

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

The monthly meeting of Pirton Parish Council was held on
Thursday 14th June 2007
at Pirton Village Hall.

Present:

Mrs Diane Bailey
Mr Steven Kitchener
Mr Rodney Marshall
Mr David Saunders (Chairman)
Mrs Jennifer Smart (Clerk)
Mr James Vaughan

Apologies for Absence:

Mr Michael Goddard (work commitment)
Mrs Rosemary Hamilton McLeod (holiday)
Mrs Margaret Johnson (on a course)
Mrs Pamela Waters (vice-Chairman) (holiday)

Also present:

Mr Nigel Brook (County Councillor)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

076.07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

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

077.07 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th May 2007 were confirmed and signed.

078.07 OUTSTANDING ITEMS

Coleman's Close – Section 106

No progress to report

Grants

Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund

Nothing to report

Southern Rural Area Discretionary Award

The bench for Middle Green had been received.

079.07 **FINANCE**

Bank accounts as at 11th June 2007:

Business Premium Account	£21,260.99
Community Account	<u>£1,535.88</u>
	£22,796.87
Contingency Account	<u>£10,500.75</u>
	£33,297.62

Monies received since last meeting – included in above:

None

It was proposed by Mr Vaughan and seconded by Mrs Bailey that payments totalling **£3,150.77** as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement be made in full. It should be noted that the lawnmower service referred to on the statement is incorrect – it was the strimmer owned by P3 that was serviced.

080.07 **ACCOUNTS**

The clerk reported that the internal auditor had examined the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2007 and had found everything to be in order. It was unanimously agreed that the accounts be approved. The Annual Return and Statement of Assurance were duly signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer. The Annual Governance Statement was also unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer. The clerk would send the Accounts to the External Auditor.

081.07 **REQUESTS FOR FUNDING**

There were no requests for funding.

082.07 **BANKING**

The clerk had consulted other clerks in the area as well as obtaining information directly from several banks other than Barclays. The Co-operative Bank's new Community Directplus Account, which is aimed at non-profit making organisations, was thought to be the most appropriate, would allow all Parish Councillors to be signatories to the account and would mean that the Parish Council's funds were being ethically invested in accordance with the policy of the Co-operative Bank. It was proposed by Mr Kitchiner, seconded by Mr Vaughan and unanimously agreed that Pirton Parish Council would change its bankers from Barclays to the Co-operative Bank, and the clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements.

083.07 **STANDING ORDERS AND COMMITTEES**

After discussion about the formation of committees and sub-committees, it was proposed by Mr Kitchener, seconded by Mrs Bailey and unanimously agreed that an Events committee be formed, consisting of all members of the Parish Council.

It was proposed by Mr Vaughan, seconded by Mr Kitchiner and unanimously agreed that the Events Committee appoint a sub-committee, to be known as the Summer Fair sub-committee. The Parish Councillor sitting on this sub-committee to be Mr Marshall, and the other members to be Toni Thomas as Chairman, Bob Barton, Simon Callis, Stephen Wood, Hugh Mcconnellogue, Bren Timson and Nick

Parkin. It was further resolved that power to spend up to the limit of its designated budget would be devolved to the Summer Fair sub-committee.

The clerk had been informed both by HAPTC and by the Allianz Cornhill that the Summer Fair sub-committee would not be able to retain and use its own bank account, even in the short term, and the clerk had informed Toni Thomas accordingly. A cheque from the Summer Fair Committee should be made available to the Parish Council soon.

After further discussion, it was agreed that amendment to the Standing Orders was unnecessary at this time as all Councillors were members of the Events Committee, and under existing Standing Orders the Chairman and Vice-Chairman could choose not to serve on sub-committees.

084.07 PLANNING

Applications:

32 Royal Oak Lane – 07/01108/1HH

Full Permission Householder : Two storey side extension

13 Hitchin Road – 07/00591/1TCA

Removal of five cypress trees

1 Bunyan Close – 07/01365

Full Permission Householder : Part two storey and part single storey rear extension

35 Royal Oak Lane – 07/01356

Full Permission Householder : Front dormer window

Decisions:

19 West Lane – 07/00612/1HH

Full Permission Householder : Formation of hard standing for two cars and new vehicle access - refused

21 Shillington Road – 07/00549/1LB

Listed Building Consent : Demolition and rebuilding of end flank wall to first floor level – conditional listed building consent.

