

Wickham Market Parish Council – Clerk’s Report 15 November 2021

The new Clerk started on 25 October with no personal handover but was given some brief handover notes from the previous Clerk who left on 1 August. Since 1 August, essential work only has been covered by the Chair and some Councillors.

The first 21 days work has included:

1. Preparation and authorisation of a new bank mandate which is with Barclays for processing
2. Access to various systems, set up and passwords changed including:
 - 2.1. HMRC payroll services for PAYE
 - 2.2. HMRC VAT126 reclaim service
 - 2.3. Email
 - 2.4. Website
 - 2.5. East Suffolk Council (ESC) Register of Interests
 - 2.6. ESC Planning
 - 2.7. Rialtas cash book software
 - 2.8. Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)
3. Review of **essential** processes associated with immediate internal financial control. Providing recommendations for improvement with both the adopted processes and the internal control to ensure processes are followed correctly. This review has covered:
 - 3.1. Standing Orders
 - 3.2. Financial Regulations
 - 3.3. Committee terms of reference and delegated authority
 - 3.4. Bank signatories
 - 3.5. Further governance reviews will follow over the coming weeks
4. Essential data archiving in line with GDPR regulations to prevent some systems from locking out due to overuse of data storage
5. Electronic Records management:
 - 5.1. The Clerk’s computer is protected using AVG security software
 - 5.2. All records that the Clerk is responsible for are automatically backed up to an encrypted cloud SharePoint site using Microsoft 365 for business, in line with SALC recommendations to fulfil WMPC Financial Regulations 6.12.
 - 5.3. These records include elements of the Clerk’s email archive and data archives that are required by the Local Government Act 1972 to be retained
 - 5.4. Log in details and passwords for required external systems have been scheduled and passed to the Chair in a sealed envelope, in line with WMPC Financial Regulations 6.10
 - 5.5. Back up processes for WMPC website will be investigated in due course
6. Ensuring that Wickham Market Parish Council vacancies and co-option eligibility are confirmed with ESC Democratic Services
7. Liaising with external auditor regarding completion of 2020/21 audit
8. Scheduling and agreeing priorities for the next 30 days with WMPC Chair Including:
 - 8.1. Transparency, regarding publication of agendas and meeting papers
 - 8.1.1. **Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities** applies to authorities with turnover below £25k
 - 8.1.2. **Local Government Transparency Code 2015** applies to authorities with turnover above £200k
 - 8.1.3. There is no legislative Transparency Code for authorities with turnover between £25k and £200k. However, the Clerk intends to quickly work towards best practice, following the Local Government Transparency Code as a guide