

# Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in  
Pirton Village Hall on 8 August 2024 at 7.45 pm

[www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk)

**Present:**

Cllr J Rogers (Chair), Cllr D Burleigh, Cllr A Goodman, Cllr S Maple, Cllr M Parkin, Cllr N Rowe, Cllr N Topliff

**In attendance:**

Mr Edward Roberts (Parish Clerk)

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**24-68     To receive and accept apologies for absence.**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**24-69     Public Participation**

One member of the public was present, along with District Cllr C Strong.

Raised from the floor was the dire state of the track leading to the Recreation Ground. Feedback from the recent car rally organisers was not positive, with numerous complaints from participants. A move to an alternative venue had also been mooted. Cllr Rogers stated that there was no immediate answer to this known problem. The owner of the track would have to be consulted before any action could be taken. Further discussion took place under agenda item 24-083.

Cllr Strong informed the meeting that there was not a great deal going on at North Herts Council, it being the holiday period. She highlighted the existence of the Council's Prosperity Funds, with grants available to community groups. The Sports and Social Club would be putting together an application as a package to include new tables and chairs.

**24-70     To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.**

Declarations of interest were received and recorded from Cllrs Burleigh and Goodman as members of Wild About Pirton, Cllrs Burleigh and Parkin as members of the Wrights Farm Working Group and Cllr Maple as a member of the PSSC.

**24-71     To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 11 July 2024 as a true and accurate record.**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 July 2024, be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed.

**24-72     To receive Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary and to approve accounts for payment.**

- a. Bank account as at 31 July 2024: Unity Trust Account £66,780.44
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £6988.91 as detailed on the monthly Finance Statement (Appendix A) be made.

**24-73     To receive the Clerk's report.**

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 8 August 2024

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| Signed: _____ |
| Dated: _____  |

The Clerk began by drawing the attention of Councillors to the Net Position financial report circulated prior to the meeting, listing expenditure against budget for the various Cost Centres.

He reported that one parking permit payment was still outstanding. A final reminder had been delivered. The deposit monies from Wellers Law had been repaid. The external audit report had been received from PKF Littlejohn with no comments. The notice of completion was now displayed on the noticeboard and the website. He would send off the £400k loan application to HAPTC on Monday 12 August.

Correspondence was ongoing with Historic England regarding the placing of a dog waste bin at the Bury gate. Alternatives to a ground spike anchor were being investigated.

A "Thank you" letter had been received from the village hall for the Council's grant towards the new kitchen costs.

**24-74 To receive the New Pavilion Working Group report.**

Cllr Maple had circulated his report (appendix C). The invitation to tender had been published at the end of July and there had been significant interest. The application to the Charity Commission had been chased and a decision had been promised for this week.

Research continued on the VAT position for the new build.

The car rally on the 31 July had been a great success, with record takings. Thanks were noted for the member of the Working Group who had supported the day with the pavilion boards and information.

The Parish Council agreed the latest version of the management structure, confirmed that the draft licence was a suitable base document to go forward and agreed that a lawyer be selected and briefed to produce a licence for the new pavilion operation.

**24-75 Planning.**

- a. To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A). Cllr Rowe ran through the current applications and explained the conclusions of the Planning Working Group. The Clerk would action the relevant submissions to North Herts.
- b. To receive an update on Blakeney Homes. Nil
- c. To receive an update on West Lane Farm. Cllr Rowe was chasing up his original planning complaint, having not received a satisfactory response. Cllr Strong agreed to support and investigate the problem.
- d. To receive an update on Wright's Farm. Cllr Parkin reported that she could find no further news on the planning application process, although the conservation officer had objected to the application on various grounds. Cllr Strong stated that she thought it would not come before North Herts Council before October. The overgrown footpaths on the site were a problem and Cllr Parkin had contacted several people at HCC, but most appeared to be on holiday.

**24-76 To receive an update on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits.**

Cllr Parkin had contacted HCC but was still waiting for a reply on any progress made. There was to be a meeting with County Cllr Barnard in the next few weeks, when it was hoped to progress matters.

**24-77 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group.**

Cllr Goodman stated there was nothing to report.

