



## PARISH COUNCIL BULLETIN – 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2020

This document summarises the matters which would have been reported to an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council; a meeting was due to be held on 7 April 2020 but has been cancelled as a result of the Coronavirus crisis.

### 1 Minutes of meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

The draft minutes are appended to this bulletin. They cannot be formally approved as a correct record for the moment as a formal meeting of the council would be required to do so. However if members see any significant errors please would they let me know.

### 2 Matters arising from minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

- **Item 5 Potholes** Cheshire East Council have been notified of the damaged carriageway at Pickmere Rough.
- **Item 8.2 Cheshire Showground** HS has supplied the Clerk with a listing of Showground events and timescales during 2019
- **Item 8.3 Effects of Storm Ciara** WAP Lawton & Son were instructed to re-erect the fallen Best Kept Village sign
- **Item 8.5 Parish Council website** See report below
- **Item 8.8 Neighbourhood Plan** Sub-group yet to be established
- **Item 8.9 Coronavirus** Hand-washing notices erected, and copy supplied for Pickmere Press Facebook page

### 3 Finance – Monthly financial summary

The annual summary to the end of March 2020 is appended to this bulletin. It marks the end of the financial year 2019-2020 and its content will be reflected in the formal annual accounts which will be the subject of internal audit and public advertisement in May/June/July 2020 (subject to any Covid 19 restrictions which might prevent or delay these).

Key points are as follows:

- Overall accounts well within budget
- Administration costs within budget
- No expenditure on Asset Options during the year
- Clover Drive: this head includes the commencement of regular maintenance of the Buttercup Way footpath (£276)
- Play area: figures reflect an accounting adjustment – expenditure was actually £607 against a budget of £900
- Contingency: reflects £450 expenditure on Tree work beyond IROS budget

- IROS – receipt figure reflects a donation for a memorial bench; payments reflect the purchase of that bench together with tree work (£450), erection of bollards on Park Lane / Mere Lane, together with various other works on the IROS (£1164)
- Land rental etc: reflects Angling Society rental plus use of VH site as a Broadband base for the Cheshire Show
- Parish Council elections: allowance for potential unforeseen council election
- Village Hall: Receipts reflect normal hire charges plus one-off Business Rate refund; expenditure reflects significant underspend on water, Business Rates and cleaning, set against excess expenditure on Hall floor renovation, electrical works, and the redecoration of the interior. The balance of expenditure is accommodated within the Contingency in the budget for unforeseen VH repairs etc.

#### **4 Finance – New payments**

##### **4.1 Payments already made** (by virtue of Standing Order powers of Clerk in association with Chair)

- Well Heeled Dog Club      Refund of Village Hall hire fee for two scheduled meetings not held due to current crisis      £30.00

##### **4.2 Payments to be made** (by virtue of Standing Order powers of Clerk in association with Chair)

- WAP Lawton & Son Ltd – re-erection of Best Kept Village sign      £75.00 excl. VAT
- Clerk expenses (schedule appended to this Bulletin)      £53.94 incl. VAT
- N Nitescu – cleaning Village Hall (incl. purchase of mop)      £99.00

#### **5 Planning matters**

- **19/2660M** - Extensions – Rose Cottage, Park Lane – not yet determined - amended plans submitted
- **19/5621M; 19/5562M; 19/5563M** – Housing proposals at Hall Lane – no decision
- **19/5533M** - Application for Cert of Lawful Use – Springfield, Pickmere Lane – **CERTIFICATE GRANTED**
- **20/0820M** – Erection of Agricultural store - Land at Mere Lane – **APPROVED**
- **20/0980M** – Extensions and erection of garage – High Garth, Park Lane — no decision
- **20/0965M** – Reserved matters – 2 dwellings at Park Lane (opposite Frog Lane) – no decision

##### **Planning enforcement referrals to CEC:**

- Siting of mobile home and freight container, Sunnyside/Meadowcroft, Pickmere Lane – Contravention notices were served on 2<sup>nd</sup> October – no further information received from CEC.

#### **6 Other matters**

##### **6.1 Coronavirus**

**6.1.1 Use of Council properties** - As a result of the Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Government advice/instruction, the Village Hall and the Clover Drive play area have been closed. Notices have been erected at the IROS stating that whilst it is not possible to physically close the public footpath near the lake and the IROS, the Council relies on members of the public using them to respect Government advice in terms of social distancing, and not to gather in groups.

