

**629**  
**MINUTES of THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**in PICKMERE VILLAGE HALL**

**7<sup>th</sup> November 2017**  
**AGENDA**

1. **Present** AS (Chair), CT, PG, AB, DH  
**Apologies** IK, SR, SF, Cllr O Hunter  
**Public** None  
**Police** None
  
2. **Minutes**
  - 2.1 **Approval of Minutes** – the minutes of the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 were approved.
  
  - 2.2 **Matters arising from Minutes** –  
  
6.3 – The Clerk reported that the VAT return has now been submitted.  
7. – Planning – 4 Thistle Close - the Clerk reported that following the submission of further information by CEC (after substantial pressure had been applied), the Parish Council’s Planning Committee had resolved that no objection should be submitted to the proposal, subject to safeguards remaining about the retention of the property as an ‘affordable dwelling’.  
8.3.1, 8.3.2 – The Clerk reported that quotations were currently being sought for the repainting of the Play area equipment and furniture, and also for the repainting of the Cheshire railings at Clover Drive/Park Lane.  
9.3 – Parish Meeting – the Clerk reported that he was still awaiting the contact details for organisations to be contacted with regard to the proposed Parish Meeting next year.  
9.7 – Hospitality Register – the Clerk reported that a pair of tickets for a concert, donated by Manchester Airport, had been given to Cllr Gough.
  
3. **Declaration of Interests** – nil
  
4. **Open Forum (Including PCSO)**
  - 4.1 Nil
  - 4.2 AS reported that a further Community Speedwatch session had been held, with over 20 vehicle details being reported to the Police.
  
5. **Report from Cllr O Hunter** – nil
  
6. **Finance**

**6.1 Current financial position** – the monthly financial summaries were noted.

**6.2 New payments** - the schedule of payments was approved, with the addition of a further stationery expense for the Clerk of £42.20, and the deletion of the proposed Chalc payment, as a result of the event having been cancelled.

**6.3 Draft Budget** – the Clerk presented for comment the first draft of a proposed budget for 2018-9. On the General Account it was noted that the Utility companies had recently reduced their direct debit payments as they had previously been ‘overcharging’ the Council. Members felt however that the budget should contain realistic figures for such payments in 2018-9. Members wished for a more realistic figure for the General Asset Replacement etc item, and resolved that the Asset Register Sub-Group would supply the Clerk with list of the main priorities for expenditure for 2018-9 and this would form the basis for this entry. The Planning Sub-Group would consider further the proposed budget figure for the Asset Options item. On the Land Asset Account, there was a need to include a sufficient item for the repainting of the Play area equipment etc, and separately, the Clover Drive Cheshire railings.

**6.4 Application to Transparency Fund** – the Clerk was authorised to proceed with the proposed submission, for a grant of £560.

**6.5 Purchase of Accounts software** - following discussion of the need for such a package and the assessment process currently being carried out, members unanimously resolved to authorise the Clerk to expend up to a figure of £2000, spread over the next 5 years (2018-23), on the purchase of such a package.

## **7. Planning**

**7.3.1 Planning Applications** – The Clerk reported that PA no. 17/3691M (Rear extension at Yew Tree Cottage, Pickmere Lane) had been granted planning permission, and that on the application for redevelopment of the Elms PH site (17/4264M), CEC’s Tree Officer had very recently objected to the current proposals on the basis that one of the proposed houses at least would be likely to prejudice the continued retention of one of the Sycamore trees remaining on the boundary of the site. Members felt that this officer response was in part due to the representations that had been made by the Parish Council in respect of these trees, and the loss of the oak trees on and immediately adjoining this site just prior to submission of the planning application.

**7.3.2 Spinks Lane** - AS reported that he, CT and the Clerk had recently met senior representatives of Cheshire East Council, including the Lead Councillor for Housing, Planning and Regeneration, and the acting Deputy Chief Executive of CEC, as well as Cllr O Hunter. He had also received a written response from the Leader of CEC in response to his letter of some weeks ago. He reported that at the meeting it had become clear that CEC had had no intention to take any action whatsoever prior to the expiry of the ‘moratorium’ period granted to the

travellers by the Court, despite the pressure from this Council to prepare a strategy in advance of this expiry. CEC have commissioned legal advice as to the steps that they can now take, and this will entail contact between CEC's legal advisers and the travellers' legal advisers. There was concern that without knowing the current situation with regard to who was living on the site (which the CEC representatives obviously did not know) it was difficult to plan out a strategy. AS reported that he had asked CEC that if and when the matter returns to Court, could he attend, on behalf of the Parish Council; CEC said that this would depend on the attitude of the Court at the time. CEC agreed to arrange a further meeting with Parish Council representatives in due course; this might well be in the New Year. It is believed that if CEC decide to serve further notices on the travellers, there will be a further minimum period of 3 months to allow compliance with the notices. AS suggested the possibility of the Parish Council making contact with our MP, to seek to apply further pressure on CEC; this was unanimously agreed. The Clerk is to contact the MP to seek a meeting. Finally, AS noted that he had raised at the meeting the general question of the Parish Council's dissatisfaction with the performance of CEC in respect of its handling of normal planning enforcement matters.

## **8. Reports from Assets Working Group**

**8.1 Funding Sub-Group** – nil to report – awaiting progress on other aspects.

**8.2 Planning Sub-Group** – AS reported that as a result of feedback from the CEC planning officer, our planning advisor was now suggesting that the next step would be the submission of an outline planning application. This would largely use the documents already prepared for the informal consultation. The Planning Sub-Group will now go ahead with such a submission as previously agreed, and will meet further to review the main project options and to bring back to Council the preferred option including some idea of potential project cost. This was agreed.

**8.3 Asset Register Sub-Group** – as discussed under 6.3 Draft Budget above, the sub-group will supply the Clerk with information re the main priorities for expenditure during 2018-9, for budgeting purposes.

**8.4 Report from Community Group** – AB reported that at a recent CG meeting, members were pleased that we were moving forward on the Asset Options consideration. The CG also flagged up that the Pavilion was in need of some internal decoration.

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

**9.1 General Data Protection Regulation** - report noted. The Clerk was asked to explore with CEC what action that Council might be taking.

**9.2 Review of Parliamentary Constituency boundaries** – Members were disappointed with the Boundary Commission's consideration of the Council's original objections to the proposals, which remained, and asked the Clerk to resubmit those views. This also to be communicated to Esther McVey MP.

**9.3 Trees in the Parish** – the report was accepted. A plan was tabled showing a small number of trees/tree groups which were thought potentially worthy of TPOs. Members agreed with this and asked the Clerk to submit these to CEC for consideration.

**9.4 Village Hall Capacity** – the report was accepted, and it was agreed that the maximum guideline capacity of the Village Hall for a standing-only event would be set at 80 persons, and for a seated event (using tables and chairs) 40 persons, with discretion given to the Chair in conjunction with the Clerk in relation to events that do not simply fall within either category.

**9.5 Contact with Wincham Parish Council** – CT report that he had had contact with a member of Wincham PC who had suggested that it might be beneficial for our two PCs to meet together to discuss matters of common interest from time to time. This was agreed in principle and it was agreed that the Clerks of the two bodies would liaise.

**9.6 HS2 – Updated Property Scheme Maps** – these were noted. This was not a consultation and there was no opportunity to comment.

**9.7 Policy Guide for the donation of Benches, Trees, etc.** – the Nantwich policy guidelines were considered a useful basis for preparing our own policies and the Clerk was asked to draft guidelines appropriate to the Parish for the consideration of a future meeting.

**Clerk:** Jack Steel

**Next meeting:** 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017