

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

The monthly meeting of Pirton Parish Council was held on
Thursday 10th May 2007
at Pirton Village Hall.

Present:

Mrs Diane Bailey
Mr Jonathan Bhowmick
Mr Michael Goddard
Mrs Rosemary Hamilton McLeod
Mr Steven Kitchener
Mr Owain Lister (Chairman)
Mr Rodney Marshall
Mr David Saunders (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs Jennifer Smart (Clerk)
Mrs Pamela Waters

Apologies for Absence:

Mrs Margaret Johnson

Also present:

Mr Nigel Brook (County Councillor)

Absent:

Mr James Vaughan

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs Waters reported that the Village Hall Management Committee had obtained quotes for the resurfacing of the front driveway and had decided the work was urgent enough to be carried out without waiting to obtain grants. It was mentioned that new lighting, for which the Parish Council grant was to be used, should probably be installed first.

060.07 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr Goddard proposed Mr Saunders as Chairman for the coming year, which was seconded by Mr Marshall and unanimously agreed. Mr Saunders proposed Mrs Waters as vice-Chairman for the coming year, which was seconded by Mr Goddard and unanimously agreed. Mr Saunders and Mrs Waters signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office, as did all other members of the new Council who were present.

Mr Lister and Mr Bhowmick left the meeting.

The Chairman reminded Councillors of the importance of giving apologies for absence for any meetings they are unable to attend, as 100% apologies is one of the requirements of Quality Parish Council Status.

061.07 INSURANCE (1)

It was agreed to bring this item forward on the agenda as a member of the Summer Fair Committee was in attendance to discuss insurance for that event. Two options were considered by Councillors – the first was to form an Events Committee to deal with any events that come under the auspices of the Parish Council, which would require the full involvement of Councillors and meetings held under the same regulations as Parish Council meetings. The second, and preferred, option was to form an Events Committee consisting of all Parish Councillors which would, in turn, appoint sub-committees to deal with each event. It would be preferable to change the Parish Council standing orders so that the Chairman and vice-Chairman would not be required to sit on every committee, but necessary for at least one Parish Councillor to do so. The finances of any sub-committee should go through the Parish Council's accounts and their minutes should be incorporated into the Parish Council minutes. There was some discussion about how the finances of the Summer Fair would be dealt with and whether or not any sub-committee could continue to be financially independent of the Parish Council. The clerk was asked to investigate this aspect so that the necessary arrangements could be finalised at the next meeting.

062.07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

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

063.07 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th April 2007 were confirmed and signed.

064.07 OUTSTANDING ITEMS

Coleman's Close – Section 106

The clerk had received a reply from Highways concerning the possibility of the formal handover now taking place. The Development Control Officer had stated that there remains a technical delay caused by the necessity for Highways to secure easements so that soakaway maintenance can be carried out in the future. The Officer also stated that the Parish Council are not and would not ever be responsible for drain or soakaway maintenance.

Grants

Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund

Nothing to report

Southern Rural Area Discretionary Award

The clerk had not yet ordered the bench, but would now do so and Mr Simmons would be asked to install it after liaising with Mrs Waters about the position of the bench on Middle Green.

Ward Members' Discretionary Grant

£240 had been received from NHDC Ward Member's Discretionary Grant towards the plinths to display the Village Map and Guide.

065.07 **FINANCE**

Bank accounts as at 8th May 2007:

Business Premium Account	£16,260.99
Community Account	<u>£10,476.27</u>
	£26,737.26
Contingency Account	<u>£10,000.75</u>
	£36,738.01

Monies received since last meeting – included in above:

Half year precept	£11,750.00
NHDC Grant	£240.00

It was proposed by Mrs Hamilton McLeod and seconded by Mrs Waters that payments totalling **£2,394.39** as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement be made in full.

As had been discussed before, Councillors feel that there should be more than three signatories to their Bank Account, but Barclays had stated that they could only increase the number of signatories if the account was changed to a Standard Business one, which would incur charges. The clerk was asked to find out how much charges were likely to be, and also to ask other clerks for details of their banking arrangements with a view to moving the account to another bank.

066.07 **REQUESTS FOR FUNDING**

There were no requests for funding.

067.07 **PLANNING**

21 Shillington Road – 07/00549/1LB

Listed Building Consent : Demolition and rebuilding of end flank wall to first floor level.

Former Pirton JMI Craft Workshop – 07/00185/ 1

Full Planning Permission : Conversion of former school craft workshop into one bedroom dwelling. Addition of pitched roof to single storey front extension.

The above planning application was discussed and only one objection recorded concerning proximity to the school and the likely difficulties of access.

A Parish Councillor had been told that the owners of the **Fox Public House** intend to make a planning application for permission to build a house on the car park to the rear of the Fox. Councillors expressed grave reservations about this.

Decisions

4 High Street – 07/00761/1TCA

Remove one Plum tree – no objection

4b Royal Oak Lane – 06/02826/1HH

Full Permission Householder : Second floor dormer window – refused

Walnut Tree Farm, Walnut Tree Road – 07/00526/1LB

Listed Building Consent – Installation of satellite dish – listed building consent

068.07 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.

Councillors were pleased to learn that the replacement pointer to Hitchin at the bottom of Royal Oak Lane has now been installed, although the nearby Give Way sign has still not been raised.

It had been noticed that many visitors to the area mistakenly turn into Great Green from Hitchin Road when heading for Shillington, and the clerk was asked to contact Herts Highways to ask for a pointer to Shillington to be installed near that junction.

