

**647**  
**MINUTES of THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**in PICKMERE VILLAGE HALL**

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019**

1.   **Present**               AS (Chair), AB, PD, SF, SR, HS; Cllr K Parkinson (KP)  
      **Apologies**       PC Kaminski  
      **Public**            7 members of the public

**2.   Minutes**

**2.1   Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019 were agreed.

**2.2   Matters arising from Minutes –**

**Previous matters arising 9.2** – the litter picking equipment box is now up and running and at least one member of the public has taken advantage of it.

**Previous matters arising 9.9** – SR suggested a late November date for the Village Hall grounds clean up; he will ensure the event is advertised on Facebook and on the noticeboards.

**Item 4.2** – The Chair reported that he and the Clerk had met PC Kaminski on-site and had introduced to him the main issues affecting Pickmere on which the police might be contacted or involved.

**3.   Declaration of Interests** – SF declared a personal interest in that she is a neighbour of the planning application 19/3780M to be considered at item 7.1 below.

**4.   Open Forum and PCSO**

**4.1   Open Forum**       A member of the public noted positively that the Fun Day posters had not been fastened with plastic cable ties but that they were still laminated with plastic. He also commented that the area used for the deposit of grass cuttings at the IROS was growing in size and suggested that the Parish Council should employ a professional company to maintain the land. Finally, he made reference to the number of weeds etc growing in the highway along Park Lane, although this is the responsibility of Cheshire East Council.

A second member of the public stated that the hedge between the IROS and the extension of Mere Lane is very overgrown and asked who is responsible for hedges generally along the highways. The Chair, exceptionally, responded that responsibility lay between the landowner of the land abutting each such hedge and Cheshire East Council; the Parish Council had no responsibility unless perhaps where it owns land on one side of the hedge. The Council had contacted one landowner re an overgrown hedge on Park Lane and this has now been cut back.

- 4.2 Report from PCSO** The PCSO was not present; however, PC Kaminski had emailed to say that he intended to carry out further speed checking on Pickmere Lane, and that no police incidents had been reported for Pickmere in the last month. The Chair and PD agreed to carry out a further Community Speedwatch exercise in the near future.

Reference was made to the very recent theft of the Post Box at Cobb Lodge, Pickmere Lane. Royal Mail had reported this incident to the Police and the Royal Mail/Post Office will be dealing with the problem.

- 5 Report from Cheshire East Councillor Parkinson** – Cllr Parkinson noted the following:
- That she had had continuing discussions with CEC officers about the vehicle speed issue on Pickmere Lane;
  - With reference to the recent Traveller event at the Cheshire Showground she had subsequent discussions with the Pastor who organised the event and also with the senior manager at the Showground. The matter is further discussed at item 8.1 below.

## **6. Finance**

- 6.1 Current financial position** – the monthly financial summary was noted.

- 6.2 New payments** – Council approved the payments on the schedule, to which was added a payment of £283.20 to WAP Lawton & Son Ltd for the urgent replacement of the gatepost at the IROS (see item 8.4 below).

- 6.3 Annual Accounts 2018-19** – Council unanimously resolved to adopt the 2018-19 accounts; AB proposer and SF seconder.

- 7.1 Planning application update** – The Clerk circulated a summary of the current position with regard to planning matters in the parish, which was noted. Members in particular commented on the following planning appeal/planning applications for submission to the relevant authorities.

- **Planning appeal 19/1652M – Outline – erection of 2 dwellings, land on Park Lane opposite Frog Lane:**

Members agreed to submit similar objections and comments to those submitted on this planning application. In addition the Council was concerned that the correct design criteria may not have been used for a new vehicle access point in such a location on a rural road, on the inside of a severe bend, and forming effectively a four-way junction with Frog Lane opposite. Council had previously found the highways officer's comments on the original application unacceptable in that they applied a subjective judgement as to probable vehicle speeds which was not supported by any survey or other data. Finally, there is the unanswered question of the ownership of the Cheshire railings fronting this site, and what would become of them.

- **PA 19/3780M – Erection of 4 dwellings, land at Clover Drive:**

This site is within the Pickmere inset to the Green Belt, and there is no objection to residential development in principle. However, the site represents a housing windfall site not only in terms of CEC's housing requirements, but also in terms of housing provision in Pickmere, and members wished to see a mix of housing being provided, including social housing, not simply substantial sized houses for the open market. This view is supported by policies in the adopted Local Plan Strategy and the Draft Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Policies document.

In addition, members felt that the views of neighbours of the site were an important consideration which should be taken into account by CEC.

