

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

7th March 2023

AGENDA ITEM 9.3 UPDATE – MAJOR PROJECTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF PREVIOUS AGENDA ITEMS

1. REPORT

1.1 Your Council is now operating with two councillor vacancies out of 8, and without a Clerk/RFO. In addition there is very limited time between now and the end of the current Council term and the Council elections in May. It is also relevant to make reference to the recent climate in the parish in relation to the problems of excess visitors in summer and Council's consideration of how best it might try to ameliorate them – this factor has significantly reduced the amount of time – and indeed motivation - of Council members and Clerk available to dedicate to the Council's 'normal' activities and duties.

1.2 It is therefore appropriate to consider the situation with regard to the various projects that the Council has been undertaking in recent months.

PICKMERE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1.3 The project has moved forward to the extent that a comprehensive questionnaire survey of Parish residents has been completed, a wildlife and environment study has been carried out, and an initial draft of potential plan contents and policies has been prepared.

1.4 However, the project has suffered in the last few months from the resignation of 3 out of 4 resident members of the Plan's Steering Group, and now the recent resignation from the Council of former Cllr Bold.

CLOVER DRIVE PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT

1.5 Work has been carried out to explore what kinds of new play facilities might be desirable, and to seek ideas of potential costings. It was intended that the next step would be a further public consultation exercise.

OBJECTIONS TO HS2B

1.6 The Parish Council has actively responded to all stages of consultation on this project and is currently awaiting notification of when its representatives are to appear before the Parliamentary Select Committee looking into this stage of the process. At the same time the Council is also awaiting further contact from HS2 Ltd with a view to further discussions and negotiations with them on the detail of the project as it passes through the parish.

GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS

1.7 As referred to in the report on agenda item 9.2, for the present the Acting Clerk/RFO will be carrying out only the most essential council functions. Inter alia, this means that for instance non-essential emails will not be responded to, the normal preparation of Council agendas and servicing of Council meetings etc will not take place, the processes relating to works on Council

land and properties will not be carried out (except perhaps in relation to urgent problems), the maintenance of noticeboards and the Council website may not be continued.

1.8 In the light of all of the above, Council may wish to consider how to proceed.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the report be noted.

2.2 That in the light of the factors referred to, Council resolves to take no further the projects referred to, with the exception perhaps of its objections to HS2, pending Council elections in May 2023.

Jack Steel
Clerk to the Parish Council