# Wickham Market Parish Council. Clerk's Report 16 March 2026.

1. **Wickham Market News.** Print deadline for the May/June issue is 2 April. Distribution will start on 11 May
2. **Reports for the council meeting.**
   2.1. Operational reports will be requested for the April Full Council meeting.
3. **Annual Parish Meeting 10 April**
   3.1. Invitations to organisations have been sent
   3.2. Advertised on P9 of the March/April magazine
   3.3. Will be advertised on notice boards, social media and round robin
4. **Correspondence from residents:**
   4.1. There was a clarification requested regarding the public comments at the February Full Council meeting. The minutes have been written to include answers to these concerns.
   4.2. There was a clarification regarding public comments at the Simon's Cross development meeting on 26 February. The minutes have been written to include answers to these concerns where possible. The member of the public will write to ESC Planning.
5. **Fly Tipping**
   5.1. Fly tipping at Simons Cross car park consisted of 4 tyres, 5 bags of rubbish and some old car parts. This has been cleared by the Clerk.
6. **Process for authorisation of projects and expenditure for Wickham Market Parish Council.**
   6.1. There seems to be concern over a belief that the Clerk is responsible for approving projects and expenditure.
      6.1.1. Financial Regulations delegate expenditure authorisation up to £500 to the Clerk. (FR5.15)
      6.1.2. In addition to this, each May WMPC delegate certain regular payments to the Clerk to manage including Salary payments, News Magazine production, Market running costs and small maintenance items which we engage Richard Ellis to complete. This delegation is published with the May annual meeting minutes.
   6.2. Here are a few examples of projects authorised by the Council (not the Clerk):

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| • Annual Jet Wash Children's play area | Full Council 18 July 2022 – 20.4 |
| • Grants to community organisations | All Authorised by the Finance Ctte. |
| • Agreement to make Cemetery cost neutral | Full Council 20 March 2023 – 21 |
| • Salary pay points for all staff | All authorised at Full Council |
| • Reduce cemetery maintenance costs and financial deficit | FC23: 74.4 |
| • Move the E&L from a committee to a working group | FC23:160 |
| • Create a new village website | FC24:79 |
| • Make structural changes (grave levelling) at the cemetery. | FC24:87 |
| • Approval of volunteering processes and documentation | FC24:162 |
| • Cut back overhanging hedges al FP9 and Village Hall drive | FC25:94 |

7. **Notes regarding risk management and internal controls:**
   7.1. Statutory time for Retention of records is published in the Data Protection and Information Management Policy.
   7.2. General taxation. The PC do not pay tax as we do not have a trading platform (Market, Cemetery and Allotments are not classed as trading for the PC)
   7.3. VAT could be reclaimed quarterly but the majority of our VAT is paid in Q4. At the moment there is little benefit from quarterly claims. This may change next year with VH modernisation costs.
   7.4. Annual report for Parish Magazine with brief figures for turnover. This is planned for the May June issue.
   7.5. Succession planning is considered as part of our Risk Assessment. Two initiatives to support planning include:
   7.6. Implementation of a new off the shelf accounting system
   7.7. Microsoft 365 licence for the council with cloud backup and storage.
   7.8. Data management is a risk which needs management. This is covered by the proposed new Information Technology Policy at FC25:212 and the proposal before the F&GP committee to implement Microsoft 365 linked to the Parish Council domain.
8. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) – Assertion 10**
   8.1. Assertion 10 is a new statement the Council must provide evidence of compliance. This relates to Data Management, digital communication and Information Technology including website accessibility. WMPC need:
      - Information Technology Policy – for review on 16 March
      - A website accessibility statement – Approved at the 16 February meeting.
      - Data Security – Proposal for Microsoft 365 for the council brought to F&GP 9 March 26