosing to move surgeries to Kingsland for ease of appointments.
- \* There is no choice of GP practices which residents can attend – seems to be postcode led. Residents want more choice in practices they could attend.
- \* 'Leadership' concept seems to be at fault.
- \* The patients forum should be made public for the 3 areas: Kington, Eardisley and Pembridge.
- \* Some residents requested it be registered that they had received excellent clinical care, and that management procedures etc. are the problem.

Mr. Lloyd was requested to return here to give the parish council an update next year, one year on.

Mr. Lloyd assured the meeting that all the points raised by the councillors and residents who attended this evening would be put into a report and given to the board meeting of Heathwatch Herefordshire on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014. There would be action taken, and follow-up correspondence to the parish council.

There was a vote of thanks then given to Mr. Lloyd.

**H053 Police Report - CSO Dick Alford**

Since March only one crime had been reported.

Two children's cycles were taken from a garage; and a similar offence in Weobley.

A white transit van has been seen around Pembridge with the driver touting for gardening work – Part registration number ADXX PZS.

The next PACT meeting will be held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May between 11-11.30 am.

There is a monthly newsletter produced by the police and individuals can subscribe to receive it by e-mail, via the police West Mercia Police website.

**H054 Minutes of last meeting/matters arising from them – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

The Minutes were signed as a true record.

**H055 Financial Report - Clerk**

Reconciliation of bank accounts for March has taken place.

Notification has been received of a new grant to be received for the Lengthsman service for 2014-15 of £4,230.00.

**Balances at end March 2014:**

Current Account:

**£27,290.49**

(This sum includes 2 grants held and unused: Neighbourhood Plan funding of £6,300 + Lengthsman: £1,057.50)

Tracker Account:

**£5,934.95**

National Savings Account:

**£11,540.45**

**Receipts since last meeting:**

First half year Precept :

£9,000.00

**Payments made since last meeting:**

None

**Requests for payment:**

Amendment to Clerk's expenses for March:

£195.52

Toilet Cleaner & Bins – April

£188.90

HALC Training fees for 2 councillors

£144.00

Magazine printing cost – April/May edition + flyer

£270.00

Fitting of 2 new picnic benches on village green

£425.78

Hall Hire Jan – March 2014

£45.50

Annual website domain name hosting fee

£57.46

Subscription to 'Local Council Review' magazine

£17.00

Amenity Trust Annual Insurance Premium 2014-15

£1,208.75

**Agreement given to pay all necessary outgoings.**

**H056 Annual Parish Council Risk Assessment – Clerk**

A copy of a detailed Risk Assessment for 2014-15 had been circulated to all councillors. This was discussed,

There was a proposal that the parish council would accept it, which was agreed by all.

**H057 Planning applications for consideration :**

Prior Approval Determination only :-

P140297/CU                      Agricultural Building at Pitfield Farm, Pembridge. HR6 9HY  
Prior approval of proposed change of use of agricultural buildings  
For caravan storage.

**H058 Insurance Company – Renewal of 3 year agreement with Came & Company – Clerk**

There is a now a new underwriter by the name of Hiscox, being used by the Parish Council's current insurers. Came and Company is offering a new three-year agreement at a good premium rate, and details of it had been circulated. However, following discussion the Clerk was requested to obtain a copy of the full policy wording supplied by Hiscox in time for the next parish council meeting, prior to any decision being made. This to be obtained and then circulated to all councillors. Clerk reminded councillors that the current policy expires on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2014.

HH

**H059 St. Mary's Community Project – Cllr. Ms. C. Fothergill**

The Church wishes to improve the use of the building by including it as a Heritage Centre and Conference Venue, for which it is applying for a Lottery Grant. Part of that application needs to show that it is a community-based use, and that it is being supported by the community and the parish council.

It is intended if successful, to build in toilets and a kitchen and to install a new heating system. There is concern that if the Church does not diversify and utilise the building more efficiently that the facility may be lost forever. The Parish Council gave this idea its full support.

**H060 Neighbourhood Planning – Cllr. A. Pace**

The Steering Group recently met – last Monday evening, 14<sup>th</sup> April.

The Questionnaire format has been agreed and will be sent out with a covering letter – including a housing survey section, and a single page for completion by landowners who may be willing to offer their land for development.

An appointment has been given to Chris Gooding of Orchard Consulting, who will analyse the results of the questionnaire.

