

## **PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL**

The monthly meeting of Pirton Parish Council was held on  
**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2007**  
at Pirton Village Hall.

### **Present:**

Mrs Diane Bailey  
Mr Michael Goddard (arrived late)  
Mrs Rosemary Hamilton McLeod  
Mr Steven Kitchener  
Mr Rodney Marshall  
Mr David Saunders (Chairman)  
Mrs Jennifer Smart (Clerk)  
Mr James Vaughan  
Mrs Pamela Waters (vice-Chairman)

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Mr Nigel Brook (County Councillor)  
Mrs Margaret Johnson (on a course)  
Mrs Claire Strong (District Councillor)

### **Also present:**

Jamie Marshall  
Owain Lister

### **160.07 GUESTS**

**JAMIE MARSHALL** At the extra meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, Councillors had agreed that there was a need for them to engage with young people in Pirton, either by means of a Youth Council, or by inviting young people to attend some meetings to speak to Councillors. At that meeting, Councillor Rodney Marshall had offered to invite his nephew from Shillington to a Pirton Parish Council meeting to explain how he liaises with Shillington Councillors on Youth Matters.

The Chairman welcomed Jamie and asked him to give a resume of his role. Jamie explained that he is part of a steering group and also part of the Parish Council, that that he has the full support of Councillors and has been given the power to make decisions. Jamie hopes to find out what facilities young people in Shillington would like, initially by holding two informal drop-in meetings at which he will hand out questionnaires. It is expected that one of the key issues in the forthcoming Shillington Parish Plan will be better provision for youth, and if there is enough interest among young people, a steering group consisting only of young people might be set up; Jamie believes there is a substantial amount of funding available for new youth projects, and some funding streams will only accept applications from young people themselves. Jamie was asked how he had obtained his position, and replied that it had been through his membership of the Youth Parliament, which is a nationwide non-political organisation for young people. Councillors discussed possible ways of finding a responsible young person in Pirton who might be interested in taking on a role such as Jamie's, and it was suggested that an advertisement could be placed in the Parish magazine, although it would probably have to be aimed at parents in the hope they would tell their children about it, as it was thought few young people read the magazine. Jamie was asked how he had publicised his meetings, and replied that he had handed out flyers at the Shillington

Firework Display and also spoken to young people directly to invite them, telling them that there was money available for youth projects and that their ideas on how to spend it were needed. He was also going to hand out disposable cameras and ask young people to photograph what they did and didn't like in Shillington. The meetings and cameras would be funded by the Parish Council. Jamie was asked if he was a Parish Councillor. He replied that he was not excluded from anything the Parish Council does, and his views were sought and listened to, although he was not allowed to vote. The Chairman said that Pirton Councillors would be very interested to know how successful the meetings were, and Jamie replied that he would be preparing a report afterwards, a copy of which he would supply to Pirton Parish Council. It was suggested that a separate questionnaire for young people could be incorporated in the Pirton Parish Plan questionnaire.

The Chairman thanked Jamie for attending the meeting.

**OWAIN LISTER** – Mr Lister mentioned first that as all public buildings are now required to have an asbestos register, the Parish Council should have one relating to the clubhouse, as this would be required before demolition or repairs could be carried out. There are three different grades of survey, and Mr Lister suggested the Parish Council ask NHDC for their advice on the matter.

Mr Goddard arrived

Mr Lister then reported that the New Clubhouse Committee had looked at various options, although the general aim was to provide four changing rooms with showers, plus two for officials, and to replace the existing clubhouse with a new building of roughly the same size, but better laid out and with improved bar and toilet facilities. The committee had visited several new pavilions and clubhouses in the area and put together a rough outline of what was required, which it had been estimated would cost roughly £750,000. The committee had also spoken to a resident of Pirton who is a Quantity Surveyor and who had expressed his willingness to help when he was needed. The committee had then investigated a number of funding sources, but found that there were few, if any, that would provide a large sum for such a project in this area. One possible source is the Football Foundation, but they would base any grant on the number of pitches at the Recreation Ground, which meant that they would only fund two changing rooms, a referees' changing area and a percentage of the costs of associated social facilities. This had been a disappointment to the Committee, as they had understood that if the Football Association supported the project, they would consider funding 100% of the costs. The Committee are also exploring the possibility of funding from Biffa or Wren, but feel that they might have to modify their plans and merely replace the changing rooms and improve the remaining parts of the existing building. The committee hopes to have a list of funding sources by Christmas, then to commission an architect and apply for planning permission in the New Year, or at least have some plans drawn up by then to show potential funders. At that time, the committee may need to use some of the money the Parish Council has set aside towards such costs. An application may also be made to the Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund, who would also help with fees in advance if they awarded a grant. Mr Brook mentioned that Lloyds TSB have money available for major projects and offered to supply Mr Lister with further details. Mr Lister was asked if the committee are now considering improving the existing building rather than demolishing it to make way for a new one. Mr Lister replied that they might renew each end of the building but leave the middle part, although that would make maintenance difficult. It was suggested that the project could be split into three