**24-78 To approve a course of action for the boundary hedges at the Recreation Ground prior to the erection of fences by the Football Club.**

This item had been deferred from July's meeting. It was agreed that commercial intervention with suitable machinery was required to cut back the hedge. Quotes were to be sought for the work from a number of contractors.

**24-79 To consider a grant application from Lea Sports PSG Football Club for the sum of £3440.00, being 50% of the cost of the pitch improvement works for 2024-25.**

The Honorary General Secretary of the club explained the background and current situation. It was agreed that the work had been to the benefit of all users of the Recreation Ground, but it had not been a cheap option.

Cllr Rowe expressed concern about the cost and the fact that this would be a continuing expense. Cllrs Rogers and Burleigh commented on the amount of money concerned and that the Parish Council did not have the funds available. The Clerk confirmed that there was £1000 remaining in the grants fund for this financial year.

Proposed by Cllr Burleigh and seconded by Cllr Rogers, that a sum of £500 be granted to Lea Sports towards the pitch improvement costs. **AGREED** by a majority, with one against.

**24-80 To agree to apply to North Herts Council for Pirton Water Tower to be listed as a building of local importance.**

Cllr Burleigh explained the background to this and had circulated a draft of her argument. The meeting agreed that she should go ahead with an application.

**24-81 To discuss the sale of the village shop and post office, noting that it is registered as an asset of community value.**

From conversations that had taken place, it appeared that for the time being the shop would continue as a business. That being the case, there was no action that the Council could take.

**24-82 To agree to replace the Pumpkin Club's gazebo, damaged by the weather at the Pirton Show. Expenditure not to exceed £250.**

Anecdotal evidence suggested that the damage to the gazebo was not extensive, but a further inspection would take place. The meeting **AGREED** to any necessary future expenditure up to a limit of £250.

**24-83 To discuss the current state of the track to the Recreation Ground and suggest solutions.**

Further to the public participation discussion, there was comment that the speed bumps along the track might also have caused problems for some of the car rally participants with low ground clearance.

Cllr Rowe suggested that the Parish Council should show willing by organising a working party to fill in the worst of the damage. This was assuming that the landowner agreed. Cllr Rogers made the point that the Council did not have the money for lasting repairs and that once construction of the new pavilion began, there would be further damage to the track. Cllr Maple would investigate the cost of MoT materiel and report back at the next meeting.

**24-84 To consider responses to the North Herts Council's Community Governance review survey, including the following questions:**

- a. Do the parish boundaries reflect you local community?
- b. Are there the right number o fparish councillors to serve your community?
- c. have there been any changes locally that mean parish arrangements should change?

**d. If your area does not have a parish council, do you want one to serve your community?**

**e. Would you prefer election dates for the parish council and the district council (North Hertfordshire District Council) to be on the same date in future?**

Cllr Rogers ran through the questions with the following responses from the Council.

- a. Yes
- b. The number of seats was correct, although we did need more councillors.
- c. No
- d. Not applicable
- e. Yes

**24-85 To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parish Paths Partnership (P3). Nil, although Cllr Burleigh commented that Wood Lane had been sensibly cut back to allow passage, but with minimum impact.
- b. S106 Projects. Nil
- c. Village Environment. Cllr Goodman reported that because of the high water level in Blacksmiths Pond it was not possible at present to deal with the goldfish problem. She expressed concern about the ditch on Walnut Tree Road where some work had been done by Highways in an attempt to alleviate the flooding problem. It appeared that the ditch had not been properly dug out. Cllr Burleigh agreed to contact HCC Highways to ascertain exactly what had been done. She would also contact the Flood Authority. Cllr Rogers would investigate the provision of a digger to clear the ditches. Cllr Parkin had canvassed opinion on the overgrown hedges in the village and it was agreed that a piece should go into the next newsletter and that something should go on Facebook, encouraging hedge cutting and neighbours helping each other out.
- d. Bury Trust. Cllr Parkin reported that some cutting back of vegetation had taken place on the corner of the Bury. The thistles had been cut and most of the cuttings removed. The Trust will try to get this done earlier next year. The Trust is actively looking at Countryside Stewardship payments and is already in receipt of payments for scrub control.
- e. Village Hall. Nil

**24-86 To suggest items for the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday 12 September 2024 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45pm.**

- a. The next newsletter
- b. The condition of the railing supports at Blacksmiths pond
- c. Maintenance of the Walnut Tree Road ditch.
- d. Repairs to the access road at the Recreation Ground.

