Clerk’s report (July 2023)

The Internal Audit report has been received. Actions required are to be discussed as Agenda item #57.

The **Parish Council** **website** has been updated to include new councillor Register of Interest forms. These now appear via a link to the FoDDC website at the request of the Monitoring Officer and in accordance with GAPTC recommended practice. If councillors would like a short biography and/or a face photograph added, they should notify the clerk. The following new pages have also been added to the website:

* ***Become a Councillor -*** including the Parish Councillor “job description” document provided by GAPTC and a co-option application form.
* ***The Daffodil Line bus service*** with a link to the current timetable.
* ***The Council’s Insurance Policy Schedule -*** an action from Internal Audit.

In the PC’s electronic accounts, **earmarked reserves** have been updated to include funds from the 2023/24 precept. New earmarked reserves have been created for ***IT Hardware replacement***and for a contribution to ***Village Hall Broadband*** if this proves to be required.

There is a new **Forest Plan** for Forestry England’s Dymock Woods, this defines the long-term vision for the woodland and sets out how FE will move towards achieving this over the next ten years. Appended to the Forest Plan will be the Dymock Woods SSSI Management Plan and the Michael Harper Reserves Management Plan. Councillors are asked to comment as part of Forestry England’s online consultation with stakeholders, available at https://consult.forestryengland.uk/ (select ‘Dymock Woods Forest Plan’). The online consultation will be open until Friday 21st July 2023.

**Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils** (GAPTC) has announced that Alison Robinson will be stepping down as Chief Executive Officer on 11 August 2023.

Councillors are invited to attend the **GAPTC Annual General Meeting** to be held on Saturday, 22nd July 2023 at 10.30am in Highnam Community Centre.

Councillors are reminded that the **clerk is employed for 20 hours per month** and that there is no provision within the budget for additional hours, therefore any tasks involving overtime need to be linked to an identified income source such as grant funding. Despite ongoing attempts to streamline processes, the clerk continues to struggle with completing all the necessary Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer tasks within the employed hours and requests councillor and parishioner understanding should it appear that responses or actions involve delay.

There has been increasing problems with sent emails bouncing back as undeliverable from **Gmail accounts**, this is due to Google increasing their security settings. To identify the PC as a ‘safe sender’ email authentication has been set up using digital signatures to verify the sender and integrity of a message. The ability to send emails to Gmail accounts is now restored.

Whilst in conversation with the domain provider to achieve the above, they carried out **security checks** and identified a recommended upgrade to add ‘Domain Lock’ and ‘Domain Guard’ available for £1 +VAT (one off fee) for the year. As the domain is very regularly targeted and shows multiple failed log-in attempts this offer was accepted. The Parish Council will need to consider whether this added level of security is required long term as the renewal price will be £15 +VAT per year (Agenda item #73).

Council is also asked to review the need for **additional security protection for the laptop**. A two-year McAfee subscription would cost £59.99 (£30/year). Currently the only protection is that included from Microsoft and a free download version of additional threat protection. (Agenda item #74).

**Upcoming GAPTC Training opportunities for Councillors:**

A reminder that all GAPTC councillor training can be booked online at: <https://www.gaptc.org.uk/training-and-events>. Please seek Chairman approval prior to booking and ask GAPTC to send invoices to clerk@kempleyparishcouncil.org.

* Being a Better Councillor Part 1 Thursday 13 July ONLINE 6pm
* Being a Better Councillor Part 2 Thursday 20 July ONLINE 6pm
* Being a Better Councillor Parts 1 and 2 8 July SATURDAY In person
* In the Hot Seat: Being and Effective Chairperson\* 26 July ONLINE 6pm
* In the Hot Seat: Being and Effective Chairperson 29 July SATURDAY In person

**Actions tracker:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Actions from Ordinary Meeting 15th May 2023** | **Date Set** | **Status** |
| clerk to notify GCC Elections team of co-optees. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to set up councillor email addresses and draft a protocol for use. | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to cost Fishpool bus shelter noticeboard & bring back for resolution. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| raise overnight parking/obstructive parking with County Highways | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| raise issues at Annual Parish Meeting: WhatsApp/group links/assets | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to record comments on the GCC Planning portal | 15/05/23 | Done |
| Cllr Reynolds to liaise with David Lewis regarding a Kempley ‘Home Page’ with links to different websites. | 15/05/23 | TBC |
| clerk to upload electronic version of 2017 Community Led Plan to the website and cross reference to the Welcome Pack. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to raise awareness of the council’s website via social media channels to increase traffic and improve visibility. | 15/05/23 | Ongoing |
| discuss Emergency Plan at Annual Parish Meeting. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| Cllr Goodwin to distribute footpath signs to farmers and clerk to source some more from GCC PROW Officer. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to obtain dog fouling signs for use in the village, a budget of up to £50.00 was agreed. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to draft a letter reminding parishioners of their responsibilities as dog owners. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to liaise on design and cost of replacing St Mary’s Church road sign | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| Cllr Goodwin to investigate cost of purchasing a suitable permanent cover for missing manhole cover outside Parkfields from Hereford Drainage for. | 15/05/23 | TBC |
| clerk to investigate cost of ‘No Overnight Parking’ signage. | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to raise awareness of Fly-tipping reporting processes via social media. | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to progress new noticeboard with volunteers | 15/05/23 | Ongoing |
| clerk to write to HCC Highways about the C1289 Much Marcle to Kempley Parish boundary road. | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to arrange site meeting with GCC Highways Manager | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to ask John Harper to contact Cllr Wood regarding Elizabeth Pyndar Trust trusteeship | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to add updated policies to website and adapt Asset Register to record asset checks where appropriate. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to send appointment form to GAPTC for Internal Auditor 2024 | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to send signed Exemption Certificate to PKF Littlejohn, Council’s appointed external auditor. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to post a notice of public rights on noticeboards and social media. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| clerk to raise a mandate variation to appoint Cllr Goodwin as signatory on the PC bank account. | 15/05/23 | Requires attention |
| clerk to circulate on WhatsApp the ‘Feedback sheet’ for use in the round-table discussions, to allow non attendees to also provide feedback if they wish. | 15/05/23 | Done |
| **Actions from previous meetings** |  |  |
| Clerk to contact Forestry Commission and fact find about boom access | 20/3/23 | ongoing |
| clerk to amend 04 Risk Assessment Policy for agreement at a future meeting. | 20/3/23 | Done |
| Update the Kempley Emergency Plan. | 20/3/23 | ongoing |
| Defibrillators: Put location information in the village welcome pack | 21/11/22 | Done |
| Use Parish Online software to record the location of existing and new carbon reduction initiatives identified through planning applications | 21/03/22 | Volunteer sought |