phases and mentioned that it seems easier to obtain funding for changing rooms than for social facilities, although the fact that the social facilities are used by other groups in the village helps. Mr Lister mentioned that it is very difficult to time grant applications appropriately, as different sources require the grant money to be spent within different time scales. Mr Lister stated that the committee would not expect the Parish Council to be able to supply any substantial funding at the moment, and that the situation is a little confusing as the Parish Council own the building but some funders require grant applications to be made by sports clubs. The committee hopes to make a planning application in January or February, and will return to the Parish Council at that time.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lister for attending the meeting.

**MR BROOK** stated that his current major concern is the effect of the publication of the Scott Wilson report on potential Gypsy and Traveller Sites in the area. Mr Brook understands the anxiety of residents and feels that the sooner the issue is resolved, the better. The final decisions on development West of Stevenage are yet to be made.

The Chairman of the PEAP sub-committee voiced to Mr Brook the concerns of some members of PEAP, who felt that the money saved by County by not cutting the Pirton Heritage verge should be made available to the Parish towards the cost of cutting it. Mr Brook acknowledged these concerns although it was pointed out that in the whole of Hertfordshire's cutting regime, the removal of the Heritage Verge from the normal cutting schedule would have a negligible effect on the County's verge cutting contract.

**161.07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present

**162.07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Mr Kitchiner declared an interest in Item 9 on the Agenda as he had submitted a tender for work in the village.

**163.07 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2007 were confirmed and signed.

**164.07 OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

**Coleman's Close – Section 106**

The Parish Council's solicitor is still preparing the necessary paperwork to complete the handover.

**Grants**

The clerk has been advised that the 'Playful Ideas' funding stream is not suitable for the re-marking of the MUGA, but that there are several other bodies to whom a grant application could be made, including Biffa, Wren and the Hitchin Youth Trust. An application will be made once the necessary three quotes have been obtained.

**Grant Funding Awards – 2007/8**

Nothing new to report

**Recreation Ground Access Road**

The clerk had still not received a reply from the Property Officer at the Legal and Democratic Services Department of NHDC, despite sending him a reminder.

### **Tithe Barn**

The clerk had been told by the Head of Planning and Building Control at NHDC that the owner of the barn has been contacted at regular intervals and that they are pursuing the matter, although reaching a conclusion is proving difficult. The Planning Department recognise that the roof does require considerable work but do not believe that its current condition puts the building at risk, but will continue to keep the condition under review.

### **165.07 FINANCE**

#### **Bank accounts as at 5<sup>th</sup> November 2007:**

Business Premium Account	£15,895.76
Community Account	<u>£11,882.49</u>
	£27,778.25
Contingency Account	<u>£10,578.32</u>
	<b>£38,356.57</b>

#### **Monies received since last meeting:**

Orange Mast rent	£1,874.43
For postcards purchased by a resident	£50.00

It was proposed by Mr Kitchiner and seconded by Mr Vaughan that payments totalling **£1,621.38** as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement be made in full.

### **166.07 BUDGET**

After discussion of the **2008 to 2009 budget** and consideration of the increase in the precept, it was proposed by Mr Goddard, seconded by Mrs Hamilton McLeod and unanimously **RESOLVED** that an increase of 4% in the precept to £24,440 be approved. The clerk omitted to ask the Chairman to sign the Budget Meeting Minutes, which will be signed at the December meeting.

### **167.07 REQUESTS FOR FUNDING**

A letter had been received from Mr Woodward on behalf of the Youth Club. Mr Woodward apologised for missing the deadline for submitting grant applications, but asked if an application from the Youth Club could be considered for funding this year towards the rent of the Clubhouse. After discussion, Councillors **RESOLVED** to make a grant to demonstrate their support for the Youth Club. Mr Goddard asked the clerk to suggest to Mr Woodward that the Youth Club apply to Rands Trust for a grant before the end of the year.

### **168.07 VILLAGE OF THE YEAR PRIZE**

Mr Kitchiner had not yet obtained quotes for improved lighting outside the Village Hall.

