

PIRBRIGHT PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Community Sports Pavilion on Tuesday 12th November 2024 at 7.30pm

The meeting was held in the Community Sports Pavilion with details available for members of the public in advance.

Those present:

Councillors

Cllr Woollett (Chair)

Cllr Austin

Cllr Graham

Cllr Sands

Cllr Small

Cllr Watson

Cllr Rowe

Officers of the Council

Mrs Helen Myers (Clerk/RFO)

Other Officers

Cllr Keith Witham (Guildford Borough & Surrey County Cllr)

Members of the Public

One residents of the parish

Col Stratton-Brown (MoD)

Angus Martin (Drees & Sommer UK Ltd)

1.	<p>FORMALITIES</p> <p>1.1 To Accept Apologies and reasons for Absence in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, s 85(1) (LGA 1972) Apologies of absence were received and accepted from Cllr David Bilbe who was attending a meeting elsewhere. RESOLUTION: <i>Cllr Woollett proposed to accept the apologies received. This was seconded by Cllr Watson. The motion to accept the apologies were unanimously carried.</i></p> <p>1.2 To Accept and Receive Members' Declarations of Interest on any Agenda Item below Cllr Small declared an interest on any Item regarding the Sandpits car park and would therefore not take part in any discussions or voting on this matter.</p>
2.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>2.1 To Approve the Minutes of the previous Meeting (15/10/2024) A copy of the draft Minutes was circulated to members prior to the meeting and a draft version was published on the website. Upon consultation with members, Cllr Woollett declared that the Minutes were an accurate reflection of the previous meeting and motioned to sign the Minutes dated 15/10/2024. RESOLUTION: <i>A motion to approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting (15/10/2024) was proposed by Cllr Small and seconded by Cllr Watson. The Minutes were unanimously approved and signed by Cllr Woollett.</i></p> <p>2.2 To Receive the Clerk's Report on Matters Arising <u>Sandpits Car Park Surfacing</u> A YFS Projects application, supported by Cllr Witham and Cllr Asad has been approved and funds received. The project requires a financial contribution from the Parish Council and from adjacent residents and businesses. All participants have agreed to contribute financially the project will include new surfacing, new fencing and the access track. The subject appears as Item 8.3.1 on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>New Government Sexual Harassment Laws</u> The Worker Protection Act (amendment of Equality Act 2010) came into force on 26/10/24. The Clerk, in liaison with Cllr Watson and Cllr Graham has added provision to the PPC Dignity at Work Policy to include sexual harassment clauses. This Item 6.2 on the Agenda to be discussed and approved.</p>

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“Litter Picking – It’s a Piece of Cake”

A litter pick in partnership with the Church has been arranged for 04/01/25 2pm – 4pm. The Club Room is booked and the church will supply tea and cake for volunteers. Cllr Rowe will organise this joint venture.

Affordable Housing Webinar – 21/10/24

This webinar hosted by David Cowan of Surrey Community Action. In summary, a parish council is unlikely to undertake a scheme, as these are usually undertaken by Rural England or other similar rural housing organisation. However, a parish council will be drawn in by association and should take care to seek advice from experts as scheme can affect the PCs reputation.

Village Greens Webinar – 28/10/2024

This webinar was hosted by Roger Taylor of Wellers Law Group who highlighted the restrictions placed on land classified and registered as a Village Green under the Commons Registration Act 1965. In summary, a piece of land (which can vary in its topography) cannot be touched in any developmental way (outside of what already exists) and must remain open to local residents for lawful sports.

NALC Pay Award

NALC and the NJC (National Joint Council for Local Government Services) have announced the pay award for Clerks which should be back dated to 01/04/24. SALC require parish councils to implement these changes as soon as reasonably possible. This forms Item 6.3 on the Agenda.

Grounds Maintenance Proposal by the Cricket Club

The Cricket Club have expressed a wish to undertake the additional grounds maintenance to the sports field themselves. This forms Item 8.2.1 on the Agenda.

3. PUBLIC FORUM & COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 To Receive any Representation from Members of the Public

Col Stratton-Brown (MoD) and Angus Martin (Planning Advisor to the DIO and Laing O-Rourke) gave a presentation on proposed infrastructure developments at Alexander Barracks between 2026 and 2032. ATC aims to become a single centre of excellence for basic training with a 40% increase in recruits and 16% increase in staff. The Mod have a Government commitment to the future and there will be a need for new living accommodation, offices, training spaces, car parking, a modern swimming pool, gym, updated nursery, medical and dental facilities and classrooms. The MoD intend to submit the application early 2025. The presentation was discussed and members raised questions in regard to the impact on the local community in so far as village traffic, facilities and services. Col Stratton-Brown stated that consideration had been given to the development proposal to minimise impact on through traffic and that no medical uplift was proposed as facilities would be on site. Spare nursery capacity would be opened-up to parishioners and local clubs would keep access to the swimming pool. Members requested that information be dissipated throughout the parish via the PeriNews and PPC social media in due course.

