

## **REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL**

**14<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

### **AGENDA ITEM 6.3 – PUBLIC INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS 2019-20**

#### **1. Report**

- 1.1 Legislation requires that the opportunity be given to local communities to make the Parish Council's accounts for the previous financial year available for public inspection for a prescribed period of time. That provision has been complied with in respect of the Council's 2019-20 Accounts, and the period is running at the present time.
- 1.2 Several parish residents have (for the first time in my experience) requested the opportunity to inspect the Council's Accounts for that year. In normal circumstances it would have been possible to use the Village Hall for such inspection to take place. However, this is not possible this year, because of the current Covid19 crisis and the rules and government guidance which flow from that. It may be possible to reopen it for certain activities in the coming weeks but it is for Council to decide to do so. The opening of the Hall will only be possible at all after appropriate risk assessments have been carried out, appropriate protocols are arranged for the cleaning of the two areas, and for the management of users.
- 1.3 Agenda item 8.3 will allow consideration of this question.
- 1.4 Since no venue is available for the full accounts including invoices etc to be made available for viewing, inspection in the 'normal' way is not possible. The Cheshire Association of Local Councils has advised that in the light of current regulations and government guidance there is no requirement for parish councils to allow the accounts to be viewed.
- 1.5 In this circumstance therefore, the residents involved have been informed of the position and have been sent by email a listing of all payments and receipts for the relevant year together with the overall Statement of Accounts. If any queries are received about specific items, your Clerk will endeavour to respond to them, though in all cases in a way that respects Government Covid guidelines.
- 1.6 Council is therefore asked to note the position and to confirm the unavailability of the Village Hall for the purpose described until such time as appropriate procedures relating to such use of the Hall have been followed.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the position be noted and Council confirm the unavailability of the Hall for the purpose described until and unless appropriate procedures relating to such use of the Hall have been implemented.