

**649**  
**MINUTES of THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**in PICKMERE VILLAGE HALL**

**5<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

- 1.1 Present** AS (Chair), AB, PD, SF, SR, HS, CT;  
**Apologies** CEC Cllr K Parkinson (KP), PCSO Darroch  
**Public** 15 members of the public

**2. Minutes**

- 2.1 Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 were agreed.

**2.2 Matters arising from Minutes –**

**5** CT asked if there had been any feedback from KP as to the various highway matters referred at the last meeting; the Clerk replied in the negative. CT referred to a continuing blocked gully problem outside the former Elms PH site.

**8.4** In answer to AB the Clerk said that he had written to CEC requesting a meeting to discuss the issues surrounding the possible preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish.

**At this point the Chair suggested that in view of the number of members of the public attending the meeting to discuss the Cheshire Showground matter (9.11) that it be brought forward in the agenda until after item 5.2. This was agreed.**

- 3. Statement by Proper Officer (Clerk)** – the Clerk made a statement in response to past requests from one member of the public that members of the Parish Council who were also members of the Pickmere Community Group (PCG) should not speak or vote on matters in respect of the Community Group. The Clerk outlined the nature of the structure of the PCG and made reference to the Nolan principles of public life, the Council's Code of Conduct and the Council's Standing Orders. He concluded that there was no formal membership of the PCG, and that informal members or helpers, which included all or virtually all of the parish council, need not declare any particular interest in PCG matters being discussed at a Council meeting. He further stated that, in the context of the various factors he outlined, while officers or committee members of the PCG might wish to declare a personal non-pecuniary interest in PCG matters being discussed at council, he saw no overriding reason why such persons should not speak or vote on such matters at Council meetings. (Later in the meeting the Clerk pointed out for information that all of the officers/committee members of the PCG who were also Parish Councillors had properly declared this particular personal interest on their Register of Interests form which is lodged with CEC.)

- 4. Declaration of Interests** – SF, AB, SR and CT declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in item 9.4. AB declared a similar interest in item 9.5,

## **5. Open Forum and PCSO**

**5.1 Open Forum** The majority of members of the public attending were apparently present to express concern about the recent licence application for a large music festival-type event next July at the Cheshire Showground (CSG). In summary, the following comments were made by several individuals; all expressed concern about the likely levels of nuisance of various sorts that would be anticipated were this event to proceed:

- At the last large festival held at the CSG this summer this resident, who lives close to the site, evidenced persons urinating in hedges; saw substantial problems in vehicles entering and exiting the site, as well as noise nuisance, on and off-site litter problems etc.
- Requests the PC to oppose this licence application because of the nuisance it will cause and the extensive activities likely to take place at unsocial hours. Request that the PC write to the CSG itself to express extreme concern at the direction the Show Society appears to be taking in hosting large events that give rise to significant nuisance to the local community. Reference was made to the Biker event (problem of rival biker gangs and personal violence off-site), the travellers event (on and off-site nuisance and offence), Truckfest – excessively loud noise generation. CSG management phones not answered when residents were seeking to complain.
- Concern at the long potential spread of the event and the very lengthy hours of operation of music etc that was included in the application. This event might well coincide with e.g. junction improvement works on M6 J19, which means that traffic chaos is inevitable.
- CEC should bear in mind its own strategic aims – improving the environment for/wellbeing of its residents, reducing crime, etc. If the event does proceed CEC must ensure they properly monitor and enforce legislation for which they are responsible. CEC should consider the impact of the proposal on the local community. Referred also to the CEC criteria relating to the licensing of events.
- In the context of its articles and objectives, and its charitable status, is the Cheshire Agricultural Society actually allowed to operate events such as this, or is it solely permitted to run the Cheshire Show?

Another resident welcomed the Clerk's statement (at item 3 above). He made reference to the new bollards erected at Jacob's Way being plastic and suggested this was contrary to the Council's support for 'Plastic free Pickmere'. He was advised that the bollards were in fact recycled plastic and their use was not therefore contrary to PfP principles, which are primarily aimed at reducing and preventing the use of single-use plastic.

**5.2 Report from PCSO** The PCSO was not present but her report of no crime events in Pickmere in the past month was noted.

## **6. Report from Cheshire East Councillor Parkinson – nil**

**9.11 Proposed Premises licence – Cheshire Showground** The discussion took place in the context of the public forum above. The Clerk pointed out that there was some confusion since

the initial licence application had not been accepted by CEC as it was 'invalid'. It was thought that a revised application had been registered, but this was not completely clear. However, it did seem clear that one way or the other there would be a valid application under consideration during this week.

