

## **PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL**

The monthly meeting of Pirton Parish Council was held on  
**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2007**  
at Pirton Village Hall.

### **Present:**

Mr Jonathan Bhowmick  
Mr Michael Goddard  
Mrs Margaret Johnson  
Mr Steven Kitchener  
Mr Owain Lister (Chairman) (Chairman)  
Mr David Saunders (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs Jennifer Smart (Clerk)  
Mr James Vaughan

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Mrs Rosemary Hamilton McLeod  
Mrs Pamela Waters (abroad)

### **Also present:**

Nigel Brook (County Councillor)

### **001.07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**002.07 MR BROOK** reported that the owners of Luton Airport will not be applying for a second runway this year, and that it is thought they will try to manage the expected increase in the number of travellers without extending the airport as the lease has only 22 years to run.

Mr Brook also reported plans to increase further the number of new homes proposed for the region, but still without any proposed increase in infrastructure, which is of particular concern as roads, hospitals and public transport in the area are already overstretched. Mr Brook was asked whether local Government, including Parish Councils, can have any influence on developments like that West of Stevenage; Mr Brook replied that he believes it can providing everyone who is concerned about the proposals works together.

An increase of approximately 5% in Council Tax is likely, partly due to the increased spending that will be needed on care for the elderly.

It was mentioned by Councillors that many roads in North Herts are in a very bad state and Mr Brook replied that extra money has been made available for roads.

### **003.07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

### **004.07 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2006 were confirmed and signed.

**005.07 OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

**Coleman's Close – Section 106**

Nothing new to report as this matter and the possible installation of a bus shelter are still being dealt with by Mr Lauder, a member of the Pumpkin Club Committee.

**Grants**

Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund

Nothing to report

Southern Rural Area Discretionary Award

Nothing to report

HAPTC Computer Grant Fund

The clerk reported that Pirton Parish Council's application to HAPTC for a grant towards the cost of a laptop computer and accessories was successful, and that the full amount available of £675 has been awarded.

Parish Enhancement and Cleansing Fund

The clerk reported that an application for funding towards the cost of the street-cleaner's salary has also been successful, and that Pirton is to be awarded £1,300.

**Recreation Ground play area**

A member of the PSSC committee reported that all the posts to separate the grass from the car park have now been installed.

**006.07 FINANCE**

**Bank accounts as at 8th January 2007:**

Business Premium Account	£16,208.35
Community Account	<u>£13,345.11</u>
	£29,553.46
Contingency Account	<u>£9,968.37</u>
	<b>£39,521.83</b>

**Monies received since last meeting – included in above:**

Interest BPA -	£42.75
Interest reserve a/c	£28.03
Allotment Rental	£5.00

The clerk reported that she had an up-to-date quotation of £850 for a laptop computer and accessories, which would leave just £175.00 to be paid from Parish Council funds, which Councillors approved.

It was proposed by Mrs Johnson and seconded by Mr Vaughan that cheques totalling **£11,224.05** as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement be paid in full.

The clerk reported that she had spoken to the bank and been told that although the number of signatories to the account could be increased, it would then be classed as a Standard Business Account (not a Community Account) with standard business rate charges for transactions. Councillors agreed that in that case, the account should remain as it is..

**007.07 Clerk's Gratuity**

In answer to a question, the clerk replied that any gratuity could only be paid out after an employee entitled to receive a gratuity has ceased working for the Parish Council.

**008.07 REQUESTS FOR FUNDING**

None

**009.07 PLANNING**

**Applications**

**45 High Street - 06/02537/1HH**

Full Permission Householder : Replacement shed

**26 Royal Oak Lane – 06/02803/1TCA**

Reduce 2 x Ash by 30%

**Rectory Barn, Rectory Manor, Shillington Road – 06/02854/1LB**

Full Permission Householder : Listed Building Consent: Conversion of part of garden store into study/garden room. Insertion of double door and window in south west elevation. Internal partitioning.

**High Ridge, West Lane – 06/02857/1TCA**

Remove 1 x Cypress, 1 x Juniper and 2 x Thuja

**Decisions**

**15 Colemans Close – 06/01948/ 1HH**

Full Permission Householder : Single Storey rear extension and single storey side extension – standard conditional permission

**Kimblewick Barn, 3 Rectory Manor – 06/01449/1LB**

Listed Building Consent : Retention of internal alterations including removal of internal wall and relocation of door to provide enlarged kitchen area to ground floor, strengthening of first floor. Proposed addition of new rooflight. – listed building consent

**010.07 HIGHWAYS**

Land leading to St Mary's Church – nothing new to report

The clerk is still awaiting a reply to the letter concerning the possibility of parking bays in Crabtree Lane.

The clerk had written to Highways again about both the Give Way sign and broken pointer at the junction of Royal Oak Lane and West Lane, but had not yet received a reply.

There was further discussion about the poor state of roads in the area, particularly the road around the corner by the Moat House in Holwell, which was considered to

be dangerous due to a large pothole there, and the clerk was asked to contact Hertfordshire Highways to ask for urgent repairs to be carried out.

#### **011.07 INSURANCE**

The clerk was awaiting a response from the Summer Fair and Bonfire Night organisers to the letters to them explaining that the Parish Council would like to continue to help them by allowing their insurance to cover events held on the Recreation Ground, but would have to ensure that all the requirements of the Allianz Cornhill and recommendations of HAPTC were met.

#### **012.07 GENERAL PARISH MATTERS**

**Possible new Bus Shelter** – no progress to report.

**Postcards** – the clerk had at last received the images for use on the new postcards and these were passed to Mr Goddard.

