

PEASENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Peasehall Parish Council virtual meeting
held via Zoom Meetings on Wednesday 29th July 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Cllr. Frank Potter chaired the meeting.

2020/32 Attendance and Apologies

The Council noted the resignation of Cllr. Chris Norrington. Cllr. Frank Potter recorded his thanks to Cllr. Norrington for his many years of valuable service to the village and to the Council and proposed that a letter should be sent by the Council.

ACTION: Clerk to progress.

Attendees:

Cllr. Frank Potter – Vice-Chair
Cllr. Roger Benstead
Cllr. Steve Pewsey
Cllr. Kenneth Parry-Brown
Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener
Cllr. Stephanie Liston
Cllr. Ric Earle
Cllr. Peter Dance

Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Norman Ball

In attendance:

Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO
3 members of the public

2020/33 Election of Chair and remote signing of Declaration of Office

Cllr. Frank Potter was nominated by Cllr. Stephanie Liston. Cllr. Frank Potter thanked her for the nomination but declined due to work commitments. Cllr. Steve Pewsey was nominated by Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener and seconded by Cllr. Ric Earle. Cllr. Steve Pewsey thanked them and accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations Cllr. Steve Pewsey was elected Chair. All in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for remote signing of the Declaration of Office.

Cllr. Steve Pewsey chaired the meeting from this point forward. Cllr. Pewsey also thanked Cllr. Chris Norrington for his patience, good humour, knowledge of Council procedure, for making a real difference to the parish and for being hands-on during events, most recently during the coronavirus pandemic. Cllr. Pewsey reminded the Councillors that they are bound by the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct and must behave in an exemplary way to others and themselves and that they are accountable to the electorate. Cllr. Pewsey said he was looking forward to the future of the Council and to delivering progress.

2020/34 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener declared an interest in item 2020/38c.

2020/35 Public Forum

a) A member of the public, referring to the Local Electricity Bill, opined that the new wave of installing solar panels on rooftops was unsightly and anti-social, especially in a conservation area, and that the inverters on solar farms were noisy. He asked the Council not to encourage their use. The member of the public also asked the representative of the Church Lands Trust for an update.

b) A member of the public reported to the Council that he had visited the old primary school site and it is in a poor state. The building is dilapidated and unsecure and is at risk of vandalism, flooding or burning down which may result in it being pulled down and lost to the village. The member of the public asked for this to be reported to the County Council and for remedial works to be requested.

c) A member of the public said that the Local Electricity Bill had many merits and that solar panels do not need to be installed on the visible side of a building. The member of the public also reminded the Council of the matters that were suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic – firstly that it had agreed to

discuss the changes to building codes in a conservation area at the Annual Parish Meeting and secondly, that it had agreed to put a new grounds maintenance contract out to tender. The member of the public also informed the Council that a number of residents had requested a public consultation regarding the Council's response to the Planning Inspectorate about EDF Energy's Sizewell C Development Consent Order application.

2020/36 Minutes

a) The Council approved as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2020, subject to the amendment of the Community Speedwatch sites from two to three.

ACTION: Clerk to amend.

b) The Council approved as accurate the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 25th June 2020.

2020/37 Matters Arising

Cllr. Ric Earle referred to the recent letter the Council were copied into from Sibton Parish Council to the District Council regarding the Church Lands Trust's response to the Local Plan Consultation on Main Modifications. Cllr. Peter Dance informed the Council that the Trustees unanimously agreed that development of the site was unacceptable and that the Secretary was to write to the District Council to inform them of that decision. Without knowledge or agreement of the Trustees, the Secretary wrongly responded that the Trust was in favour of housing on the entire site including in the parish of Sibton. When the Trustees found out about this they asked the Secretary to send a retraction but they received no response. The Trustees then sent a letter to the District Council confirming their wishes that they are against the development of the site. The Secretary also withheld the minutes of the meeting from the Trustees. Cllr. Stephanie Liston said that if the Secretary of the Trust had acted inappropriately and had not performed his duties then his responsible position on the Council should be questioned. Cllr. Kenneth Parry-Brown responded that at the meeting the Trustees agreed that the site should not be developed with 14 houses in a tenement block style but Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener had suggested that not more than 8 houses might be suitable to obviate the requirement to have affordable housing. Cllr. Levett-Scrivener denied this. Cllr. Parry-Brown apologised and said he accepts that he made a mistake with the idea Cllr. Levett-Scrivener put forward and that it was his understanding of what the Trustees had agreed. He said he prepared the minutes and shared them with one Trustee and then circulated them to the other Trustees when the furore died down. He said he wrote to the District Council to inform them he had made a mistake. Cllr. Levett-Scrivener confirmed that he does not want to see the site developed with any number of houses and that Cllr. Parry-Brown should have circulated the draft minutes and the letter before submitting it to the District Council and that he has requested sight of Cllr. Parry-Brown's retraction letter. Cllr. Ric Earle said that the District Council are considering this site under a false premise and that if the Council had been informed of the Trust's policy about the site then this would have been included in the Council's response.

