

MINUTES of THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING in PICKMERE VILLAGE HALL

8th May 2019

Present: AS, AB, SF, SR, HS, 4 members of the public

Apologies: Nil

1. Chairperson's Report for 2017-8

The Chairperson summarised the content of his annual report which will be posted on the Parish Council website. The report was accepted unanimously.

2. Elections

2.1 Declarations of Acceptance of Office - The Clerk confirmed that Declarations of Acceptance of Office had been received and appropriately witnessed in respect of all elected councillors.

2.2 Election of Officers - Cllr. Shore was unanimously elected as Chairperson for the ensuing year (SR nominating and SF seconding the motion).

2.3 Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer – AS proposed and the meeting unanimously agreed the appointment of the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer.

2.4 Appointment of Planning Committee – AS proposed that since the Parish Council currently comprised 5 members, the full Council should deal with planning matters; meetings would be called as and when required if planning consultation deadlines are to be met. Should further members be co-opted to Council in the ensuing year, the question of the appointment of a Planning Committee will be reviewed. This was unanimously agreed.

644

MINUTES of THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING in PICKMERE VILLAGE HALL

8th May 2019

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Present | AS (Chair), AB, SF, SR, AS |
| Apologies | PCSO E Darroch |
| Public | 4 members of the public |

AGENDA PART A

2. Minutes

2.1 Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the meeting of 2nd April 2019 were agreed.

2.2 Matters arising from Minutes –

6.2 Payments -The Clerk noted that only one payment between meetings had been made – for VH cleaning during April.

7.1 Planning matters - The Clerk noted that he had received a response to Council's request that the developer reopen the public footpath across the Elms site, in the light of no building activity. Construction work had now recommenced however, and therefore reopening would presumably have to await completion of the scheme.

9.10 Calor Rural Community Fund – The Clerk had sought to prepare an application for grant but this had revealed that grant awards were only where there was no mains gas supply to the building in question, thus an application in respect of the VH was ineligible.

10 Erection of fence rear of Jacob's Way – The Clerk reported that the fence had now been erected and a hedge planted.

3. Declaration of Interests – nil

4. Open Forum and PCSO

4.1 Open Forum A member of the public noted that Mere Lane was 'severely sub-standard', that the IROS was a parish resource, and that the site should not be used as a commercial site. Exceptionally the Chair responded in clarifying that the Parish Council has no intention of creating any form of commercial site on the IROS.

A second member of the public, noting the recent erection of parking control signs at the IROS, agreed that cars should not be parked for any length of time on the IROS parking spaces but felt that the signs were an excessive response to the problem. He considered the spaces to be a 'village asset'. He expressed thanks to those volunteers (which include parish councillors) who had tidied the IROS after the recent good weather and influx of visitors. He went on to comment on the condition of the VH grounds and wondered whether there was a deliberate Council policy of 'running the VH down' so as to increase pressure to bring about its replacement. The Chair again responded by confirming that there was no such intention (*n.b. see further discussion below re VH decoration works (item 10.3) and the IROS parking issue (10.6).*)

4.2 Report from PCSO The PCSO was not present and had sent apologies. The Clerk noted that, in accordance with a previous Council resolution, a letter had been sent to Cheshire Police in respect of the lack of a Police presence at Council meetings and in the village generally, and that a reply had been received; that further a Police officer was seeking to speak to the Council Chair about police presence in the village, and in addition that the PCSO had written asking if she could hold her surgery from time to time at the IROS when Sunday teas were being served. Members expressed no objection to this suggestion, though it was principally a matter for the Community Group, since it was that Group that ran the Teas.

