

657
MINUTES of THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held ONLINE

11th August 2020

AGENDA PART A

1. ATTENDANCE

Present	AS (Chair), AB, PD, SF, HS, CT
Apologies	SR, Cllr K Parkinson (CEC)
Police	Nil
Public	15 members of the public

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – Nil

3. PUBLIC FORUM – The Clerk had prior to the meeting circulated to councillors several emails received from members of the public commenting or asking questions in relation to agenda items. He summarised the comments /questions that had been received:

- Why the Council was proposing to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan;
- Why consultants needed to be used for this process?
- Why is a NP preferable to a Parish Plan?
- How is the local community to be involved in the NP process and how will the views of all residents be obtained?
- A comment that the plan should be started without any red lines.
- As to the new website there should be no loss of archive material; the site should be friendly, intuitive, well populated and will be judged on the quality of its content.

The Clerk commented on the website question that those objectives were the Council's objectives in seeking a replacement site. The question of how to deal with archive material will be dealt with in the design process and it was hoped to retain as much such material as possible.

The Clerk proposed to comment on the Neighbourhood Plan questions under the relevant part of the agenda.

4. FINANCE

4.1 Budget 2020-21 – Impacts of decisions to be made – the report commented that the potential costs of the possible Neighbourhood Plan should not impact on the Council's budget for 2020-21. The costs in relation to the possible replacement of the Council's website and the loss of income due to the Village Hall being closed as a result of the Covid19 crisis could be

accommodated through adjustment to the earmarked sums included within the Council's financial provisions. The report was noted.

5. REPORTS FROM CLERK AND FROM COUNCILLORS

5.1 Preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan – the Clerk commented on various aspects of the report to members and on the questions received in the Public Forum section of this agenda. A NP is completely different to a Parish Plan. A NP deals with land use development matters whereas a parish plan, not being bound by any statutory requirements, can cover any sort of topic that the 'parish' wishes it to. Pickmere's Parish Plan, published in 2010, considered a variety of matters that could not form part of a NP. The NP is governed by statute and government guidance (see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>) but as a result, if adopted, carries significant weight in the making of planning decisions both by the district council, and also when appropriate by Planning Inspectors dealing with planning appeals.

The NP process can be extremely complex, and it is entirely appropriate that a planning consultant be commissioned by the Council to assist it in going through the process. It is pointed out that Government encourages the preparation of NPs, and provides a grant of up to £10,000 to councils proceeding with such a plan.

As to the involvement of local residents, a key element of the NP process is engagement with the local community. At this very early stage, the Council has not decided how this might take place, but it will be doing so in due course, subject to its decision actually to proceed with a plan.

The Government's recently published White Paper "Planning for the future" continues to encourage the preparation of NPs. A report on the White Paper will be reported to Council at its September meeting.

A councillor mentioned that the majority of parish councils in Cheshire now have, or are preparing, a NP.

Council resolved:

- That Cheshire East Council be informed that it is your Council's intention to proceed with preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole parish and that authority be given to submit relevant formal notification to that Council. (Proposer CT; seconder AB)
- That appropriate arrangements be made, including liaison as necessary with the planning consultant to be appointed to assist the council, to commence and continue the Plan process. (Proposer SF; seconder HS)
- That at appropriate stages application be made to Government for grant to help finance the Neighbourhood Plan process both for the rest of the financial year to 31 March 2021, and beyond to the completion of the Plan. (Proposer SF; seconder HS)

5.2 Replacement of Parish Council Website – the Clerk introduced the report, explaining the reasoning of the Council’s sub-group appointed to consider this matter that the website should be replaced, and alluding to the broad costs. It was resolved:

- That the Council accepts the principle that it will commission the replacement of its current website in accordance with the principles described, as soon as possible. (Proposer CT; seconder SF)
- That at an appropriate moment and subject to the establishment of the new website, contracts with the current website provider and also the current email hosting company be terminated. (Proposer SF; seconder AB)

5.3 Planning application 20/3299M – Crown Farm, Frog Lane – this application was brought to Council’s attention because the deadline for comment was before the Council’s next ordinary meeting. The Clerk summarised why this application had been submitted – essentially that it was a resubmission of a previous application which had been refused planning permission by Cheshire East Council (CEC), an appeal against this decision had then been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate, but the applicants’ advisers had pointed out to the Inspectorate that the Inspector’s statement of planning policy was incorrect, and therefore his reasoning was also incorrect and the decision consequently flawed. The Inspectorate had accepted that this was the case.

The design of the current proposal had now been changed slightly but the principle remained unchanged.

The Clerk went on to advise Council that its original objection to the original application remained valid (as was CEC’s decision), and pointed out that in CEC’s officer report on the previous application several arguments had been made to back up CEC’s conclusions on the matter.

It was resolved (Proposer CT; seconder AB) that objection was raised to the new application along similar lines to the previous application, and that in addition explicit support should be given to the officer views raised in the CEC report on the previous application in relation to the question of whether the proposal constituted a conservatory, whether the building was in a group of buildings or ribbon of development, and the need to incorporate the floor area of the existing building to be connected to the main house by the proposed link in any calculation of the extent of total extent of extensions to this house (in relation to Green Belt policy considerations).

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.

6. APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS

- 6.1 Appointment of Planning Consultant in respect of preparation of Neighbourhood Plan** – It was resolved that Cheshire Community Action be appointed to assist the Council to pursue preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, on the basis of CCA’s quoted fee day rate plus related expenses, within an overall envelope of £5000 (Proposer SF; seconder HS), on the basis that that Ms Lucy Hughes of CCA be appointed as our consultant.
- 6.2 Appointment of website provider** – In summarising the report the Clerk pointed out that one of the short-listed providers, Neave Creative, had informed the Council that provision of councillor and clerk emails in the way they suggested would add a significant sum to their overall fee proposal as had been described in the report.

It was resolved (proposer SF; seconder AB) that Netwise be appointed to implement a replacement website for the Parish Council on the basis of the cost figures submitted to the Council, except that minor alterations to the costs may be accepted subject to the positive recommendation of the sub-group. Any such variations are to be reported to the Council at the earliest opportunity with appropriate justification, if necessary after they are incurred.