

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

20th July 2021

AGENDA ITEM 9.3 RECENT INCIDENT AT THE LAKE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

1 REPORT

- 1.1 Members will be aware of the recent fatality at the lake which resulted from a person swimming in the water. Whilst the accident apparently took place in a part of the lake away from the Parish Council's land ownership, it obviously raises again concerns about persons boating, paddle-boarding, or swimming/bathing in the lake.
- 1.2 Your Council's policy for many years has been not to permit persons to access the water for any of these purposes because of the inherent risks that arise in such cases, whether from the effect of the water itself, and its temperature, the currents that arise in certain areas, the potential conflict with powerboats that access the lake from time to time from privately-owned land on the lake, or from the toxic blue-green algae that blooms from time to time in summer months and which carries health risks for both humans and animals.
- 1.3 Your Council's two new signboards state clearly that swimming or boating from the Council's land is not permitted; the message about swimming is also clearly displayed on a large notice embedded near the lake shore, in the water, and it is a message that is given to persons enquiring about swimming etc in the Lake if they communicate with your Clerk. The new signs make clear that "All users of the open space, lakeside, lake and parking spaces do so entirely at their own risk".
- 1.4 Short of employing someone permanently to stand on the lakeside trying to prevent persons entering the water, it is not known what else might be done to deter such activities.
- 1.5 One particular implication of the incident was that the Fire Service wished to access the lakeside from the Council's land at Jacob's Way, but whilst they dealt with the lock/chain on the gate, the access was blocked by two cars parked against the gate, outside any parking space. Thus access was prevented. This is obviously a serious matter and as a result an order was submitted for the supply of notices stating 'Emergency access – keep clear at all times' for erection at both the gate down to the lakeside and also on the gate to the IROS field (to replace the existing sign), and quotations were sought for the yellow hatching of the parking space in front of the IROS field gate and also the area in front of the gate to the lakeside. The signs have now been delivered and will be erected shortly. The quotes for yellow lining are included on this meeting's private agenda.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the report be noted.