ACTION: Clerk to write to the District Council to confirm that both the Parish Council and the Church Lands Trust do not wish the site to be developed and to ask that they regard this united view.

2020/38 Parish Matters

a) The Council noted the proposed extension of the local bus service to Peasenhall and Sibton and thanked Cllr. Ric Earle for being the driving force behind the initiative. Cllr. Steve Pewsey suggested that the Council should make an event of the first service by inviting the residents and the local press to celebrate and record the event.

ACTION: Cllr. Steve Pewsey to progress.

b) The Council agreed to register as an Interested Party with the Planning Inspectorate regarding EDF Energy's application for a Development Consent Order for Sizewell C. Cllr. Kenneth Parry-Brown agreed to circulate a draft Relevant Representation for comment, with a view to discussing the content at an Extraordinary meeting to be held in August. The Council noted that a number of residents had submitted their views and the Council will need to initiate discussions in the village about the proposals to ensure that the Council's views are truly representative of the parish's opinion. This will need to be innovative as the Council is still prohibited from holding public meetings.

ACTION: Cllr. Kenneth Parry-Brown to circulate a draft response and the Clerk to arrange an Extraordinary meeting.

Cllr. Stephanie Liston left the meeting.

c) The Council agreed to recommence the tender process for grounds maintenance in the village for the 2021 season. Cllr. Steve Pewsey noted that the Council has no control over when the verges are cut as this is undertaken by the County Council and the landowners. Cllr. Steve Pewsey agreed to draw up a map of the cemetery to show where wildflower areas should be created.

ACTION: Clerk and Cllr. Steve Pewsey to progress.

d) The Council discussed appointing a new custodian for the Speed Indicator Device but no volunteers came forward. The SID needs to be regularly moved between three sites and the battery recharged. The brackets on the poles are above head height therefore use of a ladder would be required necessitating two volunteers. The Council discussed the health and safety implications of this. Cllr. Ric Earle suggested that the Council pays for someone to undertake this task but there was no enthusiasm for this. It was suggested that the Council sells the SID to another Parish Council.

ACTION: Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener to ascertain whether Sibton Parish Council might be interested. Clerk to remind Cllr. Levett-Scrivener of purchase price and date.

e) The Council agreed to defer consideration of producing a Neighbourhood Plan to the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to add to next month's agenda.

f) The Council agreed to support the Local Electricity Bill in principle. The Bill is a proposal to allow communities to generate renewable energy for community buildings and to sell any surplus to residents. The initiative is unlikely to apply to Peasenhall but it might remove obstacles for communities who wish to pursue it.

ACTION: Clerk to progress.

g) The Council agreed to politely ask the residents of Church Street and Rendham Hill to park on one side to allow for the passage of farm traffic during the harvest season.

ACTION: Cllr. Steve Pewsey to progress.

2020/39 Councillors' Reports

a) Highways Issues – it was agreed to add consideration of expressing an interest in registering Quiet Lanes in the parish to the next agenda.

b) Maintenance Issues – it was noted that the railings on Rendham Hill had been repaired.

c) Community SpeedWatch – Cllr. Ric Earle informed the Council that this is on hold due to the government's social distancing measures. More volunteers will be required when the scheme resumes.

2020/40 Annual Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019-20.

a) The Council approved the Annual Accounts.

b) The Council approved the Certificate of Exemption.

c) The Council approved the year-end Bank Reconciliation.

d) The Council approved the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the AGAR.

e) The Council approved the Accounting Statements (Section 2) of the AGAR.

f) The Council agreed to set the period for the exercise of public rights from 1 September to 12 October 2020.

g) The Council noted the report from the Internal Auditor.

2020/41 Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position including receipts.

ACTION: Clerk to add consideration of investment options to a future agenda.

b) It was agreed to appoint Cllr. Steve Pewsey as a signatory to the bank accounts.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange.

c) The Council deferred approval of the bank reconciliation for Qtr 1 2020-2021 to the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to add to next month's agenda.

d) The Council deferred the review of the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure for Qtr 1 2020-2021 to the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to add to next month's agenda.

e) The Council authorised the payments below en bloc:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£233.52	LGA 1972 s.112
Clerk's Training	Suffolk Association of Local Councils	£7.50	LGA 1972 s.111

2020/42 Correspondence

The Council noted the correspondence received between 1st July 2020 and 23rd July 2020.

2020/43 Questions to the Chair/Items for the Next Agenda

None.

2020/44 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next virtual meeting of the Council which is scheduled for 30th September 2020 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9:05 pm.