Councillors discussed the planning applications and had no objections to any, but did not feel able to respond to that for 35 Royal Oak Lane as Councillors found the plans misleading and were unable to reconcile them to the application. The clerk was asked to request clarification from the Planning Department.

085.07 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, and had recently reminded Highways again about this.

The clerk had had a site meeting with the Area Engineer, who had agreed to replace the signs and post at the end of the footpath at the bottom of Royal Oak Lane, using a taller post, and also to replace the faded Give Way sign on the green triangle. The possibility of a new 'Shillington' pointer by the Great Green turning is under consideration.

Mr Dzapata, the Rural Officer from CDA for Herts would attend the July Parish Council meeting to discuss, among other things, the possibility of a 20 mph speed limit in the Village.

086.07 **INSURANCE**

The clerk had asked insurers whether they would pay for replacement, cricket nets, but not yet received a reply, despite sending a reminder.

The clerk had received a letter from the organisers of the Bonfire Night and Firework display, informing the Council that this was to be held on the Recreation Ground on the 3rd November, and asking whether the Parish Council's insurance would cover the event. It was agreed that another sub-committee would have to be formed if cover was to be provided and that all of the Insurance Company's requirements would have to be met. The clerk was asked to write back to the organisers explaining this and also asking for details of any qualifications any of them held and whether appropriate risk assessments had been carried out, as Councillors would be ultimately responsible for any accidents or injuries. Mr Vaughan offered to be the required Councillor on this committee and suggested the clerk obtain public display information packs from the Environmental Health Officer at NHDC.

NIGEL BROOK mentioned that plans for Luton Airport's future seem to be in limbo at the moment, but that he continues to have grave concerns about the lack of plans for infrastructure to accompany the proposed development west of Stevenage.

087.07 **GENERAL PARISH MATTERS**

Postcards – nothing new to report

Tithe Barn – the Conservation Officer at NHDC will look at this when her workload permits.

Maypole – planning permission for this had now been granted, and the Pumpkin Club would proceed with the erection after the forthcoming Pegsdon Supper. It was mentioned that the Parish Council had expressed concerns initially about who would be in control of the Maypole, especially if the Pumpkin Club no longer wished or was able to be, and it was thought that the Parish Council would then take control. The Pumpkin Club think that the Maypole will prove very popular and that some groups will just turn up to use it, though it would be preferable for them to pre-book. It is thought that the school will make a lot of use of it, and it was suggested that Mrs Dawson be asked to become involved, as she teaches dancing at the school and may know of extra sources of funding available.

Village of the Year Competition – the clerk had supplied Mrs Hamilton McLeod with a copy of Pirton's entry.

Land near the Bury - it was suggested that the Parish Council investigate the possibility of buying the extra piece of land next to the Nature Area off Crabtree Lane to increase the size of the Bury and in order to tidy the moat. However, this had been investigated in the past and had proved too expensive.

Broken Fence - it was mentioned that the broken fence on the corner where Walnut Tree Road and Hitchin Road meet looks very untidy and could be

dangerous. Several possible solutions were discussed, but it was decided to discuss the matter again at the next meeting when it is hoped more Councillors will be present.

Meeting with other Village groups - it was suggested that the Parish Council invite all groups in the Village to an informal meeting, possibly in September and probably at the Sports and Social Clubhouse, to discuss the plans and aims of each group.

088.07 CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk had received information about a number of training courses being run by HAPTC, and the Parish Council agreed to pay for her attendance at one on Finance for Councils in September.

The clerk had heard nothing further from 02, despite requesting plans and details of the height of their proposed mast.

A copy of a letter sent by Mrs Strong to the Secretary of State for Defence had been received, in which Mrs Strong urged the Government to re-instate the free postage service for British Forces serving overseas. Councillors discussed the matter, as Mrs Strong had requested, and the clerk was asked to write in support of the re-instatement of free postage.

The clerk had received emails from a number of residents expressing concern at the construction of a swimming pool and changing rooms on land behind houses in Royal Oak Lane. Residents had not seen a planning application for either of these constructions, and were concerned about the damage to nearby road surfaces caused by heavy vehicles delivering materials, and also by the noise and disruption caused by the building work. The clerk was asked to pass on residents' concerns to Planners.