It is envisaged to send out the Questionnaire to all parishioners, by hand, immediately after the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Meeting & Annual Open Parish Meeting.

**H061 Reports for the 7<sup>th</sup> May Annual Open Meeting – Clerk**

A reminder was given to all councillors to prepare their reports in readiness for this meeting.

ALL

**H062 Traffic Speed Indicator Devices deployment - Clerk**

Notification has been received of an increase in deployment costs to £195.00 + VAT each time. Clerk has booked 2 deployments – for June and September this year.

There was discussion as to whether perhaps Pembridge could join with Titley parish in purchasing a S.I.D. to keep for our own uses – to be discussed further later on.

HH

**Meeting was Closed for the next two items**

**H063 Residents Questions:**

None.

**H064 Ward Councillors Report – Cllr. R. Phillips**

Cllr. Phillip's report has been circulated to all councillors in advance of this meeting.

Additional information given by Cllr. Phillips included:

Cllr. Phillips mentioned that Vince Playdon will be the parish's new Localities Manager

There will be a 'Chairs and Clerks' meeting to be held by Cllr. Phillips on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

Balfour Beatty has announced that they will only be cutting grass verges throughout the county once per year, and public amenity grass three times a year in 2014.

50,000 potholes have been reported since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

Village white lining is very poor, and will need repainting at some time; however not much resurfacing work needs to be carried out.

HH

Letters have gone out to all parents that have applied for school places for their children in 2014, and 94.7% have achieved their first preference of school.

Council Tax – the 25% discount previously offered to single occupants will be cancelled.

There will be a 50% surcharge of Council Tax on each empty property that has been left empty for more than 2 years.

**The Meeting was Re-opened**

**H065 Mobile Post Office Service – Clerk:**

A letter has been written to Kington Post Office querying the recent poor attendance of the mobile Post Office Outreach service. A response is awaited.

**H066 Faster Broadband Roll-Out within Rural Herefordshire – Cllr. A. Stokes**

Request for information from a resident. The meeting was advised that British Telecom have had some problems as the only contractors. They are soon to publish a roll out to cabinets. The provision to Leominster Industrial Estate and Enterprise Zone has been taken up with our M.P.

Once fibre is in the cabinets the system proceeds by copper wire. If businesses or homes are not within a kilometre of a live cabinet, then there is a problem. Approximately 10% of the population will not achieve this. The cost of installation is by 2/3 public money and 1/3 British Telecom funding. By 2017-18 there will be better ways of provision. A list/schedule of parishes to receive faster broadband is expected soon.

**H067 Glass Recycling Bins – Site Improvement – Cllr. A. Pace**

A letter is to be sent to the Village Hall Committee to advise them that the Parish Council agrees to provide a solid base for the 3 wheelie bins and a bund to go around them, providing a specification can be provided. In addition, the Village Hall Committee will be advised that a Wi Fi connection is already fixed in the Hall, and which has been little used.

HH

**H068 Water Meter reading for end of January at Public Toilets: Clerk**

**Reading for March is: 872.1**

**Reading for February was: 864.5** Monitoring to continue for one year.

**Reading for January was: 861.4**

**Reading for December was: 858.4** These have been advised to Welsh Water.

**H069 Next Meeting Dates:**

**Wed 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 : Neighbourhood Plan Public Meeting at 6.30 pm, followed by the Annual Open Parish Meeting at 7.30pm** In the Parish Hall.

All Welcome

**INFORMATION**

- \* Two new picnic benches have now been fitted on the village green.
- \* Westonbury Mill has applied for the following licences:
  - a) Live music (indoors/outdoors) & b) sale/supply of alcohol for consumption on premises from Monday - Sunday between 11.00 hrs and 23.00 hrs.
- \* European Parliamentary Election – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014  
For 7 Members of the European Parliament for the West Midlands region.
- \* West Mercia Energy advise of a slight price rise to the capped gas and electricity rates for 2014 -15.
- \* Village Hall Committee advise that the hourly hire rate will increase from 1<sup>st</sup> April by £1 per hour.
- \* There will be a meeting for parish council clerks with Balfour Beatty on 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> April.
- \* There will be a meeting for clerks and councillors with Herefordshire Council at which the Leader and Chief Executive will speak about their plans, on 13<sup>th</sup> May.