MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 26 OCTOBER 2026 AT 3.00 PM AT KEMPSEY COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded those present of the fire safety procedures.

PRESENT: - Cllr Waller (Chairman), Cllr Stevens, Cllr Gardener, Cllr Cooke and Cllr Biddle

IN ATTENDANCE: - Sharon Dunn - Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer plus one member of the public

1. **Apologies**: - Cllr White (Personal) and Cllr Varley (Personal) - Accepted
   County Cllr Allen (Personal) - Received

2. **Declarations of Interest**

   - Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
   - To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature - None
   - To declare any Other Disclosable Interests on items on the agenda and their nature - None

3. **To Consider Written Requests from Councillors for the Council to Grant a Dispensation** (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) - None

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Notes from Public Question Time are appended to these minutes

Action

4. Finance
   a. VAT Matters - For Information

      Members were reminded that the Council had previously obtained advice from a specialist firm recommended through The County Association of Local Councils (CALC). The earlier advice had indicated that further action regarding the Option to Tax should be considered when construction of the new community and sports centre facility was closer to proceeding.

      The Clerk and Cllr Waller had subsequently held an initial meeting with a local specialist VAT adviser. This meeting had explored the Council's circumstances and the possibility of obtaining a further written opinion.

      Changes had meanwhile been made to the Council's approach to VAT recovery, particularly concerning expenditure associated with premises that were let to other organisations.

      Given the approaching planning and construction stages of the proposed new facility, together with VAT costs arising from other projects, members discussed the importance of obtaining clear, documented professional advice.

      The Council noted that a further local VAT adviser had also been approached. The Clerk had now invited both firms to provide quotations for written advice covering the VAT issues outlined in a paper circulated to members. Advice concerning business rates had also been requested.

Action

Members discussed the complexity of VAT legislation and the benefits of having a written professional opinion to support the Council's decisions and provide a clear record of the basis on which decisions can be made.
The quotations are awaited and will be brought back to Council for consideration before any further commitment is made. Clerk

b. Business Rates - Proposal for the Clerk to submit completed questionnaire to MHDC business rates enquiry.
RESOLVED: The Council agreed that the Clerk should complete and submit the business rates questionnaire to the District Council, disclosing all three public buildings operated by the Council, including the Sports Pavilion. The Clerk to complete the questionnaire to the best of her knowledge and return it promptly. Clerk

5. IT/Youth Hub
   a. Proposal to purchase a projector, furniture and Wi-Fi for the IT/Youth Hub
   Members considered equipment and furnishing requirements for the IT Hub and Youth Centre, including a projector, motorised screen, interactive touchscreen, tables and chairs.
   The proposal was modified to read 'Proposal to allocate £5000 to purchase equipment and furnishings for the IT/Youth Hub. The modified proposal was agreed and then taken to a vote. Deputy
   RESOLVED: To allocate £5,000 to purchase equipment and furnishings for the IT/Youth Hub.

6. Youth Centre
   a. Proposal to enter into a contract to sell electricity generated or stored at Kempsey Youth Centre to an electricity provider and to purchase electricity for Kempsey Youth Centre and IT/Youth Hub from the same provider.
   Members considered electricity arrangements for the Youth Centre and IT Hub, taking account of the solar panels and battery storage. The system could allow electricity to be used directly, stored for later use or exported when surplus generation was available.
   The existing electricity contract is due to expire in November 2026.
   Members expressed concern about potentially high out-of-contract rates and noted that a meter change would be required to support the proposed arrangements.
   A comparison of five providers had been undertaken. **Provider A** was recommended, with indicative rates of:
   Electricity imported: 27.5p/kWh.
   Standing charge: 65p per day.
   Electricity exported: 15p/kWh.
   RESOLVED: The Council unanimously approved proceeding with EDF Energy, via a broker, for both the purchase of electricity for the Youth Centre and IT Hub and the sale of surplus generated or stored electricity, subject to the contract terms. The Deputy Clerk to action. Deputy

7. Community Centre
   a. To consider a request to provide additional car parking spaces at the front of Kempsey Community Centre.
   Members further considered the proposal to establish two permanent nursery staff parking spaces on the grassed area at the front of the Community Centre.
   Due to the following concerns the proposal was declined:
   - concerns about the visual impact of parking
   - possible restrictions arising from the site's planning history.
   - the presence of underground utilities.
   - the effect on vehicle access, manoeuvring and deliveries.
   The Clerk to update the nursery Clerk

8. Infrastructure
   a. Proposal to authorise the Clerk to sign a contract to employ Clark & Kent Contractors to design, supply and construct a pump track to be sited on community land at Old Road South / Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey.
   The Chair proposed that this proposal be considered in confidential session as sensitive/ contractual information was due to be discussed.

