

646
MINUTES of THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
in PICKMERE VILLAGE HALL

9th July 2019

- 1.1 Present** AS (Chair), AB, PD, SF, SR, HS
Apologies Cllr K Parkinson (KP)
Public 2 members of the public

1.2 Co-options to Council

The Chair welcomed Cllr P Dobson (PD) to the meeting following his co-option to the Council. The Clerk noted that discussions were proceeding with candidates for the two remaining vacancies on the Council.

2. Minutes

- 2.1 Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the meeting of 4th June 2019 were agreed.

2.2 Matters arising from Minutes –

5. The Clerk noted that presumably largely as a result of intervention by CEC Cllr Parkinson, CEC officers appeared to have been more active in dealing with several matters discussed at the June meeting, including cleaning gullies and two outstanding possible planning enforcement issues.

9.2 SR reported that litter picking equipment had now been purchased as agreed together with a storage box.

9.9 Tidy-up of VH grounds – SR said that he would make a request via Facebook for volunteer parish residents to help form a working party to tidy further the VH grounds.

- 3. Declaration of Interests** – SR declared a personal interest in the planning application 19/2660M (Rose Cottage) in that he is friends with the applicant.

4. Open Forum and PCSO

- 4.1 Open Forum** Nil

- 4.2 Report from PCSO** PC Steven Kaminski introduced himself as the recently appointed Rural/Wildlife Officer for the Knutsford area. He has quite a wide area to cover and will deal primarily with these issues but also with day to day crimes. He works in conjunction with PCSO Emma Darroch. It was agreed that a date would be arranged for the Chair and Clerk to meet SK and to walk around part of the parish to introduce him to some of the current potential policing issues. He would raise the issue of speeding vehicles with the PCSO and will request that she

carries out a 'Trucam' speed check on the 30mph section of Pickmere Lane. Any vehicles found exceeding the speed limit with such a check will receive speeding notices.

- 5 Report from Cheshire East Councillor Parkinson** – The Chair noted that a lengthy note had been received from Cllr Parkinson discussing the various matters that had been referred to her.

6. Finance

- 6.1 Current financial position** – the monthly financial summary was noted. Members were happy to receive the shortened summary, which shows the current financial situation compared with the annual budget.

- 6.2 New payments** – Council approved the payments on the schedule, to which was added an additional amount of £35 payable to CHALC in relation to the course due to be attended by AB. SF requested to attend the same course.

- 6.3 Land Asset Funds** – Members noted the report and agreed that the sums recommended be transferred to the General Land Asset fund and the Play Area/Clover Drive fund.

- 7. Planning application update** – The Clerk circulated a summary of the current position as to planning matters in the parish, which was noted. Comments were made as follows in respect of the current planning applications:

- 19/2660M - Extensions, Rose Cottage, Park lane – CEC to be asked to take any comments made by neighbours into account;
- 19/2768M - Replacement stable etc buildings and new manege, Deansland, Pickmere Lane – no objections subject to:
 - A condition to ensure that the existing stable etc buildings are removed from the site should this application be implemented;
 - A condition restricting the use of the proposed stables and manege to personal use by the occupiers of Deansland, and not for any commercial purpose.
- 19/3024M - Rear extension, Fernhill Cottage, Frog Lane – CEC asked to ensure that the contents of the CEC report and decision on planning application 14/2001M are taken into account in considering this current proposal. The earlier planning permission referred to is believed to be that for the original conversion of these formerly business premises to dwellinghouse.

In relation to the potential enforcement matter at Frog Lane, CEC were to be asked to ensure that their actions should take into account the planning permission granted on appeal for the erection of a large house and outbuildings on this land.

A member queried the current position as to Spinks Lane. Members agreed that, particularly in the light of changes at CEC following the recent elections, a further request should be made to discuss with senior Councillors of CEC the continuing problem of Spinks Lane. In addition,

in making this request, reference should be made to the unauthorised use of Spinks Lane by users of the Spinks Lane land on quad bikes.

8. **Review of assets - the way forward** – members agreed to the arrangement of a meeting to explore informally possible ways forward in respect of this matter. Possibilities for decision were to be brought back to a future council meeting.
9. **Reports from Clerk and from Councillors**
 - 9.1 **Data Protection fee** – report noted and authority given to pay the required annual fee to the Information Commissioner’s Office, if possible by direct debit.
 - 9.2 **Request for further memorial bench** – the report was noted and the Clerk asked to inform the applicant that for the moment there is no suitable location for the provision of an additional bench.
 - 9.3 **Correspondence received re existing memorial bench** – the report was noted and agreed and the Clerk was asked to respond appropriately to the correspondent.
 - 9.4 **Request for Speed survey on Pickmere Lane** – the negative response of CEC to the Council’s request was noted. HS referred to two accidents that had taken place on the national speed limit section of Pickmere Lane since the last Council meeting – one resulting in injury to an occupant of the vehicle which had overturned. The matter is to be discussed further with CEC Cllr Parkinson.
 - 9.5 **HS2 – Update and further consultation** – The Chair referred to a meeting with HS2 that he attended recently, with the proposed focus being an update on the responses to the consultation on the Written Draft Environmental Statement (WDES). However, the meeting in fact focussed solely on the proposed modifications to the HS2 project principally in the High Legh/Ashley area (but with implications for Pickmere) which have now been published for consultation purposes until September 2019. The changes involve not only some very substantial alterations in the areas mentioned, including a new grade-separated railway crossover, but also two short spurs off the HS2 line, which are designed to allow for a possible future rail link to Liverpool (as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail?) These spurs seem destined to result in blight to further areas and properties well beyond the HS2 route itself, yet apparently may not be subject to detailed public consultation in the areas affected.

