

## Clerk's report April 2020

The clerk reported that the Parish Council's year end is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and the accounts reconciled. The accounts and Parish Council records were taken to the Internal Auditor and returned on the 6<sup>th</sup> April as all in order with a good report. The clerk completed the Annual Return for External Audit to PKF Littlejohn for 2019/20 which was signed off all in order by the Internal Auditor. The 2019.20 Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/20 will be signed off by the Parish Council at this Parish Council meeting at which points all documentation required under the Transparency Code will be submitted to PKF. Everything was circulated to Councillors for information.

**The Coronavirus Bill** has been given royal ascent so has come into law. THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020 comes into being 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020. This covers meetings until the 7th May 2021. Meetings can be cancelled without further notice.

There is no requirement to hold an Annual Council meeting this year (although you may wish to), the Chairman (and any other appointees) continues to the next annual meeting, or such time as the Council may determine. Meetings can be held "electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers"

To be classified as in attendance the Councillor must be able to hear and be heard (therefore they could phone in to a video conference call)

Meetings must still be properly convened and able to be attended by members of the public

The notice doesn't have to be put up in notice boards but must be up on the website. There is another requirement to place it on the principal council's website which we will be seeking clarification on.

There is no provision within the regulations in relation to Annual Parish and Town Meetings. However, currently these cannot take place face to face, however, they are still able to take place before June, so await further information

Nor is there any provision within the regulations relating to the Audit year end. We advise that if your internal auditor can undertake their work remotely to carry on with this as we await further information.

The regulations relate to virtual meetings and this is the preferred method, rather than agreed email decisions.

**Lengthsman** Contract for 2020/21 received, signed and returned to WCC and budget for Lengthsman for the year remains unchanged at £2126.70 for the year. The Lengthsman's work was suspended on 24<sup>th</sup> March by WCC until further notice due to Coronavirus restrictions.

**RJC**. 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020- RJC asked whether grounds maintenance and Open Spaces and Bus shelter/Play Area inspections should continue with current Coronavirus restrictions.

Parish Council response was:

- the grass will start to grow fast now and should be kept under control or it will become unusable in the future. There is little risk to or from Rich Cole to any of the parishioners.
- the playground should certainly be taped off and a notice put up reminding people why it is out of bounds
- I think open areas to walk in should remain open but it wouldn't harm putting up another notice reminding people to keep their distance and walk in twos or small family groups.