

Wickham Market Parish Council – Clerk’s Report 21 March 2022

1. **New Bank Mandate** is complete and move to electronic payments is underway
2. **External Audit for 2020-21.** There is an outstanding Audit issue with PKF Littlejohn who are the external auditors. The challenge raised was in relation to WMPC not following its own Financial Regulations. Now awaiting a response from the external auditors
 - 2.1. **Remedial Action:** To assist Councillors with understanding different aspects of the council's responsibilities, a series of two-page quick reference guides have been prepared. These are all based on Legislation, Council Regulations and documented best practice fully referenced to source documentation. **(See agenda item 13)** These include
 - Role of the Clerk
 - Agendas and Minutes
 - Value for Money
 - New Councillors Guide
 - Conduct at meetings (In final draft format)
 - Transparency (currently in production)
3. **Rialtas accounting system** has been reviewed. The setup is not intuitive and like many software packages, it does not support analysis, which has to be done in Excel. It has not been possible to download data to support budgeting and analysis and there is a charge of £30 per hour for training. Therefore, a new Microsoft Excel model has been written and automated as far as reasonably possible, which provides:
 - Current year Cash Book
 - Budget, Prior Year Actuals and Next Year budget
 - Reporting and variance analysis
 - Bimonthly Finance report and Payment Schedules
 - Bank Reconciliations
 - VAT Reclaim
 - Reserves Management
 - CIL Reporting
 - Asset Management
 - Year End reporting will be added during MarchThe Excel model follows standard modelling principles and is fully supported by explanatory notes and instructions on its effective use, to facilitate handover should this be required
4. **Budget Review for 2021-22** has been completed and a Budget for 2022-23 has been approved
5. **Complete review of all WMPC Governance documentation (See Agenda item 14)**
 - 5.1. Update legislated documentation not approved since 1 April 2021. Review at March meeting
 - 5.2. Scrutinise remaining documentation and schedule appropriate review and adoption

Priorities for the next 60 days include

6. **Complete any work required for 2020-21 Audit review**
7. **Prepare for 2021-22 Audit including**
 - 7.1. Review of latest legislation
 - 7.2. Prepare a time scale schedule to ensure deadlines are not missed
 - 7.3. Prepare all year end documentation
 - 7.4. Engage with internal auditors to prepare an audit file
8. **Year End tasks include**
 - 8.1. VAT Reclaim
 - 8.2. CIL Report
9. **Website**
 - 9.1. Web site review required including
 - Layout
 - Information available
 - Converting files to pdf so they open rather than download. Also improves security
 - Accessibility Audit and statement – a legal requirement