

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

6th September 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|---|
| 1. | Present | AS (Chair), CT (Vice Chair), AB, SF, PG, DH, IK, SR |
| | Absent | None |
| | Apologies | Cllr O Hunter (received post-meeting) |
| | Police | None |
| | Public | One member of the public |

2. Minutes

2.1 Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the meeting of 5 July 2016 (616) were approved and signed by the Chair.

2.2 Matters arising

5.1 PG reported that following discussion with the bank, the bank charges previously imposed had been refunded.

8.3 Sale Moor Angling Society - the Clerk reported that the agreement with the Society forbade the practice of anglers camping overnight at the mere. The Clerk was asked to check whether the rule related to 'camping' overnight or 'fishing' overnight.

Rules for the use of the IROS - the Clerk reported that the rules given on the large notice boards at the mere did not arise from any broader resolution of the Council. AS stated that it was his understanding that they had been distilled from the wording of the s106 planning agreement that related to the transfer of the IROS land to the Council.

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Open Forum

- 4.1 The member of the public present raised the issue of the parking restrictions on Mere Lane. He reported that they are sometimes ignored and that cars are frequently parked half on the pavement. The road is narrow, as is the pavement, where it exists, and obstruction is caused. The issue arises both from visitors to the mere and from residents of Mere Lane. He asked if the Parish Council could do anything about

the problem. AS noted that the item is included on the meeting agenda and councillors would discuss the issue later in the meeting.

4.2 Report from PCSO - none

5. Finance

5.1 Conclusion of External Audit - PG reported that the audit had been completed satisfactorily save for the auditors' minor observation that there was a £1 discrepancy in the annual accounts.

5.2 Current financial report - monthly financial summaries had been circulated. There was nothing specifically to report and no comments were made on the summaries. The Clerk reported that the Council's previous fixed tariff arrangements for gas and electricity had ended and it was necessary to review the tariffs. He was asked to use reasonable endeavours to seek satisfactory tariffs for the next period.

5.3 Parish Council Insurance - The Council's Insurance policy was due for renewal. The annual payment had been increased to allow for inflation, as had valuations of Council assets. PG reported that the insurance contract is due for renewal in one year's time. The Clerk was authorised, unanimously, to pay the renewal premium.

In the context of the Council's insurance cover, a query was made about the cover for the Community Group's Fun Day, held in August. It was reported that certainly cover for the Bouncy Castle operation was provided by the BC provider, but it was unclear what other insurance cover was provided by the Community Group for the event. It was agreed that for future such events, it must be clear in advance that the Community Group has secured appropriate insurance cover.

5.4 Payments not previously authorised - None

6. Report from Planning Committee

6.1 16/2609M - Erection of Agricultural Worker's Dwelling at Land at Frog Lane Farm. One of the condition on the approval restricted occupation of the proposed dwelling to a person working, or last working, in agriculture. AS reported that the Officer's report on the application did explicitly take into account the comments made by the Parish Council.

6.2 16/2872M - Single storey extension at Fernhill Farm, Frog Lane. A further application has now been received for a two storey extension on the site of the single storey extension just approved under 16/2872M. This second application is to be considered by the Parish Council's Planning Committee on 13 September 2016.

DH made reference to the unauthorised 'driveway' that had been formed over the verge on Pickmere Lane, near the Village Hall. It would appear that this had now been turfed over and the missing piece of railing re-erected, perhaps due to the fact

that the house had been on the market. It was confirmed that no communication had been received about the matter from CE or from Cllr Hunter.

- 7. Report from Asset Working Group** - AS noted that the meeting of the Planning sub-group needed to be arranged shortly. He wondered if, in the light of the list of items for repair at the Village Hall and elsewhere, there was a need for a further Assets sub-group to deal with/schedule/prioritise asset repair matters, particularly taking into account the availability of finance, but AB reported that she and PG, hopefully with CT's help, have this aspect in hand. CT pressed the issue of the VH external lighting, which seemed in need of repair, and the Clerk was asked to deal with that particular matter.

SF reported that the Community need/Funding sub-group had met with a view to establishing a statement of need. A simple questionnaire for users of the Village Hall had been drafted. This was circulated, discussed and agreed and the sub-group was asked to continue with its work.