5. Administrative matters

5.1 Co-option of Councillors – The Chair proposed that in the light of 3 places remaining unfilled out of the 8 available for parish councillors after the recent election, the Council should consider co-opting councillors to one or more of these places. Members unanimously agreed to this proposal. Members went on to discuss the procedures for considering persons to fill these places and agreed unanimously to the suggestions laid out in the Appendix to the report on this item, with the alteration that to advertise the vacancies, a notice will be placed on Council noticeboards. The Council therefore resolved that a Co-option Committee be formed (the membership was agreed to be the Chair, SF and SR), and that power be delegated to that Committee to consider applications for possible co-option, to interview applicants as necessary (or a shortlist dependent upon numbers of applications received), and to make decisions on who should or should not be co-opted, reporting their decisions for information to a future meeting of the Council. The interviews will be held in private and it was emphasised again that there is no requirement on the Committee or Council to publicise the reasons for any decisions that may be made and no requirement to fill any or all of the places.

5.2 Programme of meetings for 2019-20 – two variations from the normal pattern of first Tuesday of the month were incorporated and agreed – 9th July instead of 2nd July (SR may have to apologise for non-attendance at that meeting due to an existing commitment) and 14th January instead of the February meeting (AB ditto). The schedule was agreed.

5.3 Councillor training – the schedule of ChALC training sessions for 2019-20 was noted and members encouraged to attend whichever courses were relevant to their needs.

5.4 Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct - the Standing Orders appended to the report (incorporating Financial regulations) were unanimously approved as an interim measure pending a more comprehensive review to be completed before the end of 2019 taking into account the Model SOs published by NALC. In addition the Code of Conduct for Members also appended, as published in 2019 by Cheshire East Council, was adopted by this Council.

5.5 Membership of outside bodies – authorisation was given to continuing subscription payments to the bodies mentioned for the ensuing year.

5.6 GDPR legislation - Council resolved to adopt the policies and other documents appended to the report and agreed that the relevant policies be loaded onto the council's website, and further resolved that the Clerk should continue to act as the Council's Data Protection Compliance Officer.

5.7 Inspection of Clover Drive play area – the report was noted but because SR had been re-elected to the Council, and is content to continue inspecting the play area on a weekly basis, it was resolved that reservation of a place on the training course was not necessary (also as SR was unable to attend on that day due to work commitments).

6. Report from Cheshire East Councillor – the Clerk does not have contact details for the newly elected district councillor and has not yet been contacted by her. The Clerk was asked to welcome her election (via CEC) and to request contact details.

7. Finance

7.1 Annual Governance provisions and procedures for audit – the Clerk noted that the internal auditor had certified that the Council's financial procedures and controls are compliant with requirements. He then presented the Annual Governance Statement for 2018-19, reading each requirement individually. Members agreed each of the individual statements, approved the Statement and authorised the Chair and Clerk to sign the relevant return. The Clerk subsequently introduced the Accounting Statement for 2018-19. Members unanimously approved this statement, certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review under relevant legislation, and authorised the Chair and RFO to sign and submit the relevant certificate of exemption. The Council will consider the Asset Register at its next meeting. Finally, the Council approved the proposals for providing appropriate publicity to its accounts for 2018-19.

7.2 Current financial position – the monthly financial summary was noted.

7.3 New payments – Council approved the payments on the schedule, to which was added a sum of £96 incl. VAT in respect of the PAT testing of electrical items at the VH and Pavilion, which was carried out last week.

The Clerk also noted that since two of the Council's cheque signatories had retired from the Council, only two remained – the Chair and the Clerk. Accordingly, as two signatures are required for the payment of cheques, the Clerk's expenses for the month of April whilst authorised by Council could not be paid until such time as a third signatory was added to the Bank's list. Members agreed to add HS as a third signatory, and the Clerk was asked to organise this addition with the bank (which is likely to take some weeks to arrange).

8. Report from Planning Committee

8.1 Planning application update – The Clerk circulated a note of the current position with regard to planning matters in the parish, which was noted. In particular it was noted that the appeal against refusal of planning permission for appn. 17/6399M (Erection of two dwellings, Mereview Farm Park Lane/Mere Lane) had been dismissed, and that appn. 19/1285M (Erection of one dwelling, land adj. Mulberry House, Frog lane) had been withdrawn by the applicant.