**Meeting Closed: 9.37pm.**

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| <p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Dated: _____</p> |
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Appendices

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

Appendix B – Planning Applications

Appendix C – New Pavilion Working Group Report

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

## Pirton Parish Council

### Bank Reconciliation at 31/07/2024

|                                   |            |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| Cash in Hand 01/04/2024           |            | 79,496.56        |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| <b>ADD</b>                        |            |                  |
| Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/07/2024  |            | 42,464.94        |
|                                   |            | 121,961.50       |
| <b>SUBTRACT</b>                   |            |                  |
| Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/07/2024  |            | 55,181.06        |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| <b>A Cash in Hand 31/07/2024</b>  |            | <b>66,780.44</b> |
| (per Cash Book)                   |            |                  |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| Cash in hand per Bank Statements  |            |                  |
| Petty Cash                        | 31/07/2024 | 0.00             |
| Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust | 31/07/2024 | 66,780.44        |
|                                   |            | <b>66,780.44</b> |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| Less unrepresented payments       |            | 66,780.44        |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| Plus unrepresented receipts       |            |                  |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| <b>B Adjusted Bank Balance</b>    |            | <b>66,780.44</b> |
| <br>                              |            |                  |
| <b>A = B Checks out OK</b>        |            |                  |

|                                   |
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| Signed: _____<br><br>Dated: _____ |
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### Payments

| Code                                 | Date       | Detail                 | Supplier               | Net Cost        | VAT           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Salary                               | 08/08/2024 | Salary                 | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 693.57          |               | 693.57          |
| Tax                                  | 08/08/2024 | Tax & Employers NI     | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | 173.40          |               | 173.40          |
| Employer's NI                        | 08/08/2024 | Tax & Employers NI     | HMRC Clerk's Tax       | 15.04           |               | 15.04           |
| Room (Office Expenses)               | 08/08/2024 | Expenses               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 30.00           |               | 30.00           |
| Telephone                            | 08/08/2024 | Expenses               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 20.00           |               | 20.00           |
| Postage & Mileage                    | 08/08/2024 | Expenses               | Edward Roberts (Clerk) | 20.25           |               | 20.25           |
| Audits                               | 08/08/2024 | External Audit         | PKF Littlejohn         | 315.00          | 63.00         | 378.00          |
| Room Hire                            | 08/08/2024 | Room Hire              | Village Hall           | 21.25           |               | 21.25           |
| Street Cleaner                       | 08/08/2024 | Street Cleaning        | Tony Smart             | 208.40          |               | 208.40          |
| Village Greens                       | 08/08/2024 | Village Greens Grass   | Andrew Burton          | 320.00          |               | 320.00          |
| Grass Cutting Rec                    | 08/08/2024 | Rec Grass Cutting      | A&B Gardening          | 562.50          | 112.50        | 675.00          |
| Countryside Development Agency (CDA) | 08/08/2024 | CDA Herts Subscription | CDA Herts              | 36.00           |               | 36.00           |
| Sports Pavilion                      | 08/08/2024 | Q S Fees               | RLP Surveyors          | 3,665.00        | 733.00        | 4,398.00        |
| <b>Total</b>                         |            |                        |                        | <b>6,080.41</b> | <b>908.50</b> | <b>6,988.91</b> |

### Receipts

| Code          | Date       | Detail                     | Supplier          |               |        |
|---------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------|
| Miscellaneous | 18/07/2024 | Charity Legal Work Deposit | Wellers Law Group | 500.00        | 500.00 |
| <b>Total</b>  |            |                            |                   | <b>500.00</b> |        |

|                               |
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| Signed: _____<br>Dated: _____ |
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Appendix B – Planning Applications

|   | Reference           | Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | <b>24/01429/FPH</b> | <p>1 Bunyan Close, Pirton</p> <p><i>Single storey side/rear extension following demolition of existing detached garage.</i></p> <p><b>Comments to Tom Rea by 27 July 2024 (extended to 9 August)</b></p> <p><b>No objections</b></p> |