### **169.07 BANKING**

The necessary forms had now all been handed in to Barclays for the addition of two new signatories to the Community Account.

### **170.07 PLANNING**

#### **Applications**

**41 High Street – 07/02504/1LB**

Listed Building Consent: Two and single storey rear extension. Single storey rear extension and conversion to existing garage to create study/guest bedroom, shower room and utility room with two rooflights to western roof slope. New partition and door to form bathroom. New master bedroom and en-suite shower room formed following removal of internal partitions. Kitchen and WC internal partitions to be removed to provide open-plan kitchen/dining room in rear extension.

**41 High Street 07/02505/1**

Full Planning Permission: Two and single storey rear extension. Single storey rear extension and conversion to existing garage to create study/guest bedroom, shower room and utility room.

*Councillors discussed the application for 41 High Street, to which they had no objections.*

**4b Royal Oak Lane – 07/02264/1PUD**

Lawful Development Certificate : Proposed installation of two rooflights to front, one rooflight to rear and one window in north east gable end to facilitate loft conversion

**Decisions**

**Walnut Tree Farm, Walnut Tree Road – 07/01750/1HH**

Full Permission Householder : Single storey side extension to provide store room and studio room in roof space – refused

**10 Danefield Road – 07/01482/ 1HH**

Full Permission Householder – Two storey and single storey front extension and single storey rear extension – conditional permission

**Tudor Cottage, Great Green – 07/01702/1HH**

Full Permission Householder : Replacement detached garage/workshop/store following demolition of existing – withdrawn

**5 Royal Oak Lane – 07/01877/1HH**

Full Permission Householder : Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension - no objections.

**13 Hitchin Road – 07/02187/1TCA**

Removal of 7 Conifer trees and Plum tree – no objections

**2 Hambridge Way – 07/02263/1TCA**

Crown reduction by 30% of Conifer tree – no objections

There was some further discussion about the lack of vehicular access to the **School Craft House**, for which an appeal had been lodged against the refusal of the planning application.

Mrs Hamilton McLeod mentioned that considerable work was being carried out at **Pirton Court**, although no planning application had been seen by the Parish Council. It was thought that planning permission had not been required for the work, and that the new owner was working in close conjunction with the Planning Department.

As requested at the 18<sup>th</sup> October meeting, the clerk had contacted Mary Caldwell, the Planning Control & Conservation Manager at NHDC to request training in Planning Matters and a possible visit to the Planning Department by the Parish

Council. Ms Caldwell had replied to the effect that such training, together with the appointment of a Parish Council Planning Champion had been suggested by NHDC's Task and Finish Group and a meeting held in September, although the clerk had no record of receiving information about this. Ms Caldwell offered to attend a meeting of the Parish Council to provide information on the background of the planning control process, and the clerk was asked to arrange for this to take place in the New Year.

#### **171.07 HIGHWAYS**

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

The broken street signs and low Give Way sign in Royal Oak Lane had still been replaced, although the clerk had been assured by Highways that new signs would be installed in August. The clerk had still not received a response to the suggestion of parking bays in Crabtree Lane.

The clerk had requested the removal of the National Speed Limit Sign in Hambridge Way.

Jacque Grant of the Community Development Agency had sent a report of her meeting in Pirton to discuss various traffic issues with Councillors. This was added to the Circulation Box for November.

#### **172.07 INSURANCE**

The clerk had now been told by the Allianz Cornhill that the claim for the cricket nets would be met, but that a claim for replacement locks at the PSSC would not be met as the keys had not been taken by forcible and violent entry to or exit from the Clubhouse.

#### **173.07 GENERAL PARISH MATTERS**

Councillors agreed that they had been very impressed by **Jamie Marshall** and discussed various possible ways of finding a similar young person in Pirton. The clerk was asked to find some information about the Hertfordshire Youth Parliament, and to see if anyone from Pirton was a member of it. It was agreed that when the Parish Plan questionnaire is being prepared, it should include a mini-questionnaire specifically for young people. The clerk was also asked to contact Youth Services at NHDC to ask for any help or advice they could give.

**Gypsy and Traveller Site** – a number of Councillors would attend the briefing session at the Council Offices in Letchworth on the 21<sup>st</sup> November.

**Dog Waste Bins** – Mrs Waters mentioned that the lid of the bin in the Recreation Ground is broken and that she would carry out a survey of all the bins.

**Maypole** – the clerk reported that the Allianz Cornhill had stated that they considered the insurance arranged by the Pumpkin Club to cover use of the Maypole acceptable.

