

PETERCHURCH WATER SUPPLY SOCIETY

Minutes of AGM 10th May 2025

Held at The Boughton Arms at 11am

Present

Mrs Carole Powell (CP) Committee member

Mr Steven Phillips (SP) WQCO

Mr Chris Richardson (CR) Vice Chair

Mr Allan Gibbs (AG) Chair

Mrs Hannah Price (HP) Treasurer

Miss Samantha Metcalfe (SM) Secretary

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from

Eva Morgan, Simon Thorpe, Anna Powell, Andrew Oliver, Richard Strong, Johnny Scrimegour, Bob Barnard, John Fisherdon, Francis Harvey, Greg Warwick and Valerie Vaughn.

AG opened the meeting and thanked attending members for coming to the meeting and introduced his self, further commenting on 2025 progress so far and then asked members to introduce their selves.

Ian McCulloch questioned the order of the AGM agenda, querying elections of officers taking place before the open forum in case of gratitude wishing to be given.

Committee members introduced their selves.

2. Minutes of 2024 AGM.

These were placed in the notice boards, Hub and were available electronical if requested.

AG stated communication via text messages were now available for 2025. Postal services will be reduced to the increase of cost and gave thanks to Greg Warwick for hand delivering and saving the committee money.

Chris Hendy requested confirmation on a sum of money missing a decimal point within a report. HP to discuss and correct.

3. Chairmans report

AG read out report.

Peterchurch Water Supply Society

Chair Report. AGM 2025.

It has been another very busy year for PWSS. Much further work has been completed with regard to the modernisation programme. This will be my last AGM as Chair. It has been an eventful few years and a privilege to serve the Peterchurch Community.

Serving in a number of Committees I`m always struck by the self-congratulation that some reports indulge in. I`m probably going to be guilty of that, since I feel strongly that the Society would have ceased to function were it not for the efforts of the Committee. That would have left all those on the PWSS supply without water and the task of connecting to Welsh Water – not a cheap or easy option.

Many people assisted in this renewal process, but our two engineers, Chris Richardson and Steve Phillips, have worked very hard to both project manage and actually complete sections of the complex work. All this to a very high standard and our sincere thanks goes to them. Many others have supported this and to mention just one – Johnny Scrimgeour, a past Chair, was very proactive in gaining a generous grant from Herefordshire Council which enabled us to purchase a second large reservoir tank at St. Peter`s Well site.

Many thanks all on the Committee for their support and help.

You will hear a Maintenance & Modernisation report later in this AGM in greater technical detail. Briefly, however, we will now have a modern, up to date, system that is both robust and efficient. It has been inspected by the Authority and received with enthusiasm. It is fit for purpose and will finally take PWSS into the 21st Century.

You will understand, I hope, that the work completed was absolutely necessary. Firstly, to ensure that a safe and reliable water system prevailed. Secondly, to comply with Authority regulation. We were falling short in a variety of respects whilst operating a supply that no longer complied with statutory requirements.

Our modernisation programme has been delayed since we were prevented from connecting the final links in pipework to the Hinton line. The landowner of the adjoining field refused to give permission to do so.

This unexpected problem meant we had to use a different route which involved much more work and expense. This has delayed the completion of the project. At the time of writing we are hopeful for a June/July 2025 date for final completion.

We are placing a multiple text message service provider on our system. This will enable us to text all members simultaneously in the event of an emergency. It will only function efficiently if everyone submits their mobile phone number. These will be held securely and confidentially. They will only be used for this service by PWSS. If members do not tender their numbers please do not complain about lack of communication.

You will be aware that Welsh Water will increase its rates from April 2025 to March 2026 by 27%. This would mean an average property would presently pay £503.00 rising to £639.00. We had hoped to freeze our rates, but inflation has continued to affect the cost of materials. Specifically, the delay in re routing the supply to Hinton has proven expensive and was not something we expected. Our reserves are low and we urgently need to create a contingency. The rate rise will compare very favourably with that from Welsh Water but will indeed be a necessary rise. There will be specific details of the new rates, and a vote to support them, later this meeting.