CT described his visit to the municipal offices in Macclesfield to view the application, and the unacceptable obstacles imposed by CEC on this process about which he had written to CEC. He sought to clarify to the meeting that although the dates referred to in the application covered a period of several weeks, the focus of the application was a three-day festival 'Stratosphere Festival', with the periods to each side used for set-up and dismantling. A figure of 9999 potential attendees was referred to in the application. There was no mention in the application of how potential aspects such as toilet provision, provision for camping, litter collection, etc etc would be made.

SF commented on the apparent youth and inexperience of the two applicants to organise a festival such as seemed to be proposed.

AS had spoken to a manager of the Showground who stated that there was only a tentative booking for a three-day event, and that he was not aware of a licence application having been submitted. AS expressed concern that the application made reference to potential noisy activity over a period of several weeks, and that the application is in many ways vague and undetailed. He proposed objections not only to the event as a whole but also to this type of event being held at all on this site. In addition to the submission of objections to the proposed licence he proposed making contact with the Show Society's very senior management and sending them a copy of the licence objections. The grounds of objection were very much along the lines of the criticisms made by residents (see above) and the Clerk had already started to draft such a document. This was agreed.

Following a request made by a resident present at the meeting, it was agreed that the PC's objection would be placed on the Council's website, together with a note of the key personnel at CEC and at the Cheshire Show Society to whom the objection was to be copied. CT also requested that the Council object to CEC about the licence advertisement and inspection process. This was agreed.

## **7. Finance**

**7.1 Current financial position** – the monthly financial summary was noted.

**7.2 New payments** – Council approved the payments on the schedule to which was added a reimbursement to SF of a payment of £35 for flowers for a long-established resident of the village who had recently moved away.

**7.3 Budget 2020-21** – the proposed budget was agreed and members unanimously agreed to request CEC for an unchanged precept figure of £13,650 for the year 2020-21.

## **8. Planning matters**

**8.1 Planning application update** – the schedule of planning matters was noted.

**8.2 Spinks Lane** – the Chair reported on the meeting he and the Clerk had attended with senior councillors of CEC at the request of the Parish Council. The identity of the various CEC Portfolio holders had changed with last May's district council elections, and the Chair of the PC was seeking to secure CEC's confirmation that the resolution of the Spinks Lane problem remained at the top of CEC's priorities when that Council was able to take action on unauthorised traveller sites. The CEC representatives agreed that this remained the case. The report was noted.

## **9. Reports from Clerk and from Councillors**

**9.1 CEC Draft Environmental Strategy** – SF and HS could not understand the absence of any mention of HS2 and Manchester Airport in this strategy, and that the strategy should align with e.g. the Council's economic strategy. The Clerk was asked to respond accordingly to CEC.

**9.2 Memorial benches** – AB/SF had reviewed the potential for locating any further benches that might be requested, bearing in mind that it was considered that there was no capacity for further benches to be located at the IROS. Two potential locations were suggested – the Clover Drive play area and a site at the top of Clover Drive. These possibilities were agreed for future use if required.

**9.3 Risk assessment** – the initial draft detailed risk assessment for various parts of the Council's property ownership was agreed and also agreed was the establishment of a small working group to consider and make recommendations on the elements identified as requiring further consideration. AB and SF agreed to consider this with the Clerk.

**9.4 Pickmere Community Group request to erect event posters** – this was agreed subject to the content and form of the poster for each event being agreed with the Chair and/or Clerk prior to its erection.

**9.5 Criminal damage at the IROS** – report noted.

**9.6 Replacement of sign – play area** – report noted.

**9.7 Plastic free Pickmere - Accreditation** – item withdrawn from agenda.

**9.8 CEC litter collection services** – the Clerk was asked to write to CEC appropriately praising the quality of this service, based upon experience of their emptying of litter bins and collection of litter at the IROS and elsewhere in the parish. A member asked whether CEC have the equivalent of a 'Community Champion' award, which would be appropriate for this service. HS has spoken to CEC litter pickers working on Pickmere Lane who have carried out this process 5 times during 2019 whereas in a normal year they do it only twice. The pickers' opinion was that

a high proportion (50%) of the litter picked emanated from McDonalds restaurant – presumably at Northwich. The Clerk was asked to write to that company about this problem.

**9.9 Report back from SLCC Cheshire conference** – report noted.

**9.10 Complaint re various highway matters** – report noted.

**9.11** See above

## **AGENDA PART B – CONFIDENTIAL**

The Council resolved that members of the public should be asked to leave the meeting at this point to enable discussion of confidential matters.

**10. Quotation for replacement sign – Play Area** – quotation agreed.

**Clerk: Jack Steel**

**Next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019**