

## **REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL**

**20<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

### **AGENDA ITEM 9.6 POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF BROADBAND FOR THE VILLAGE HALL**

#### **1 REPORT**

- 1.1 The requirement to hold online Council meetings as a result of the Covid pandemic, and the resultant uncertainty as to how the Parish Council will hold its meetings in the light of continuing uncertainties about the progress of the virus, have highlighted the question of the absence of a broadband service at the Village Hall. Such a service might have helped speed up the return of Council meetings to the Hall, but in addition is an increasing necessity when it is used for other purposes. One further advantage is that it would allow control of the Hall's central heating system without the need to attend, thereby saving the Clerk's time in adjusting heating times to suit Hall bookings.
- 1.2 It is therefore considered pertinent to explore this possibility now.
- 1.3 Various exploratory enquiries have been made and from those it would appear that any initial quotes would be based on a download speed of 8-16mb, as in the absence of a phone line, the providers are not able to test its quality and capacity, and to check if it is linked to a fibre service. On this basis, costs of unlimited broadband downloads, without the provision of a telephone line, are in the order of £18-£25/month. If, when the provision of a line is explored in more detail, it is found possible to supply higher download speeds (in the order of 50-70 Mb) – which would be desirable – then the cost would be more – perhaps £30-£35 monthly. It has also been pointed out that selecting broadband provision simply on the basis of lowest monthly cost might well be at the expense of having a poor-quality service in terms of customer response, reliability, service capacity, etc.
- 1.4 At this stage, Council's views are sought as to the merits of purchasing a broadband service. On the basis of the above figures, the annual cost would be perhaps in the range of £240-£420. There is no provision in this year's budget for such a cost, but it could perhaps be included in a budget for the next financial year.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Council consider the merits of exploring further the provision of broadband at the Village Hall, and in particular whether to proceed to seek quotations.

J Steel

Clerk to the Parish Council