**6.1.2 Operation of the Council during the crisis** - The Council's scheduled meeting of 7 April 2020 was cancelled, and extraordinary meetings cannot be called due to the current crisis. The business of

the Council will continue as far as possible as normal, relying on Standing Order Emergency Provisions that in such circumstances the Clerk in association with the Chair of the Council is authorised to take decisions on behalf of the Council. These provisions will operate bearing in mind that the Clerk works from home, and that social distancing protocols will be observed. The National Association of Local Councils is in dialogue with Government as to how local councils might continue to operate in the current situation, and further advice is awaited.

**6.1.3 Establishment of Community Group system to help local vulnerable residents** – The Community Group has established a WhatsApp group of volunteers from the Pickmere community who have offered to help those residents who have difficulties in shopping, dog walking etc as a result of current quarantine/lockdown/social distancing restrictions. Over 30 such volunteers have put themselves forward and have so far assisted a number of local residents. It is to be noted that several members of the Parish Council are involved with this help group.

**6.2 Petition** – Members will recall the submission of a petition to Council on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 asking the Council to seek the purchase of land adjoining the Village Hall. The same petition has been resubmitted to the Council and now incorporates 93 signatures.

**6.3 M6 Junction 19 works** – Work was due to start on the M6 J19 Improvement scheme in late March 2020 (although presumably this intention will be affected by the current crisis). During the first few weeks, the main focus of the work would be within the centre of the roundabout, making preparations to start building the foundations of the new bridge from late May onwards. Other pockets of work would be carried out at the same time to confirm the location and condition of drainage provision, underground services and power cables. Narrow lanes and speed restrictions will be installed on the M6 carriageway and within the roundabout to provide a safe working space for workers. Some closures will be required to install traffic management measures. The motorway and the junction will not be closed at the same time. Ground investigation work has recently been completed and the compound will be established at an early stage. The compound will be used as the office, for car parking, and for storage of materials and construction equipment. The site will be required for approximately 15 months. The site compound along with the construction activities will inevitably cause some disruption for local residents around the junction, but the contractors state that they will endeavour to minimise impacts where possible. Construction activities will be supervised, keeping disturbance to a minimum, and noise levels will be monitored to ensure they do not reach an unacceptable level. If you would like to be added to the traffic management bulletin for information on closures, please contact [M6Junction19Improvement@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:M6Junction19Improvement@highwaysengland.co.uk)

**6.4 Village Hall Chairs** – Through grant aid provided by the Manchester Airport Community Trust Fund, with the particular help of Pickmere & District Women's Institute and Pickmere Wine Club, the Hall has been provided with 50 new conference chairs. The old chairs have largely been relocated to the Pavilion/container. The appearance and attractiveness of the hall will be greatly enhanced by this acquisition.

**6.5 Table Tennis table** – As many may know there is a table tennis table stored at the Village Hall though it is unused. The table is privately owned, but with the owner's consent a notice was placed on parish noticeboards asking if anyone might be interested in using the table or perhaps forming a table tennis club. One person has contacted the Clerk saying that he would be interested in doing so, and further contact is awaited (though presumably interrupted by the current crisis).

**6.6 Parish Council website** – The website provider has, following its offer to upgrade the site such that it is compliant with new Accessibility Regulations, created a mobile version of the site, which is adapted to devices such as mobile phones, and this site is in partial operation at the time of writing, with further work in progress. It seems likely that that company will recommence sending the Council its contractual annual invoice, but none has been received at the time of writing.

**6.7 Joan Webb** – it is with sadness that the death of Joan Webb was recently announced. A condolence card has been sent to Joan's family on behalf of the Parish Council. Joan arrived in Pickmere as an evacuee from Salford in 1940 and remained in the village for 79 years. She was an active, well-known and popular resident. She was a founding Parish Councillor in 1947 and was Chair for many years. She worked at New Cheshire Saltworks in Wincham and also for many years at the fun fair at Pickmere Lake. She was also a pioneer of the Youth Club, a long-standing member of Pickmere WI and from its opening the chair of Wincham Community Centre. Many will have fond memories of her local knowledge and reminiscences as well as her popularity as a raconteur of Albert and the Lion and other stories. She will be sadly missed by many and the Parish Council extends its sympathies to her family and friends.

**J Steel – Clerk to the Parish Council**

**3 April 2020**