8. Correspondence to Clerk and Reports from Councillors

- 8.1 Receipt and Circulation of Correspondence** - DH made reference to the lack of certainty among Councillors as to how correspondence received by the Clerk was dealt with - in terms of what was responded to directly, what was circulated to Councillors, and what was included on Council meeting agendas. AS proposed, and it was unanimously agreed, that where the Clerk understands the Council's policy and position on an issue raised in correspondence, he should reply/respond to the correspondence directly. Where in the Clerk's opinion the correspondence raised a matter of policy needing the consideration of Council, or where the matter raised had broader community implications perhaps suggesting the need for reconsideration of the Council's policy stance in the particular case, he would include the matter on the next available agenda.
- 8.2 Toxic Blue-Green Algae** - The Clerk reported that the Environment Agency had reconfirmed this week that the risk of such Algae remained in the mere, and would be likely to remain at least until a period of hard frosts. The EA would not normally carry out any further testing in this context. The EA advised that warning notices should remain on the site.
- 8.3 Clover Drive Play Area** - SR reported that he has spent some time cleaning various elements of the play area, including graffiti. He noted that the play items would be in need of comprehensive repainting in the next couple of years, that similarly the area would be in need of power washing, and that with IK's assistance he will repair the floor surface, as mentioned at a previous Council meeting.

SR also reported the concern of a neighbour of the play area about a small number of youths occupying the play area some evenings. The possibility of CCTV surveillance is complicated by several fundamental issues. It was clarified that matters of 'low-level' anti-social behaviour should be referred to CE Council, while more serious matters should be referred to the Police.

- 8.4 Enquiry re use of Village Hall for Pre-school group** - The Clerk reported that he had received an enquiry for such use, involving up to 20 children, between about 9.00 am and 3.00 pm, for 4-5 days per week. The use would require permanent space for storage of toys and equipment, and also the creation on part of the car park of a more or less permanent play area, separated off from the car park. Clearly the use would have a range of other implications including the need for substantial change to the Hall's cleaning regime, and also potential disruption/prevention of Hall use by other existing or potential users. Having discussed the request with the Chairman, the request had been refused.
- 8.5 Parking on Mere Lane** - Following the points raised by a member of the public under 4.1 (above), AS stated that there is no known record of the Parish Council being involved in the establishment of the yellow lines on Mere Lane and elsewhere in the vicinity. They arose at a time when the mere and its surrounds were more intensively used in summer months with the existence of the fun-fair and subsequently the jet-skiing activities. Contravention of the restrictions now results not only from visitors to the area but also from residents, some of whom have restricted parking provision within their domestic boundaries. The Parish Council has previously sought to secure enforcement of the parking restrictions via the Police, without success. Current signage and road marking is old and partial, some signs having clearly disappeared over the years. The Clerk has requested clarification from CE Council on the origin and status of the parking restrictions.

It was resolved:

That the Clerk is to write to the Police requesting enforcement of the parking restrictions, and also to CE to request renewal of the old and partial signage which currently exists.

- 8.6 Pickmere and Wincham Methodist Church - Request for donation to Repairs and Renovation Programme** - The Clerk confirmed that there is legal provision for the Parish Council to make a donation to another body's expenditure subject, in broad terms, to there being an appropriate level of benefit to the local community. However, there is no provision in the Council's budget for such a payment. Further, it was noted that the great majority of the Council's income arose from the annual precept. A member said that there was the question of whether the PC can build something into its Asset Strategy which would complement the proposed Methodist Church works. It was resolved that:

The Clerk is to inform the Methodist Church that the Council is unable to offer a donation to the Church arising from the absence of budget provision, but that the Council would be interested to discuss with the Church whether the two sets of potential proposals might contain complementary elements.

- 8.7 Highways England Consultation - M6 J19 Improvement Scheme** - Both options considered in the document included the erection of traffic signals at the junction of Pickmere Lane/A556 Chester Road. The contents of the document were noted.
- 9. Report from Cllr O Hunter re Cheshire East Council** - None, due to absence of Cllr Hunter
- 10. Use of IROS land - Dog Water Rescue Training Group** - The item was deferred until a future meeting when a representative of the Group could attend.

Clerk: Jack Steel

Next meeting: 4th October 2016