3.2 To Consider Recent Communications Sent & Received

3.1 The SLCC contacted all member Clerks and have confirmed that the Government’s increase in Employer’s NI will apply to Parish Councils. The Clerk has allowed for this increase in the 2025/2026 draft budget.

3.2 The Lempriere Trust contacted the Clerk to inform her that, following a meeting of the Trustees, £800 had been awarded to the Parish Council to use towards a new basketball court or some other recreational equipment or community project.

3.3 NALC Webinar 17/10/24. The Clerk attended this webinar which was hosted by the Legal Team at NALC who have launched the new website and wanted to reiterate the resources available covering many of the aspects of running a parish council. PPC subscribes annually to NALC, SALC and the SLCC, all of which are valuable partners.

3.4 The Forresters Association have confirmed that they would like to purchase a new memorial bench via the PPC memorial bench policy to be placed close to the entrance to The Gardens, overlooking the cricket pitch.

3.5 The Clerk is working with the administrator of the Pirbright Community Facebook page to improve the PPC Facebook page.

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	<p>3.6 The Parish Council were contacted by Surrey Highways in regards to the Leylandii hedge owned by the Tennis Club. The authority stated that it was restricting the walkway and should be cut back. The Clerk passed this information on to the Chair of the Club who has given assurance that the hedge will be cut back.</p> <p>3.7 Lloyds Bank are changing their banking terms and introducing fees from 14 January 2025. From that date a monthly account fee of £4.25 will be charged on all Treasurer's Accounts. Lloyds will introduce further fees in January 2026 for cheque deposits (£0.42 per cheque).</p> <p>3.8 The Clerk has been liaising with GBC and SCC over the possibility of the Pond being developed as a BNG bank. However, following extensive research the Clerk would not consider this a viable option.</p> <p>3.9 The Clerk is in the process of updating the Chairman's Board in the Hall.</p> <p>3.10 The Church have confirmed that the date for the 2025 Pirbright Fair will be 30th August 2025.</p> <p>3.11 Banner requests have been received and approved for various events on 24/11/24, 30/11/24 and 25/01/05 .</p> <p>3.12 The Government have opened a consultation regarding attendance at council meetings via remote means and proxy voting. At the moment all local councillors are required by law to attend Parish and Town Council meetings in person. The Government is now consulting on introducing powers for Parish and Town Councils to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and vote by proxy in certain circumstances. This forms Item 6.5 on the Agenda.</p>
4.	<p><u>HEALTH & SAFETY</u> 4:1 To consider any Health & Safety Issues arising since the last Meeting (15/10/2024) No issues were reported.</p>
5.	<p><u>REPORTS (for information, unless urgent action is required)</u> To Receive Updates on:</p> <p>a) Community Sports Pavilion Cllr Woollett stated that there had been some good usage of the pavilion as a result of the redirection of hirers from the Hall when the boilers were out. To encourage more hirings, the Trustees have decided to reduce rates for regular hirers. PCC are in a position to sign an annual Agreement with LPH for each cricket season. It is hoped this Agreement can be finalised in the coming weeks following some further small amendments and a meeting between LPH and PCC can be arranged to sign the Agreement.</p> <p>b) Lord Pirbright's Hall Cllr Woollett thanked all members present for resolving the boiler issues so quickly. Cllr Woollett also wished to thank the Hall Manager, Catherine Loots for her time and efforts in resolving this emergency situation so quickly. Cllr Graham reminded members that the new cooker was needed and Cllr Woollett announced that the Trustees will now be working towards building up a reserve fund to protect LPH in the future.</p> <p>c) Report from Borough Councillors Cllr Witham circulated his monthly newsletter to members prior to the meeting. Cllr Witham wished PPC well with the Sandpits car park project and also announced that the Pirbright Arch pedestrian works had been pushed back to early 2025.</p>
	<p><u>FINANCE & GOVERNANCE</u></p> <p>6.1 To Discuss & Approve the PPC Receipts & Payments for October 2024 A list of receipts and payments for the month of October 2024 were circulated prior to the meeting. This document was discussed and approved by members. RESOLUTION: <i>Cllr Woollett moved to approve the October 2024 Receipts & Payments schedule. This motion was proposed by Cllr Watson and seconded by Cllr Small. The motion was unanimously carried and the document was duly signed by Cllr Woollett.</i></p>

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6.2 To Approve the PPC Dignity at Work Policy 2024 which now includes Sexual Harassment

An amended PPC Dignity at Work Policy was circulated to members prior to the meeting. This Policy was discussed and approved by members to be uploaded to PPC's set of Governance documents.