**Southern Rural Area Parishes Meeting** - the clerk offered to attend this meeting at Ickleford on behalf of the Parish Council, and Mr Saunders said he would also attend.

**Tithe Barn** – the clerk reported that she had contacted Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust and that they had suggested that the matter be brought to the attention of the conservation officer at NHDC.

**Maypole** – as requested, Mrs Hamilton McLeod had provided brief details of the proposals for the Maypole. Although Councillors were prepared to support the project in principle, they were unanimous in feeling that the proposed height of 12 metres was impractical and unacceptable and would result in too great a spread on the ground, which they feel neither green is large enough to accommodate. The clerk was asked to write to the Pumpkin Club to express Councillors' views and also to ask for a scale plan of their proposals showing the height of surrounding buildings and trees. It was agreed that it would be helpful if one or two of those most closely involved with the project could attend a future Parish Council meeting to discuss plans for the Maypole.

**Mobile 'phone mast** - The clerk had circulated an email from 02, who had seen the Orange mast in the Recreation Ground, and are interested in the possibility installing a mast of their own there. The clerk was asked to let them know that the Parish Council is interested in principle, but would like more details of their proposals and to know how much rent 02 would be prepared to pay.

**Village Entrances** – Now that Councillors have had time to consider it, the idea of white 'gates' on the verges at the sides of the road to mark the entrance to the village is generally thought to be a good one. The matter will be discussed further, possibly in conjunction with any traffic calming measures, as it is thought such 'gates' could help endeavours to reduce speeding.

#### **013.07 REPORTS**

##### **Recreation Ground and Sports & Social Club**

It had been noticed that old goal posts had been left in a ditch on the Recreation Ground, and stated that as they are the responsibility of the Football Club, they should be asked to remove them.

Mr Lister reported that the New Clubhouse Committee had now been formalised. It was mentioned that although it had been agreed that the Parish Council will be the client and eventual owner of the new Clubhouse, some funding bodies will only make grants to bona fide sports clubs, but not to Parish Councils. However, it was felt that this need not prevent application to those bodies by the Football Club, who could then donate any grants they received to the Parish Council to be spent on the new Clubhouse. It was asked whether the LTA might contribute, but replied that it would not as Pirton Tennis Club is not affiliated to the LTC. The Committee is looking at other similar projects in the area, and has been offered assistance by Peter Walker, a Quantity Surveyor who grew up in and played football for Pirton and who has given valuable professional advice to Knebworth in the recent construction of their new facility. As the project could take up to five years to complete, it is not yet necessary to seek formal planning permission, although it would probably be useful to speak to planners once an outline plan has been prepared, at which time, a rough budget could also be drawn up. It was asked whether the response to the recent Clubhouse questionnaire had been good, and Mr Lister replied that it had been. It was also asked whether the Parish Council would provide direct funding, but felt that it was too early in the project to know if this would be required. It was asked whether the intention is to include more facilities, such as squash courts, in the new building.. Mr Lister replied that the intention at the moment is just to replace the existing clubhouse with a modern, brick built sports pavilion, possibly with the facility of sub-dividing the bar area and including facilities for disabled people, There had also been discussion about the best position in the Recreation Ground for the new Clubhouse, which was thought to be at the end of the drive. It was asked whether a link between the New Clubhouse Committee and the Parish Council had been discussed, and Mr Lister reported that he felt it would be important to have a strong link between the two.

It was reported that the New Year's Eve party had not been a success as so few people had attended. However, the PSSC plan to hold events on the last Friday of each month, starting with a Quiz Night on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January.

The clerk reported that Mr Simmons has now mended the dog waste bin.

#### **Access road**

The clerk is still awaiting a reply to her letter to the solicitors for the new owners of the Old Vicarage, pointing out the poor state of the road and mentioning liability for any damage or injury attributable to it.

#### **Bury Trust**

It is hoped that the planned walkabout will take place next month.

### **014.07 VILLAGE UPDATES**

#### **Environment - North Herts Landfill**

Nothing new to report.

#### **Pirton School**

The school will shortly be celebrating its 130<sup>th</sup> birthday by holding a Victorian Day.

#### **Village Hall**

Nothing new to report.

#### **Youth Matters**

Nothing new to report.

### **Parish Paths Partnership**

Mr Saunders reported that there is funding of £3,500 available which he thinks will be sufficient to provide three pedestals on which the Village Map and Footpath Guide can be displayed. Councillors were asked to consider where they would like the pedestals and maps to be sited, although Great Green and Little Green seem two of the most obvious places.

### **Tree Warden and PEAP**

Nothing to report.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

No report

### **Rands Trust**

Nothing to report.

## **015.07 ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION**

CMS News – January

Letter from Herts County Development Unit 16/12/06 re: North Herts Landfill

Letter from Pirton Parent, Baby and Toddler Group 19/12/06

HAPTC Newsletter December '06

Letter from Chilterns Conservation Board December '06 re: Design Awards

Charity Commission News – autumn 2006

Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust Newsletter – winter 2006

The Clerk - January

Letter from Cascade December '06 re: Community Housing

Hertfordshire Highways Information Bulletin December '06

LVCR from NALC - January

Photograph of WI handing over new bench on Little Green

Crime Figures – December '06

Neighbourhood Watch Update – December '06

North Herts Neighbourhood Watch News

In the Loop – December '06

Clerks & Councils Direct – January '07

NHDC Members' Information – weeks ending 15 & 22 December, 5 January

**016.07 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Council Meeting will be on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007**  
at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.