The Clerk reported on his attendance at a different meeting organised by HS2 where in response to the Parish Council’s representations on the WDES the representatives of HS2 were unable (because of their operational rules) to give any detailed response to our comments. The HS2 representatives, though they provided no confirmation gave some hints that:

- The proposed embankment structure designed to carry a diverted Pickmere Lane over the new railway is to remain part of the proposals;
- The proposal that Budworth Lane will be permanently closed in conjunction with the project is to remain;

- In order to construct the embankment carrying Pickmere Lane, and the railway as it runs toward High Legh, the very many heavy construction vehicles bringing in fill material will have to use initially Pickmere Lane, and subsequently a widened School Lane and Frog Lane.
- The Parish Council's alternative method for avoiding the very large Pickmere Lane overbridge/embankment, the closure of Budworth Lane, and thus create a much reduced need for heavy construction traffic in this locality has not been accepted, though the HS2 representatives were not permitted to explain why.
- The next opportunity for public inspection of revised proposals in response to the submissions received on WDES is not likely to occur until 2020.

The meeting itself took 90 minutes to provide these few 'hints' and in large part was a waste of time and resources.

HS had coincidentally referred members' attention to a video piece about another section of the HS2 route where similar strong criticism was made of HS2 and the difficulty the public has in eliciting any worthwhile response from the HS2 organisation to representations made to them.

The Clerk was asked to respond to HS2, with copies to Esther McVey MP and also Nusrat Ghani MP (Minister for HS2) to include the following points:

- The Parish Council continues to be extremely frustrated at the lack of detailed response from the HS2 organisation to representations submitted to them. When meetings occur, there is a marked absence of detailed and meaningful response from HS2 representatives to comments made. No meaningful discussion is possible at these meetings. Comments are 'taken away' by HS2 but no response ever received. Months elapse and then a further iteration of the scheme is published with no discussion of why suggestions have been rejected. A further request is therefore made for more meaningful consultation process that would allow detailed discussion of possible alternative approaches to detailed aspects of the scheme.
- The implications of the proposals for the Ashley/High Legh area in the current formal consultation are substantial in their impact on those communities and will cause considerable additional blight in areas surrounding the HS2 proposals, and beyond.
- The altered proposals will further impact detrimentally on the wider communities including that of Pickmere and are opposed.

9.6 Plastic-free Pickmere – HS reported that the initiative is progressing; the group will shortly apply for accreditation and this Sunday's Teas by the Lake will include a fundraiser for the group. Northwich Town Council are working towards accreditation. SR suggested that the Clover Drive play area could be declared a single-use plastic-free zone. The one existing item that is single use plastic is the CEC litter bin/bag. HS will contact CEC to see if different arrangements can be made. In conjunction with the Clerk, HS and SR will investigate the erection of a sign, perhaps incorporating it with a new playground sign (the existing one being old, deteriorating and out of date). This item is to be included on the September Council agenda.

9.7 CWAC Local Plan Update – report noted

9.8 Annual Parish Meeting Update – SF noted that the date has been confirmed as Tuesday 22 October, between 6.00 pm and 8.00 pm. The Clerk is to inform the various organisations including the Methodist Church.

9.9 Car Parking issues at the IROS – the car parking signs on the Council’s parking spaces have been re-erected where they were vandalised. On car parking generally it was noted that on one good weather weekend when there was substantial on-street parking the yellow line restrictions were enforced by CEC’s officer(s). The Clerk was asked to write to CEC to thank them for their actions and expenditure last year in re-establishing these controls.

9.10 URGENT ITEM – The Chair allowed discussion of an urgent item relating to the recent partial collapse of one of the large crack willows trees adjoining the lake. These trees are prone to such events, as is pointed out in the recent tree survey carried out on the Council’s land. The Clerk had consulted with the Council’s tree consultant and certain options were suggested to secure public safety. The Chair in conjunction with the Clerk was authorised to deal with the matter appropriately, and to incur the necessary expenditure in order to do so.

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. Decoration of Village Hall – the quotation in the sum of £500 (materials to be provided) was accepted and the work authorised.

Clerk: Jack Steel

Next meeting: 3rd September 2019