RESOLUTION: *Cllr Woollett moved to adopt the adapted PPC Dignity at Work Policy 2024. This motion was proposed by Cllr Woollett and seconded by Cllr Graham. The motion was unanimously carried and the updated Policy will be accepted into Governance.*

6.3 To Note and Adopt the NALC Pay Awards for 2024/25

NALC and the NJC have announced the pay award for Clerks. The new pay scales were circulated to members in advance of the meeting. SALC require parish councils to implement these changes as soon as possible.

RESOLUTION: *Cllr Woollett moved to adopt the NALC pay scales for the Clerk. This new rate of pay must be back dated to 01/04/24. This motion was proposed by Cllr Small and seconded by Cllr Austin. The motion was unanimously carried and the Clerk will notify PPC's payroll provider.*

6.4 To Receive & Discuss the Draft 2025/2026 Budget and Precept request

The Clerk circulated a proposed budget and Precept request to members prior to the meeting. The Clerk asked that members consider the figures and form a view ahead of the next meeting in order to respond promptly to GBC in mid January 2025.

ACTION: *Cllr Woollett moved to ask members to feedback to the Clerk and settle on a figure before the January meeting so that the budget can be ratified at the next meeting. This motion was proposed by Cllr Watson and seconded by Cllr Small. The motion was unanimously carried.*

6.5 To Agree a PPC Response to the Government's Consultation on Remote Meetings & Proxy Voting

The Clerk circulated the full list of questions ahead of the meeting in order for members to provide a coordinated response to the survey. These questions were discussed and members agreed a response. Cllr Woollett moved to submit a coordinated response to the survey to suggest that Councillors should attend meetings wherever possible in person. In exceptional circumstances, members felt that other members should be permitted to attend a meeting via Zoom and be able to submit their vote via Zoom.

RESOLUTION: *This motion was proposed by Cllr Woollett and seconded by Cllr Small. The motion was unanimously carried and the Clerk will submit a collective response on behalf of PPC.*

7. PLANNING

7.1 To Review applications received and other Planning related issues

24/P/01504 Land South of, Gole Road, Woking, GU24 0QF Erection of stables for private equestrian use, use of land for the grazing and keeping of horses, associated hardstanding, yard, manure trailer and area of ecological enhancements.

PPC Response: *PPC raise an objection. The application proposes inappropriate development within the Green Belt contrary to Policy P2 of the Guildford Local Plan and the relevant policies of the NPPF. The access remains unsafe, without control of sight lines which are in part outside of the applicant's control. It occurs on a dangerous bend in Gole Road close to locations where injury accidents have occurred and where traffic calming measures have had to be undertaken. This land has been the subject of the clearance of extensive areas of tree coverage and as noted in the previous objection which is not reflected in the application or the accompanying ecological appraisal and therefore sets an incorrect baseline for the assessment of the application. The revised proposal would have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt and introduce a substantial building which would cause 'in principle' harm and actual harm and would lead to development and encroachment within the countryside. The purpose of Green Belt is to (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; (c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. The site is located within a sensitive area of open countryside close to Pirbright Conservation Area and the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area and would adversely affect their setting and encroach on the countryside by introducing a substantial building. The use of the land for equestrian purposes does not justify a large building such is proposed and would only be considered appropriate as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. In this case the erection of a large building as proposed (larger than the existing tin building) and the other changes made to facilitate it, including the access, and yard introduce creeping urbanisation that harm the openness of the Green Belt and should be resisted. The application also post dates works that have already been carried out and on which we have raised enforcement concerns that led to the TPO on the remaining woodland belt (TPO dated 24/09/21 imposed by Tim Holman of GBC).*