It was reported that just after the last meeting a new telegraph pole had appeared in the Recreation Ground. Some years earlier, the PSSC had been told that recycling facilities could not be sited at the Recreation Ground as the telephone cable was too low to allow the lorry to pass under it, although it was thought by Councillors that the trees overhanging the access road could also have been a problem. However, it was recognised that a recycling facility could be a target for vandals and it was decided to wait to see if NHDC suggested siting a bottle and can bank there.

089.07 REPORTS

Recreation Ground and Sports & Social Club

A member of the PSSC reported that the club had received a very large electricity bill. The Club would query the bill, although they suspected it was correct as so many readings had been estimated in the past, and would monitor the use of electricity in future. It was mentioned that the PSSC Committee is working well under the new Chairman.

Access road

The clerk had sent a letter drafted by Mrs Hamilton McLeod to the new owner's solicitor, but had not yet received a reply.

Play Area

The clerk had just received the 2007 Rospa Inspection Report, but had not yet had time to read it, although had noticed one or two minor faults. Mr Vaughan and Mr Kitchener would look at the report to consider what, if any, action might be needed.

Bury Trust

Mrs Hofton is now the full time Chairman. There would be another meeting shortly.

090.07 COUNCILLORS' SUGGESTIONS

It was agreed that as discussion on this would make a meeting very long, and as a number of Councillors were absent, a separate informal meeting should be held to give Councillors a chance to put forward and fully discuss their ideas and suggestions for the next four years.

091.07 VILLAGE UPDATES

Environment - North Herts Landfill

Mr Kitchiner had attended a recent meeting, and understood that in future Biffaward would wish to fund larger projects than in the past, and it was suggested that Mr Lister be informed of this as the new Clubhouse might be a suitable project. The contamination from a number of the boreholes is being monitored, and a representative from the environment Agency explained how the tests work and that water is still perfectly safe to drink.

Pirton School

Nothing to report

Village Hall

It was expected that the resurfacing of the drive would be carried out within two weeks. There was nothing new to report on repairs to the wall between the Village Hall and the school.

Youth Matters

It was again pointed out that the Village provides well for most age groups, but that there is little for teenagers to do, and it was asked whether the Cycle Circuit could be considered again, and possibly a Basketball Court. An email had been sent round trying to establish the likely level of interest among young people in the village. The existing Basketball hoop is used quite a lot, and it was agreed that if a Basketball Court is provided, it should be sited on the MUGA. It was agreed that the matter would be discussed again when there are more Councillors present, and that members of the Youth Club could be asked to attend a Parish Council meeting to give their views, although it was recognised that not all young people attend the Youth Club. It was also suggested that if another Village Appraisal is carried out, a mini-appraisal for young people should be included. It was also suggested that this subject could be discussed at the proposed informal meeting with other village groups.

Parish Paths Partnership

Mr Kitchener reported that he had strimmed the grass at the side of the Baulk as there had been a number of complaints about it, and had also removed a low branch from Footpath number 10.

Tree Warden and PEAP

Nothing to report

Neighbourhood Watch

Six lavender bushes had been uprooted and stolen from Maltings Orchard. As few Councillors receive Neighbourhood Watch emails, the clerk offered to send on to Councillors those she received.

Rands Trust

No report.

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

Crime Figures for May

Letter from Herts CC re Waste Development Plan – 6 June

Hertfordshire Highways Information Bulletin – May

Email from CPRE – 6 June

HAPTC Newsletter - May

Letter re East of England Plan – 11 June

PSSC Minutes – 14 May

In the Loop – June

Chiltern News – June

CMS News – May

Icknield Way Association Newsletter – spring

Fieldwork (CPRE) – June

Annual Report from NALC – March

Email re Free Training for under 25s

Chilternsaonb flyer and Building Design Guide

Hertfordshire Society Newsletter – May

Email from Neighbourhood Watch re Bank Card cloning

Charity Commission News – spring

LCR Magazine from NALC – March

NHDC Members' Information – weeks ending 11, 18, 25 May, 1 and 8 June

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting will be on **Thursday July 12th 2007**
at 7.45pm in the Village Hall.