

Cheveley Parish Council
c/o 59 West Street, Isleham, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5SD

MINUTES

Cheveley Parish Council Extra-Ordinary Full Council Meeting on
Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7:30pm
held online using the Zoom meeting platform.

Present: Councillors Claire Elbrow (Chair), Alison Day, Cllr Fullerton, Jane Gibson, James Hadlow, Sheila Marvin, Brent Noble, Sallie Thomas (Vice-Chair) and Sue Willows.

There was one member of the public present.
The meeting was opened at 7:32pm.

Under the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, this meeting will be held remotely using an online meeting platform. The meeting will be open to the public (including the press).

69/20/21 Apologies and approvals for absence
None.

70/20/21 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
None.

71/20/21 Open Forum for Public Participation (10 mins)
None.
Cllr Thomas joined the meeting at 7:34pm.

72/20/21 Purchase of former URC building

- (a) Report (verbal) from pre-contract meeting held on 11th September – the meeting was attended by Cllrs Elbrow and Thomas, and the Clerk, Mr Tony Poole (builder) and Mr Keith Johns (architect). The contract with the builder had been signed as agreed at the Extra-Ordinary meeting held on 6th August (minute no: 42/20/21 (d)). Mr Poole said that he would work around the school regarding delivery of materials i.e. avoiding school pick up and collection times. The building and surrounding area would be fenced off during the works allowing safe use of the car park by the school throughout. Work could start on 2nd November if funding is in place.
- (b) Completion of purchase and publicity – following completion on 29th September, an announcement had been made on the PC's website and Facebook page. A poster had also been put up outside the building. A newsletter with more information will be drafted for approval at next week's Ordinary meeting.
- (c) Report from the Clerk (written) on funding and/or borrowing options for repairs and renovations – NOTED. At the time that tenders were obtained it was thought that grant funding would be available to cover most, if not all, of the costs. However, the coronavirus pandemic had meant that many of the grant funders which could normally be relied upon had closed their funds, or diverted them solely to coronavirus recovery related projects. Despite extensive research by Councillors and the Clerk, no grant funding had been identified as being available or likely to be offered at this time. The Clerk's report included information on the funding sources investigated, a running costs budget and borrowing options, and concluded with a recommendation to borrow to enable the project to move ahead. At the meeting, Councillors were given the opportunity to respond to the report and raised the following points: -
- Due to the extraordinary times we are experiencing this year and the effect this has had on grant funding, it is reasonable to conclude that taking out a loan is the best way forward.
 - Taking out a loan would mean the project could be started and finished before spring next year when it is hoped that restrictions regarding coronavirus will be eased, allowing public buildings to become fully functional once more.
 - Moving forward with the project sooner rather than later keeps up momentum with residents and shows that the PC is eager to provide a suitable community building for the benefit of the parish. If we delay, residents may lose interest or make the assumption that the building is not going to be refurbished after all.
 - Some of the PC's earmarked reserves could be diverted to pay some of the renovation costs.
 - Interest rates are low and the PC can afford the repayments without raising the precept.
 - The PC can reduce the budget on some of its running and project costs to help towards the costs of the renovations. Cllr Hadlow was thanked for the work he had done on this and will send the

Clerk a copy. An updated draft budget will be presented to Councillors at next week's Ordinary meeting.

- The PC should borrow a lower amount of £90k which would cover the cost of the tender without the extras which had been identified - intruder alarm, disabled access, new kitchen, new boiler/heating system.
- The PC should not borrow any money for the project as this would be a burden on the tax payer for many years to come.
- The PC has reserves it could use for the renovations (the Clerk said that the PC's current reserves are either earmarked for projects, earmarked as necessary general reserves or earmarked for this year's running costs).

- (d) Proposal to seek the Secretary of State's approval to borrow £120,000 to fund repairs and renovations – It was proposed by Cllr Hadlow that the PC take out a loan for the repairs and renovations given that there is no grant funding currently available – Cllrs voted 8 in favour and 1 against - **RESOLVED**. Cllr Elbrow proposed to take out a loan for £120,000 which would cover all building costs covered by the tender from Tony Poole as well as the cost of potential extras such as the kitchen, heating system, alarms and automated doors – Cllrs voted 4 in favour, 3 against with 2 abstentions – **RESOLVED**. It was proposed that the loan be taken over a term of 15 years at a cost of £9,103.56 per year. It would not be necessary to raise the precept to cover these repayments. Cllrs voted 8 in favour with one abstention – **RESOLVED**. Cllr Hadlow proposed that any funds left over from the loan once building works are complete, and future CiL contributions, should be used to pay down the loan to reduce the repayments or term of the loan. A six-month and twelve-month review of the PC's finances in relation to the loan repayments will be carried out. Councillors voted 8 in favour with 1 abstention – **RESOLVED**.
- (e) Proposal to submit planning application for change of use - class F1 (place of worship) to class F2 (hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community) – cost £231.00 – **RESOLVED**.

73/20/21 Date of Next Meeting & Matters for Future Consideration.
Tuesday 13th October.

The meeting was closed at 8:50pm.