|    |                     |                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ii | <b>24/01468/FPH</b> | <p>34 Drovers Way, Pirton</p> <p><i>Single storey rear extension</i></p> <p>Comments to Andrew Hunter by 7 August 2024 (extended to 9 August)</p> <p><b>No objections</b></p> |
|----|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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**Planning Decisions** (for information only)

|   | Reference          | Detail                                                                                                                                   |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | <b>24/01088/FP</b> | <p>30 Shillington Road, Pirton</p> <p><i>Erection of rear shed for agricultural purposes.</i></p> <p>Permission granted 11 July 2024</p> |



## Appendix C - New Pavilion Working Group Report

**New Pavilion Working Group report to PPC 8 August 2024**

1. The Working Group has met formally 31 times to date.
2. The invitation to tender for construction and demolition was published on the Find a Tender website on 29<sup>th</sup> July. Thank you to Ted Roberts for this.
3. Tender submissions are requested by 10.00 on the 10<sup>th</sup> September.
4. Arrangements are being made to place a public notice in the Comet with the tender process details.
5. Initial indications are that we may receive 6-10 tenders.

**Costs and funding**

6. The funding gap is now around £185k although we hope to save c£50k of cost through value engineering.
7. We had expected to hear about our application to the Charity Commission by 31<sup>st</sup> July. Having chased up a response our lawyer managed to talk to a manager at the Commission. Having explained our circumstances (time pressures) he said that he would allocate it to a priority case handler on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August so we should hear their decision in week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> August.
8. Following PPC approval for seeking a £400k loan from the PWLB, the timing for submission is proposed as mid-August. This will hopefully allow time for approval before the FF grant application by 11<sup>th</sup> October, and drawdown within 12 months at a hopefully lower interest rate than currently, and in time to meet contract payments.
9. A letter has been created to send to potential sponsors/donors to seek funds/pledges of funds. We have a list of over 25 people that will be approached. We hope to raise c£50k as a result.
10. We plan to deliver a note to every house in the village seeking final donations/pledges.
11. We are seeking some initial advice on how to ensure that if the CIO contracts for the pavilion the VAT rating will be 0% as it is a new build.

**Communications**

12. The Car rally on the 31<sup>st</sup> July was a great success with record car takings over the bar of more than £5k. Also, the donations jar for the pavilion has provided £740 since April, with £205 taken out after the car show. Thank you particularly to Peter Cole for supporting the day with the pavilion boards and information.

**Management Arrangements**

13. A meeting was held on 5<sup>th</sup> August between PPC and PSSC to discuss management arrangements for the pavilion.
14. It was agreed that a pack of information should be provided to a lawyer so that a licence can be generated based on our documentation.
15. The pack of information will include – Management Structure, CIO objects, Draft licence incorporating the points in the Memorandum of Understanding.
16. The proposed management structure was reviewed and a minor amendment suggested. The revised version is attached for confirmation.
17. A revised version of the draft licence has been produced following the discussion at the PPC/PSSC meeting, and this is will be sent separately for confirmation.
18. PPC is requested to agree that a lawyer should be selected and briefed for the creation of a licence for the new pavilion operation.

