

Clerks Report May 2020

The Clerk and Parish Assistant are continuing to work from home and this has proved to have had no detrimental effect on the running of the Parish Council and NRCC. Sue James, the cleaner employed via NRCC has been successfully furloughed and Liz Goddard the caretaker has continued to carry out her usual duties, PPE has been purchased for her to enable to carry out these duties safely and she provides an update daily via email of duties she has completed or to report any issues.

Following an application to Norfolk Community Foundation we have successfully been awarded a grant of £1000 to support with the Covid 19 Community Response. These funds will be held by the Parish Council and will be used to support residents during this pandemic. Currently funds are being used to support the local emergency group 'NESS' and has purchased PPE for volunteers and paid for the printing of leaflets that have been delivered to every house in Necton. These funds are to be used, but not limited to supporting those experiencing hardship, cover volunteer expenses such as mileage costs and PPE for the volunteers. The Council are working closely with NESS and no doubt as we progress through the lockdown phases other requests will be considered.

The end of year figures have been prepared and the AGAR paperwork has been completed. This, along with our other paperwork and procedures will be audited by our internal auditor Jo Boxall. Due to the current position the Clerk will deliver all paperwork to Jo in order for her to complete this audit remotely. Once this has been checked she will produce her report which will be shared accordingly. PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors have confirmed that the submission deadline for the receipt of the approved AGAR and supporting documentation is Friday 31 July 2020. They have also confirmed that a new Statutory Instrument amends the deadline by which the Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) together with any certificate or opinion issued by the local auditor must be published from 30 September 2020 to 30 November 2020. Previously there was a requirement for all smaller authorities to have a common period for the exercise of public rights, being the first 10 working days of July. Under the new regulations there is no requirement for a common period for the exercise of public rights. Smaller authorities are still required to set a period for this purpose, but the only requirement is that the 30-day working period for the exercise of public rights should start on or before the first working day of September, i.e. on or before 1 September 2020. This SI was issued on 7th April and is effective from 30 April 2020.

Councillor Bateman has also completed the internal financial checks for the quarter. By using technology details of payments, bank statements and invoice images were sent via email. Thus, enabling a sample of payments and procedures to be checked and to find these all to be in order.

The Clerk was recently asked to investigate the speed limit on Dunham Road by a resident and whether this could be reduced, noting a road traffic accident occurred recently, whereby a car left the road and went through a hedge. The Clerk contacted NCC Highways who confirmed that if the Parish Council wished to submit a business case for a speed reduction to be considered this would need to be based on the needs of the majority of the residents and not one individual. They concluded by stating that all speed limits have been reviewed in line with their Speed Management Strategy to ensure consistency across the county. Therefore, unless there were major proposals for new development or a cluster of accidents that all involved personal injury then a lower limit would not even be considered. The resident has been informed of their response.