9. Review of assets – the Chair referred to his report for the year 2018-19 and the question of how to take forward the asset review that has concerned the Council for some time. He suggested that an informal meeting of members should be arranged to discuss the issues involved, following which the matter would be brought back to the Council for formal discussion and decisions. The Clerk was asked to arrange such an informal meeting.

10. Reports from Clerk and from Councillors

10.1 Request for 30mph limit on Pickmere Lane to be extended – the request for support in requesting CEC to extend the 30mph zone was discussed and varying views were expressed. It was agreed that CEC should be requested to carry out vehicle speed monitoring on the length of Pickmere Lane between Style Matters and the 30mph zone, and in addition ally that with data from that council's SIDs (which data the Parish Council had previously requested on a number of occasions) as a means to consider what further traffic calming measures might be appropriate on this dangerous stretch of road.

10.2 Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting – in view of the recent elections it was considered desirable to look to arrange this meeting for a date in October. It was hoped to decide upon a firm date at the next meeting of the Council.

10.3 Internal decoration of the Village Hall – Council has previously decided to proceed with the sanding/varnishing/renovation of the VH floor, and following discussion decided to seek quotations for the internal decoration of the VH. The Clerk reported that the Council's application for grant funding from Manchester Airport Community Trust Fund to renew the chairs at the VH had been refused, on the basis of a policy decision apparently made earlier in the meeting of that Fund's trustees, that precept-funded bodies should not be eligible for grant from the Fund. However, an indication was given by officers that a similar application from a group(s) or association(s) using the hall might have more success. It was agreed that the Clerk should discuss with representatives of the Pickmere Wine Club and Pickmere WI whether perhaps a joint application from those bodies could be submitted.

10.4 Activities near the lake and problems arising – SR reported that following the recent influx of visitors to the lake and IROS, he, with other local volunteers, had collected 19 sacks of litter over two days. He proposed that the Council could establish a resource of litter pickers, sacks, gloves etc which might be made available to volunteers by means of a lockable cabinet, so that individual walkers near the lake could use the equipment on a day to day basis to help clear litter. He was asked to present a package of possible measures, with costing, to the next meeting of the council. In the meantime, expenditure of up to £50 on equipment was authorised.

SR further reported that a 'Village Clean-up' event is to be held on Sunday 2nd June and volunteers are welcomed. The event will commence at 10.00 a.m. with complimentary refreshments at the Red Lion PH. HS/SR requested that an item on 'Plastic Free Pickmere' should be included on the Council's June agenda.

10.5 Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund – the report was noted, including that any grant aid would not exceed 20% of eligible costs, that most of the funding of the project should already have been secured, and that the minimum grant award would be £10,000, meaning that the project cost would have to be a minimum of £50,000. SF suggested that this be borne in mind in the asset review discussions to be held in pursuance of the decision made at item 9 above.

10.6 Car parking control at the IROS – the Chair reported on the reasoning behind the erection of the car parking notices at the IROS, and the involvement of a parking control company. This had followed considerable discussion at council (see previous minutes) as to how to deal with the frequent parking of vehicles on these spaces for continuous periods of days, weeks and, recently, months. No other practicable method of dealing with the problem could be found. The wording of the notices reflected the needs of the car parking control company in terms of its ability to enforce the requirement that vehicles be not parked on the spaces between 10.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. The Chair emphasised that these spaces were provided specifically to serve the IROS, as noted in the s106 Agreement that brought about their provision, and that there was never any intention that they be used to supplement local residents' own parking provision.

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.

11. Minor works at the IROS – Council confirmed the actions of your Chair and Clerk in authorising these works and authorised payments in accordance with the report

12. Payment of business rates for the Pavilion – the Clerk confirmed that the very longstanding historical anomaly in respect of the payment of rates for the Pavilion had now been resolved with Cheshire East Council, at no cost to the Parish Council.

Clerk: Jack Steel

Next meeting: 4th June 2019