

## REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

6<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### AGENDA ITEM 9.1 APPOINTMENT OF PARISH CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

#### 1. PARISH CLERK

1.1 The Clerk to the Parish Council (and Responsible Financial Officer) submitted his notice of resignation in December 2022. He fulfilled these duties until 28 February 2023 since when he has remained as Acting Clerk to perform essential tasks (including preparation of the Council's Annual Accounts at the end of March 2023 and their submission to the Internal Auditor), working on an hourly basis. This work has continued up to the recent elections and has included work on the preparation of this agenda. Further work is required in relation to the finalisation of the accounts for 2022-23 as well as to ensure that at least the essential financial tasks of the Council continue to be performed.

1.2 The vacant post was unsuccessfully advertised through CHALC and the parish noticeboards in the New Year and subsequently an advertisement for a locum Clerk was circulated by CHALC.

1.3 The Clerk's duties in Pickmere have included the following tasks:

- Organising Council meetings, including drafting reports, preparation and posting of agendas, taking of minutes, etc.
- Managing the Council's website
- Managing the Council's finances including preparation of annual accounts and related processes
- Issuing payments/posting transactions on the Council's accounting software
- Requesting quotes for work/issuing instructions to contractors/monitoring works
- Managing the Village Hall, including managing bookings/collecting hire fees, managing the hall cleaner, managing the central heating etc
- Part-managing the IROS and Pavilion
- Dealing with emails and resulting issues
- Managing the noticeboards
- Neighbourhood Plan and HS2 objections – assisting the working groups, also including liaison with NP grant-issuing body

1.4 It may that some of these tasks and responsibilities, e.g. managing the Village Hall including bookings, managing the Pavilion and other properties, managing the noticeboards, could be assumed by one or more councillors, thereby relieving the Clerk of some responsibilities, which may in turn increase the attractiveness of the post.

#### 2. RESONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

2.1 The Parish Clerk has for some years also been the Council's Responsible Financial Officer, or RFO. This is a formal position and is required by the Local Government Act 1972. This post is most often held by the Clerk, but a council may appoint one or more of its members to be its RFO (or indeed any other officer of the Council) but on an unpaid basis.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 That members consider how to proceed with regard to the appointment of a Clerk and RFO.

**Jack Steel**  
**Acting Clerk to the Parish Council**