

## Wickham Market Parish Council – Clerk's Report 21 November 2022

1. **External Audit for 2020-21.** Still awaiting a response from PKF Littlejohn who are the external auditors. This is now expected to be by mid January 2023
  - 1.1. **Remedial Action:** To assist Councillors with understanding different aspects of the council's responsibilities, guides for Transparency and Committees & Working Groups are in production
2. **WMPC Governance documentation does not meet the requirements** of the Police and Crime Commissioners for release of the approved £3k grant for the young adults group. Agenda item 15 has updated documents for review and approval.
3. **The Local Government Transparency Code 2015** applies to councils with a turnover of more than £200k. As WMPC is very likely to be in this position for 2023-24, the Council should apply the requirements of the code as soon as possible. The full code is 40 pages long but the Clerk has condensed this to a draft with 5 pages which is being further refined before publication to Councillors
4. **Children's Play area:**
  - 4.1. Smaller maintenance jobs are being attended to
  - 4.2. Leylandii hedge scheduled to be cut in November. It has been delayed because Norse are still cutting grass due to the extended growing season
5. **Newsletter:** not yet started because of a lack of Clerk's resource
6. **Grounds Maintenance Contract:** currently reviewing the correct process for tendering. A tender document showing the work required will be prepared for agreement at the December E&L Committee
7. **Allotments:**
  - 7.1. Most allotment rent letters were sent by email with only 11 sent by post. There is only one payment outstanding. Collecting activity included one email and one 30 day notice letter by post. Any outstanding bills on 30 November will receive an eviction letter with 14 days to clear their plot. This process has been agreed with the Allotment Association.
  - 7.2. Payment stats: BACS 66%, Card 21%, Cheque 13%
  - 7.3. Richard Ellis has ordered pedestrian gates for Glebe and will install as part of his regular maintenance time in the Parish
  - 7.4. Problem plot Glebe 39 with overgrown hazel trees is currently being addressed
8. **Maintenance activity:** As the growing season slows, Richard's work will reduce. The Parish Council should review project work such as significant cutting back of growth alongside footpaths which will make maintenance more effective next year. Richard will help with the Winter Market set up and take down
9. **Markets:**
  - 9.1. East Suffolk permits for the Hill Carpark for the Winter market have been arranged
  - 9.2. The East Suffolk license agreements are with ESC to arrange signatures
  - 9.3. An organisation check list has been developed and refined for documentation required for the Market to continue
  - 9.4. Grant of £1,930 has been received for the Winter Market
10. **Lighting sets for small trees have been identified.** These will be ordered w/c 14 November
11. **Quotes from six electrical contractors** were requested on 3 November to install lighting in the Plane trees on the hill. Two have declined and so far only one has responded. Expected costs for 4 sets of lights are likely to be £500 labour, £400 lights, £450 cherry picker = £1,350. For all trees expect £2,250. E&L October pre approved £2,200
12. **Website:** The Agendas and Minutes section has been reformatted to make it easier to find documents for the different meetings
13. **Suggested budget** has been prepared for review. This is the Clerk's view of a Zero-Base Budget. This means that receipts and payments are built up from knowledge and estimates of what to expect for 2023-24 given commitments and expected new projects. Although there are still some unknown lines, this does not simply take 2022-23 and add a bit for unknown increases – See item 21

### Priorities for the next 60 days above the regular demands of the role include

14. **Clerk Training:** Time each month to complete CiLCA qualification assignments as agreed
15. **Delivery of proposed expenditure plans** should they be approved
16. **Village Hall** working arrangements
17. **Website** A review of the website is required including an Accessibility Audit and statement