The clerk had spoken to Mr Dzapata, the Rural Officer from CDA for Herts about the possible introduction of a 20 mph speed limit and been told that it would be vital to consult residents and to have their support for any such move. The clerk had mentioned the possibility of a Village Appraisal being carried out by the new Parish Council but Mr Dzapata had pointed out that this would take some time and he realised that the Parish Council would probably like the issue of speeding addressed in the near future. Mr Dzapata said that he would be willing to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss Parish Plans, Village Appraisals and speeding with Councillors, and the clerk was asked to arrange this.

It was mentioned that vehicles are being regularly parked on verges of roads within Pirton, particularly Bunyan Close, Cromwell Way and Danefield, which churns up the grass and makes the verges look very unsightly as well as making it impossible for any remaining grass to be cut. It was asked whether the Parish Council has jurisdiction over grass verges, and suggested that Mr Dzapata could also be consulted about this when he attends a meeting.

069.07 INSURANCE (2)

Following damage to the cricket nets in the Recreation Ground, the clerk was asked to find out whether Insurers would pay for their replacement, which will cost £400.

070.07 GENERAL PARISH MATTERS

Postcards – nothing new to report

Tithe Barn – nothing new to report. The clerk was asked to chase the NHDC Conservation Officer again

Maypole – nothing new to report. The clerk had spoken to Mr Jarrett about the status of Great Green. Mr Jarrett confirmed that some years earlier he had investigated the possibility of the road around Great Green being adopted by Highways, but learned that would not be possible because officially no part of the Green should be used as roadway.

Village of the Year Competition – the clerk reported that she had signed the entry form completed by Mr Woodward. However, as it has been signed in the name of the Parish Council, Councillors would have liked to have seen the form before it

was submitted and the clerk was asked to request a copy from the organisers of the competition.

071.07 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The Chairman listed the organisations and committees in the village on which the Parish Council is normally represented, and the following appointments were made:

Bury Trust – Mrs. Hamilton McLeod
Environment – Mr. Kitchiner
Parish Paths – Mrs. Bailey
Tree Warden – Mr. Kitchiner
Village Hall Management Committee – Mrs. Waters
Parish Environmental Action Plan – Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Kitchiner
PSSC – Mr. Goddard
School Governing Body – Mrs. Waters
Rands Educational Trust – Mr. Goddard

The Chairman then asked Councillors to think about what they would like the current Council to achieve during its term of office and to bring their ideas to the next meeting for discussion.

072.07 CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk had received an invitation addressed to the new Council from the **Methodist Church** to a commemorative service on the 27th May, celebrating 100 years since the opening of the Church. Mrs Bailey and Mrs Hamilton McLeod would be attending the service and would represent the Parish Council.

A further email had been received from **02** expressing renewed interest in the possibility of installing a mast in the Recreation Ground. Before considering the matter further, Councillors would like to see drawings of the mast and to know proposed dimensions, especially the height, and the number of attachments. The clerk would ask for full details of the proposals. It was also suggested that the Contract with Orange be examined to see what conditions were imposed for their mast.

073.07 REPORTS

Recreation Ground and Sports & Social Club

Mr Goddard reported that the PSSC is becoming very active under its new Chairman. The recent quiz had been very successful and the next event planned is a barbecue and disco at the end of the month.

Posts had been installed to try to stop people driving over and damaging the pitches, but unfortunately the posts themselves had been knocked down, presumably as an act of vandalism, shortly after installation.

Access road

Mrs Hamilton McLeod would examine the paperwork relating to the Access Road and would draft a letter to the new owner's solicitors stating that there was no justification for the Parish Council to carry out repairs, that the only arrangement for the division of responsibility and costs had been informal and that Councillors would be prepared to meet the new owner to discuss the issue.

Play Area

Although this item had been removed from Outstanding Items, it was agreed that it should remain on the agenda each month as a reminder to inspect it regularly so that any problems could be dealt with promptly.

Mr Vaughan and Mr Kitchener reported that the gate does close properly.

Bury Trust

Nothing new to report

074.07 VILLAGE UPDATES**Environment - North Herts Landfill**

Mr Kitchener would attend the next meeting on the 21st May.

Pirton School

Nothing to report

Village Hall

Further to discussion as recorded under Public Participation, it was mentioned that the boundary wall between the Village Hall and the School is unsafe and that children climb on to it and then onto the nearby tree, to prevent which it was suggested that some of the lower tree branches could be removed. It was mentioned that when the footpath was diverted it had been found that the path next to the Village Hall is un-owned.

Youth Matters

One of the new Councillors enquired about progress on the Cycle Circuit and was told that as no further information about either the mystery benefactor or the size of his donation had ever been forthcoming, there had been no developments since the subject had first been raised. The Councillor in question would like the possibility of a Cycle Circuit considered further.

Parish Paths Partnership

Nothing to report

Tree Warden and PEAP

Nothing to report

Neighbourhood Watch

No report

Rands Trust

No report.

075.07 ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION**Blue Circulation Box:-**

Letter from NHDC -20th April- re Smokefree

Leaflet re FOIA

Hertfordshire Highways Information Bulletin – April

The Clerk – May

HAPTC Newsletter - April

Letter of thanks - 27th April - from Brownies/Rainbows Guider

Letter from Herts CC - 30 April- re Minerals Plan

Email from CPRE – 30 April

Peter Lilley Surgery Dates

Email from Rob Smith – 23 April – re Elm Tree Farm development

PSSC Minutes – 12 March

Clerks & Councils Direct – May

LCR Magazine from NALC – May

Chilterns Commons Network Newsletter & Chilternsaetna – spring

CDA for Herts Newsletter – April

Crime Figures April 2007

NHDC Members' Information – weeks ending 13, 20 and 27 April, 4 May

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting will be on **Thursday June 14th 2007**
at 7.45pm in the Village Hall.