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	<p><i>The ecology survey remains as inaccurate, treating the site as a mown grassland and being carried out in August 2022 after a significant heat wave and after the site had been cleared of trees and cut and which we fear is not representative of the species diversity on the plot. The starting point for the ecology survey, that this is mown grassland used for horse grazing is incorrect and understates the previously natural state. This was a mosaic habitat that had not previously been grazed or used for agriculture with areas of marsh and bog which were removed by the previous ditching and clearance work. Further ecological surveys are required at the correct time of year and should take account of the changes that preceded. The current, old survey, simply appears to have facilitated this most recent application. PPC maintains the view that the plot is within the Greenbelt and that no special circumstances have been presented and that the application should therefore be refused.</i></p> <p>24/P/01532 12 Rapleys Field, Pirbright, GU24 0LT Proposed two storey front extension, front porch extension, conversion of garage into habitable accommodation, together with a first floor side extension and single storey rear extension.</p> <p>PPC Response: <i>This is one of the former Airey homes built in 1948 that was rebuilt when grants became available, and since subject to various planning applications to extend. The current application supersedes 23/P/00782 (approved by GBC in July 2023), which proposed an uplift of 43.61% above the size of the original dwelling. The uplift for this new proposal is 32.1%, and is in keeping with the three other dwellings in the road that have already been extended. However, the bulk of the two-storey front extension could affect the light into the adjoining property and PPC would request that Planning Officers look carefully to confirm that the angles are within the limits permissible to avoid this prospect.</i></p> <p>24/P/01504 Green Gates, The Green, Pirbright, GU24 0JT Lawful Development Certificate (proposed) for the erection of a potting shed and greenhouse to rear garden.</p> <p>PPC Response: <i>PPC raise no objection to this application.</i></p> <p>24/P/01618 Lord Roberts Centre1, 32 Kings Way, Bisley Camp, Brookwood Ground Floor Refurbishment: includes the development of new changing rooms, featuring a Part M compliant lobby and shower to ensure accessibility. Enhanced welfare facilities like mothers room and a praying room will also be incorporated to improve functionality and user comfort. Additionally, a new lobby is proposed at the far-right end of the building to enhance overall functionality, accommodating the needs of the tenants. First Floor Refurbishment: includes the development of new teaching facilities, locker rooms, and CNC spaces. Existing office areas will be refreshed, and the boardroom will be converted into a staff room.</p> <p>PPC Response: <i>PPC raise no objection to this application.</i></p> <p>24/P/01635 Squire Furneaux, Volvo Cars Guildford, GU24 0LW Advertisement consent for the erection of X4 Internally illuminated signs and X10 non-illuminated signs.</p> <p>PPC Response: <i>PPC would raise the illuminance levels with the Planning Officer. The application states a level of 500 cd/m2 for static signage. Pirbright is a registered "dark" village and PPC would request that all lights are on a timer and not on 24/7 and that a lower illuminance level be approved in the interests of avoiding harm to protected species from light spill. This would be to respect the dark nature of this conservation area, so as not to interfere with the native bats and owls in the village, and also in consideration of the residential properties opposite the garage.</i></p>
8.	<p><u>HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT</u></p> <p>8.1 To Receive and Update on Tree Management No report was received on this matter at this time.</p> <p>8.2 To Receive an Update on the Management of the Green and Local Environment</p> <p>8.2.1. To Discuss the Sports' Clubs proposal for grounds maintenance PCC have expressed a wish to undertake the additional grounds maintenance to the sports field themselves. PPC currently undertakes a good level of grounds maintenance to the main green, little green, playground & recreation area and sports field. This maintenance includes 16 cuts to all areas and spring vertidrainage. PPC currently undertakes additional grounds maintenance to the sports field only. These additional works include 16 extra cuts, autumn vertidrainage, weed spray treatment and fertiliser. Members were supportive of an agreement between PPC and PCC and for PCC to take on the extra maintenance on a yearly agreement. Cllr Watson will draft an Agreement permitting PCC to take on this responsibility with a number of guardrails in place to respect the village green legislation and protect the parish council with proposed works being agreed by all parties in advance.</p>

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	<p>ACTION: Cllr Woollett motioned for Cllr Watson to draw up a draft Agreement to be circulated to members and subsequently approved by members and ratified at the January meeting. This motion was proposed by Cllr Small and seconded by Cllr Sands. The motion was unanimously agreed.</p> <p>8.3 To Receive a Report on any Parking and Traffic Issues</p> <p>8.3.1. To Receive an update on the Sandpits Car Park</p> <p>The YFS application has been supported by Cllr Witham and Cllr Asad and both the Guildford and Woking elements have been approved. The Clerk will now liaise with contractors to schedule the works and will update members at the next meeting.</p>
	<p>NEWSLETTER</p> <p>To Confirm Items for the December 2024 Issue of the PeriNews</p> <p>It was agreed that the December issue of the PeriNews should contain an article wishing all parishioners a happy festive period. Further articles would thank Cllr Graham for giving a reading at the Remembrance Service and an update on the cost of war memorial restoration. Lastly an article regarding the Litter Pick on 04/01/25 in partnership with the church and the fact that LPH will once again be a point of recycling for Christmas trees.</p>
10.	<p>CHAIR'S CONCLUSION</p> <p>To Receive Chair's Notices & Members' Questions</p> <p>No Notices or Members' questions were received.</p>

The meeting finished at: 21.30hrs.

The next meeting was announced as Tuesday 7th January 2025 at 19.30hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....