- **PA 19/3975M – Erection of animal shelter, land at Frog Lane:**

Reference was made to the successful planning appeal for erection of one very large house plus large outbuildings including a substantial 'workshop' which was to be used for purposes ancillary to the use of the dwellinghouse on land that is part of the 4 acres of grazing land referred to in the current application, and the apparent conflict between the proposal in the appeal case and the same applicant in this case justifying the current proposal on the basis of 4 acres of land being used essentially for agricultural purposes.

- **Sunnyside/Meadowcroft, Pickmere Lane**

Further to the potential enforcement issues at Sunnyside/Meadowcroft, the Chair noted that he had recently had further discussions with a resident of one of the existing houses. The Clerk was asked to request CEC for an update as to the enforcement situation.

## **7.2 Consultation on draft Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Policies**

Members commented particularly in relation to draft policy PG10 (Infill villages). The small extensions to what in the Macclesfield Local Plan was defined as the Pickmere Inset to the Green Belt, and in the new document as the infill village boundary, was considered problematic because it opened up the potential for future pressure on such land, or land adjacent to such extensions, to be developed. Members therefore agreed to object to such widening and considered that the current Inset boundary should be retained in the new plan.

Members welcomed the attention given in the draft plan to the problem of the absence of defined sites for travellers in the District, and the fact that CEC have not sought to allocate any such sites in Pickmere.

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

### **8.1 Recent event at Cheshire Showground** – reference was made to the recent problem also discussed above at item 5. The Chair reported on his recent discussions with the senior manager of the Showground, and the fact that liaison over the event with CEC and the Police had taken place only at the very last minute; in addition the manager had said that the event had turned out to be far larger in scale than was envisaged. The Chair emphasised the need for a process of consultation throughout the year between the Showground and the local community, the

Police and CEC etc on the programme of events, so that potential issues and problems can be raised and appropriately dealt with in advance of the events. He will pursue this proposed initiative further.

- 8.2 Plastic-free Pickmere** – HS confirmed that Pickmere was now an accredited community; the local steering group is continuing its efforts to reduce the use of single use plastics locally. Esther McVey MP had been involved in local discussions and had offered to help. Following the discussion at the July Council meeting, HS and the Clerk were in the process of seeking quotes for a replacement sign at the Clover Drive play area which would update the information on the current sign (which is in a deteriorating condition) and incorporate the PfP message. Progress will be reported back to Council in due course. HS has spoken to CEC and ANSA about the plastic dustbin bags used at the play area, and these bodies have agreed to explore the possibility of using bio-degradable bags instead.
- 8.3 Annual survey of play area** – SR had reviewed the recent annual survey which had pointed out similar low and very low risk matters to last year's report. The site is well used but is showing its age. He has recently removed the tabletop to one of the picnic tables and proposes to replace it with an appropriate timber surface. This was agreed. He suggested that there is the possibility of beginning a rolling programme of replacing equipment, with the climbing frame perhaps being the first candidate. It was agreed that he would seek initial thoughts / suggestions from appropriate specialist companies for further consideration. This item should be considered for the next Council agenda if progress is achieved.
- 8.4 Collapsed tree and replacement of gate at IROS** – The report was noted. There is a further report on the private agenda (item 9) relating to the substantial cost that would be incurred if Council wishes to remove entirely the fallen tree.
- 8.5 Protocol for marking the death of a senior national figure** – SF pointed out that this could refer to members of the Royal Family through to leading political figures etc. For Pickmere, action might be limited only to the making available of a Book of Condolence. Members asked the Clerk to contact Knutsford Town Council to request whether in such a circumstance we could direct persons wishing to sign a Condolence book to that council.
- 8.6 Energy Provider for Village Hall** – the report was noted, the Clerk pointing out that energy prices were volatile, and those offered by British Gas now were now higher than when the report was written. The potential savings to the Parish Council of switching from one provider to another were not large, and the exercise did not warrant an excessive time input. Council agreed (SR proposing, AS seconding) to delegate power to the Clerk to select a suitable provider.
- 8.7 Locations for additional memorial benches** – the report was noted and AB/SR agreed to consider options and report back.
- 8.8 Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and health and safety matters** – the report was noted.

## **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.

- 9. Various works at the IROS and Buttercup Way footpath** – the maintenance regime for the footpath and the proposal for the erection of bollards at Mere Lane/Jacob's Way suggested by the contractor were accepted and expenditure agreed.

There was a further discussion about the collapsed tree on the lake edge. The cost of removing it entirely (even if using parts of the main trunk as informal seating around the lakeside/IROS) would be substantial – far outweighing the cost of the tree surgery works carried out to make the tree structurally safe so far. Leaving the tree where it was would have ecological benefits, and also retains the character of the lake as a semi-wild area rather than an area of parkland. Following a vote, members agreed that the tree should be left as it is.

**Clerk: Jack Steel**

**Next meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019**