**Storage**

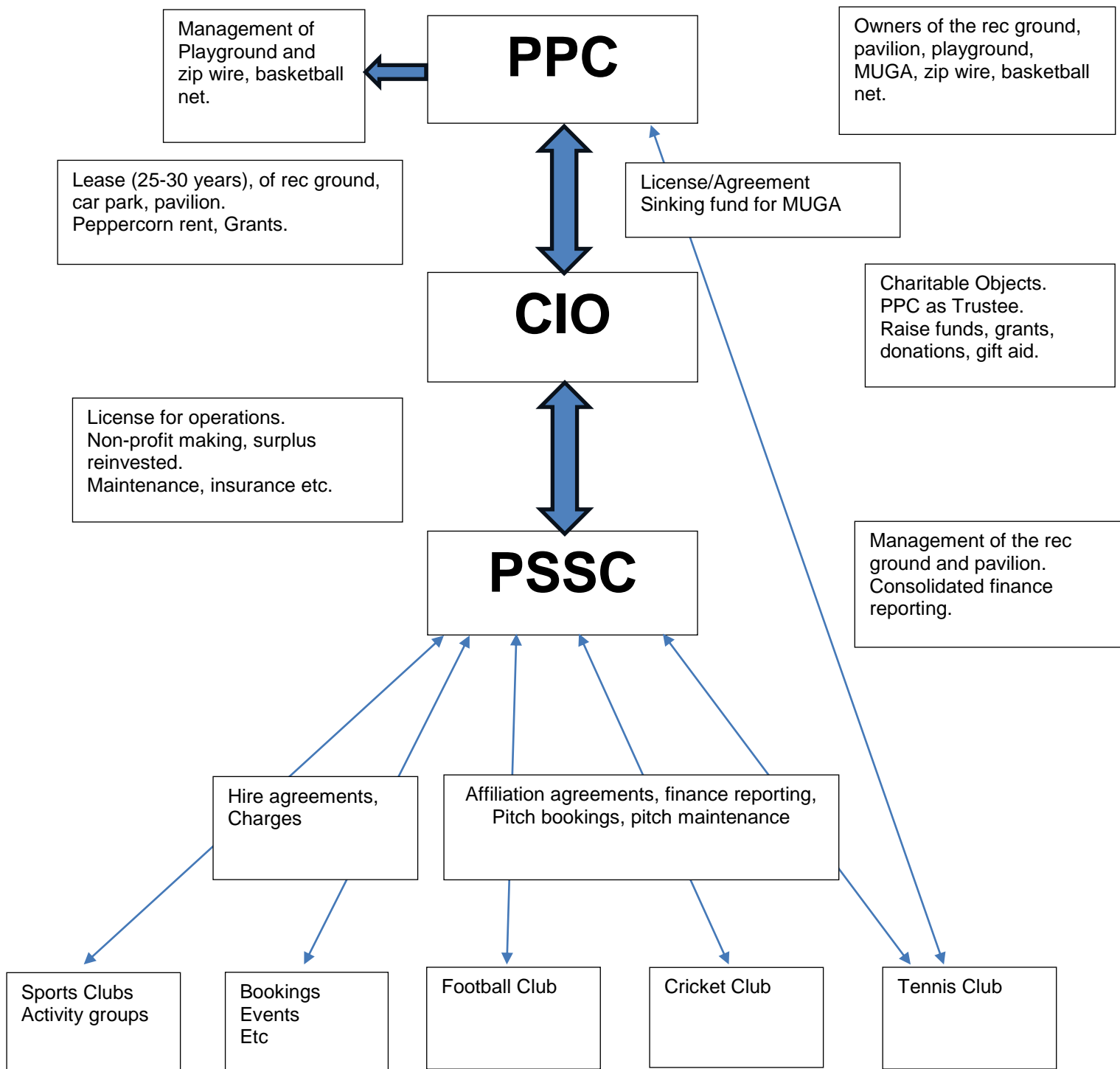
19. Two containers have now been procured and installed.
20. Quotes have been received for the further 2 containers, to be positioned near to the MUGA. Quotes were received for both new (one trip) and old (c15 years). The cheapest (new) and preferred supplier is Cleveland who supplied the first two. The total for two containers and delivery is £5435. Their old containers would be £1488 less but it is felt that the poor appearance and lower likely waterproof life make them less attractive.
21. Arrangements are being made for shipment from High Down farm to the Recreation ground.

22. Once all of the storage is in place it is proposed that a working party demolishes the storage building and that the wood is used for the Bonfire night bonfire.
  
23. The PPC is requested to:
  - a. NOTE the contents of this update.
  - b. PROVIDE any comments or direction on the matters contained in this update.
  - c. CONFIRM that the management structure is agreed.
  - d. CONFIRM that the draft licence is a suitable base document (along with the charity objects and management structure) for seeking legal drafting of a licence for the new pavilion operation.
  - e. AGREE that a lawyer be selected and briefed to produce a licence for new pavilion operation.

Simon Maple

# Management structure for the Recreation Ground

## V4



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| Signed: _____ |
| Dated: _____  |