

## REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

6<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### AGENDA ITEM 9.10 ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

#### 1 Report of Chair

1.1 The outgoing Council has a number of committees/working groups which need to be reviewed.

1.2 It is considered that the following topic areas may be worthy of sub-committees of the Council or working groups in order to increase community engagement and spread the workload across the residents of the village:

- PPC Strategy for the next 4 years
- HS2
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Highways,
- Village Environment, (rewilding, bench and sign maintenance etc)
- Community engagement/ Community Group
- Manchester airport liaison
- Planning Committee
- Police /CEC Traffic enforcement liaison (Speed, Yellow lines)
- Play area Working Group
- Personnel Committee & sub-committee (Councillors only)
- Policies GDPR, Sob Descriptions,
- Community buildings, (booking, T&C, refurbishment, crown land, etc)
- Finance and audit compliance (Councillors only)

#### 2 Comments of Acting Clerk

2.1 The Acting Clerk advises that caution should be applied in considering this topic. In essence, only the full Council can exercise the powers that it is given. Individual councillors, including the Chair, do not hold any individual power on behalf of the Council and do not have the power to make decisions on behalf of the Council. The Council may appoint committees or sub-committees of the Council to consider various topics and may or may not delegate decision-making powers on behalf of the Council to those committees or sub-committees. Such bodies must be composed solely of councillors.

2.2 The holding of committee/sub-committee meetings composed of councillors must be dealt with in the same way as Council meetings – i.e. with the same processes for public notification of meetings, establishment of agendas, and recording of minutes.

2.2 Should the Council wish to involve directly non-elected residents of the local community in consideration of individual topics, such groups should desirably be referred to as working groups, and they can have no decision-making powers on behalf of the Council as a whole - they are essentially advisory groups to the Council as a whole.

2.3 These distinctions must be upheld since they seek to avoid:

- the powers that are given to the Council as a whole being exercised by non-elected members of the community;
- decisions being made by small groups including non-elected members of the community conflicting with the possible views of the Council as a whole;
- the Council's decision-making becoming fragmented and confused as different committees and groups start to operate in their own way.

2.4 If any such committees or groups are formed, it is essential that clear systems are established for:

- establishing their terms of reference, responsibilities and if appropriate delegated powers;
- reporting their discussions and recommendations and if permitted, decisions, back to Council.

2.5 Before any decisions are made to establish such groups or committees, the Acting Clerk recommends that the advice of CHALC be sought.

### **3 Recommendation**

3.1 That Council should consider what committees, subcommittees and working groups, including some of those listed above, might be appropriate.

3.2 That CHALC be consulted as to how such arrangements might be organised, and the rules surrounding such arrangements.

3.3 That residents be invited to express their interest in being involved in working groups covering some of the areas discussed.