**Parish Plan** – as had been agreed at the extra meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, Pirton Parish Council would begin the process of producing a Parish Plan. Mrs Bailey would report back to the Council when she had studied the literature supplied by Mr Dzapata.

**Weed-killer spraying** - Mrs Waters had passed on residents' concerns to the operator of the weed-killer spray, who had expressed his own concern that the

Parish Council might be acting on a complaint made anonymously. The clerk would assure him that this was not the case.

#### **174.07 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Community Development Officer at NHDC had requested that a member of Pirton Parish Council attend a Southern Rural Area Committee Meeting to be held in Ickleford on the 13<sup>th</sup> December to report on how the £240 Ward Members' grant towards the Village Maps had benefited the community. The clerk was asked to reply stating that the next Parish Council meeting would be held on that date and that Councillors felt that the Parish Council meeting had to take precedence, but that a written report could be sent if requested.

An email from a resident had been received stating that the footpath that runs by the allotments from Walnut Tree Road to the Recreation Ground was very overgrown. It was agreed that the grass and nettles on this footpath should be cut.

A resident had complained that the horse side of the grass on Hambridge Way beyond the gate still needed cutting, and Mrs Bailey offered to approach Countryside Management Service to ask them to carry this out.

#### **175.07 REPORTS**

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

It was reported that the Bonfire Night had been a success and had proved profitable.

The clerk had received a reply to her letter to the new owners of the Old Vicarage concerning the piles of waste soil. The new owner assured the Parish Council that the boundary would be left in good order after the completion of some new fencing.

No further quotes have yet been received for the re-marking of the MUGA.

As mentioned under Minute 173.07, the Allianz Cornhill would not pay for replacement locks for the Clubhouse. The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to bear the cost of replacing the locks as necessary, even though there would be no reimbursement from the Insurance Company.

##### **Play Area**

Nothing new to report on quotes for replacement metal gates.

##### **Bury Trust**

Nothing new to report

#### **176.07 VILLAGE UPDATES**

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

Nothing new to report

##### **Pirton School**

Nothing new to report

##### **Village Hall**

The Village Hall Management Committee had listed several reasons why it did not feel it should allow access to the School Craft House from the Village Hall car park.

##### **Youth Matters**

There had still been no response to the request in the Parish Magazine for adult help with the running of the Youth Club. As Club meetings are held in a building owned by the Parish Council, Councillors feel that they do bear some responsibility

for the Youth Club, especially since one of the aims agreed at the meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> October had been to provide more and better facilities for young people in the village. The clerk was asked to contact the Hertfordshire Youth Service at NHDC to ask for their advice.

#### **Parish Paths Partnership**

Mrs Bailey reported that P3 had put in a bid to take responsibility for a number of footpaths next year.

#### **Tree Warden and PEAP**

Nothing new to report

#### **Neighbourhood Watch**

There have been no reported incidents over the last month.

#### **Rands Trust**

Mr Goddard reported that the Rands Trust had sold some property.

Mr Kitchiner left the meeting as he had submitted a tender

### **177.07 TENDERS RECEIVED FOR WORK IN THE VILLAGE**

As the majority of tenders received had been very competitive, Councillors found themselves facing some difficult choices. However, following the principles of Best Value, by which the Parish Council aims to secure an efficient and economic service whilst ensuring that it also obtains the best quality, Councillors were able to reach agreement on which tenders to accept, and were pleased to be able to accept tenders from local tradesmen in all cases.

### **178.07 ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION**

#### **Blue Circulation Box:-**

Email from CPRE– 7<sup>th</sup> November  
Biffaward Annual Report – 2006-2007  
Chiltern Society Newsletter – Autumn 2007  
Letter from Stop Stansted Expansion – 9 October  
Letter from Dick Woodward re Gypsy & Traveller Site – received 11<sup>th</sup> October  
PSSC Annual Report and Accounts – 1.4.06 to 31.3.07  
Peter Lilley Surgery Dates  
Letter from Mid Beds D C re Gypsy & Traveller Site Consultation – 19 October  
Chalk & Trees Newsletter – Autumn/Winter  
LCR – NALC Journal – November  
Clerks & Councils Direct – November  
HAPTC Newsletter – October  
What's On in the Chilterns – October to April  
CDA for Herts October Newsletter and Annual Review  
CMS News – September  
CPRE Newsletter - November  
NHDC Members' Information – weeks ending 5, 12, 19, 26 October, 2 November  
Added at meeting – Report by Jacque Grant (CDA) of meeting in Pirton

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Council Meeting will be on **Thursday December 13<sup>th</sup> 2007** at 7.45pm in the Village Hall.