I would finally like to thank members for their support and encouragement over this difficult period. I'm aware that all anyone wants is a reliable supply of safe water. The Committee understand that, but unlike our fellow suppliers we are all volunteers running a very small operation. The CEO of Welsh Water received a salary of £355,000 in 2024. With various bonus payments this ended up as £489,000 for that year. All this in spite of being rated one of the worst performing water boards in the UK. The previous years salary, 2022 was £792,000. We, at PWSS, are in a different league altogether, but we are dedicated to providing a professional service.

Allan Gibbs. PWSS Chair. April 2025.

Ian McCulloch questioned information being submitted electronically was not a good idea and what happens if the internet is not in operation or numbers are not present.

HP stated information is requested yearly and if given will be up to date and present.

Ian McCulloch further suggested a group of people should be in place to pass on information such as contaminated water to neighbours instead of using technology.

AG reminded the meeting is to be kept polite and a dispute is being dealt with separately.

Chris Hendy enquired why was there an issue regarding a new pipe being laid on land and why was it having to be rerouted.

AG and SP stated the current pipe was never connected making it not legal to request it being replaced due to works start and stopping previously.

Rhodri Flanagan questioned what the original source of communication was used within the committee and agreed that the new text message seems very viable.

4. Treasurers Report

HP read and explained report.

(in put Report)

Ian McCulloch questioned if the £1800 cost due to water testing from a complaint could be challenged. HP confirmed not possible.

Chris Hendy questioned if PAYE was included.

HP confirmed the PAYE in question was before her time and is discuss with accountants.

Bank balances were discussed and stated bills are awaiting to come in.

Robert Metcalfe questioned if households and businesses were charged the same amount.

Stated that he was part of the group who installed the water pipe for the church and questioned if the hub was billed as the water provided to graveyard users was free so does this mean the hubs business is using free water. Could a water meter be put in place to separate usage.

Committee confirmed they are not charged and would go to vote to introduce fee.

For – 10 Against – 0 Abstain – 2

Going forward the Hub will be billed alongside all other business users.

5. Maintenance Report

AG commented the amazing work carried out by CR and SP has enabled the system to be viable.

SP read out report.

(Insert report)

6. PWSS Upgrades programme/report

CR read out report.

(Insert report)

Dave Reece commented his hose pipe pressure is very poor.

CR confirmed as he is at the end of the line it is likely the case as the system is gravity fed.

Discussion involving a pump being installed for that end of the system occurred and possibilities of pricing and grants will be in looked in to once current works are completed.

Ian McCulloch questioned why a sediment filter was required.

CR and SP explained due to surface water getting in the system due to a wall not correctly being installed previously has caused issues so needs to be corrected and Gillian Armitage has requested the filter be in placed

Chris Hendy questioned if the tanks In a photo on the report were solar batteries and to help with costs.

CR stated no they are not and the cost of a solar system would be a huge but worth exploring in the future.

7. Increase of rates 2025/2026

The suggestion of an increase of 10% over all bills was disclosed.

Discussion of a lower rate took place however stated the committee had discussed other options and currently this is best for the committee in case of emergencies etc.

Further discussion took place regarding payment plans, these are already in place and stated on the bills.

For – 5 Against – 3 Abstain – 0

8. Election of officers and committee members.

AG questioned if anyone wished to step down. No one stepped down.

Vote for Treasurer, Chair and Secretary

For – 9 Against- 0 Abstain- 0

AG stated he will continue until a new chair is found and would like to see current works completed.

Robert Metcalfe commented It is a difficult job requiring hard work and often unpaid.

9. Open forum.

AG requested all comments are kept within a 4 min period per member and more complex issues can be discussed separately.

Chris Hendy thanked Greg Warwick for keeping him up to date with issues. Also requested if the emergency contact maybe disclosed in regard to no water etc.

AG stated the website is being taken over by a new person and will be functioning correctly once refreshed as well as mass text messaging is now in place.

Ian McCulloch remarked on the current state of the well site and how walkers are disappointed with its current state.

CR stated contractors are still completing work so once this is finished and if funds allow landscaping will take place and the committee which to enable visitors to have access to the wells head with information boards in place.

10. AOB

Robert Metcalfe thanked the committee for there work.

Meeting closed at 12:03pm