Action

b. The proposal was modified to read 'Proposal to authorise the Parish Office to appoint a contractor to cut the hedgerows at the community land at Old Road South / Pixham Ferry Lane and cultivate the site for weed control. The modified proposal was agreed and then voted on. — Clerk

RESOLVED: To authorise the Parish Office to appoint a contractor to cut the hedgerows at the community land at Old Road South / Pixham Ferry Lane and cultivate the site for weed control — Clerk

c. **RESOLVED:** To authorise the Clerk to pay Malvern Hills District Council £5495 in compliance with the S106 Agreement for Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring activities. — Clerk

d. **RESOLVED:** To submit documents and apply to the Local Planning Authority to discharge Conditions 17, 18 and 19 (ecology conditions) of the approved planning application M/25/00408/FUL and to pay the required fees.

e. Proposal to submit documents and apply to the Local Planning Authority to discharge Condition 11 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) of the approved planning application M/25/00408/FUL as it applies to the construction of the pump track and to pay the required fees. **ITEM DEFERRED** until the November Parish Council meeting.

f. Members considered possible names for the community land at Old Road South / Pixham Ferry Lane. Suggestions included Kempsey Park, Riverside Community Centre, Pixham Riverside, Pixham Play Park and Pixham Park. — CW
RESOLVED: To name and register the community land at Old Road South/ Pixham Ferry Lane (Os 8482 4850) as Pixham Park.

Members discussed the workload and financial position relating to Pixham Park and the wider community-land development. It was noted that significant work remained, including the archaeological investigations, ecological requirements, construction of the pump track, sports facilities and landscaping.

9. Lengthsman & Maintenance

Following the resignation of Tim Hughes, Members considered two broad options:

1. Continue participating in the Worcestershire County Council Lengthsman scheme and recruit a replacement.
2. Withdraw from the scheme and engage a private grounds /maintenance contractor on an adhoc basis.

The advantages and disadvantages of each option were discussed.

The previous arrangement had involved approximately 24 hours per month of Lengthsman work and a further 24 hours per month of general maintenance. The discussion favoured advertising for a replacement and making the role sufficiently flexible to attract suitable candidates with a possible range of 24 to 48 hours per month to be advertised with a closing date of 30th November 2026. — Office

a. RESOLVED: The Council unanimously agreed to proceed with recruitment of a replacement following Tim Hughes's resignation.

10. Allotment Land — Clerk

Members acknowledged the research already undertaken by Mr Geens and agreed that the registration process should proceed.

a. **RESOLVED:** To accept quotation from SME Solicitors LLP for first registration of allotment land indicating legal fees of approximately £2,500–£3,000 plus VAT, together with Land Registry fees of approximately £100.

RESOLVED: Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting(s)) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press from discussions only in respect of agenda items 8.a & 11. as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

8.a Proposal to authorise the Clerk to sign a contract to employ Clark & Kent Contractors to design, supply and construct a pump track to be sited on community land at Old Road South /

Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey. **ITEM DEFERRED -** Awaiting an insurance enquiry and some outstanding contractual issues to be resolved. To feature as an agenda item in November

11. Staffing & Parish Office resources - Proposed interim staffing arrangements for discussion. Members discussed how the Parish Office would operate during the Clerk's medical leave.

The Deputy Clerk will be working in a full-time capacity, as Acting Clerk with commensurate increase in hours and salary.
It was noted that this arrangement needed to be formally documented to allow the Acting Clerk to sign legal and other official documentation, as required.
The Parish Office opening hours will be significantly restricted for the general public to limit interruptions and allow administrative work to be completed.
The workload will be reviewed in early January or possibly earlier.

Best wishes were expressed to the Clerk for a successful outcome to her operation and for a speedy recovery.

Meeting Closed at 5.06 PM

Signed …… Chairman……. … Date

Standing Orders were adjourned

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public raised concerns about agenda item 7.a. to consider a request to provide additional car park spaces at the front of Kempsey Community Centre.

Points raised included:

- Whether planning conditions associated with the conversion of the former school restricted the proposed use.
- The previous widening of the access to help manage traffic congestion on the Main Road.
- The presence of underground gas and water services and the need to protect them.
- Potential interference with vehicle manoeuvring, deliveries and access.
- Uncertainty about the precise ownership boundary.

Members acknowledged the concerns and noted that the parking proposal would be considered under the relevant agenda item.

Standing Orders were reimposed.