

**Clerk/RFO Report to Walberswick Parish
Meeting 13th April 2017**

1. I want to thank everyone for the warmth of the welcome I have received and for the information and support that has been so generously given. I truly believe that Walberswick PC, now quorate with the co-option of Councillor Josie Bassinette, is continuing its progress and building on the good work that Karen Forster so diligently began and progressed. The remaining 4 vacancies have now been declared and it is absolutely critical that villagers put themselves forward to fill them - **I cannot emphasise this enough.**

All councillors will have full training to prepare them to carry out their role within the law and to serve the community to their very best.

2. The last year had a very difficult start but Karen Forster's arrival in August set the Council on the path to recovery with its financial administration and the reinstatement of its Financial Standing Orders and compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. A Public Interest Report was issued by BDO, the Council's external auditor and this was the catalyst to putting controls and systems in place to return the Council to compliance. BDO issued a further, Issues Arising Report for the year 2015-16 which has been dealt with via a Report that was discussed by the Council at its meeting in March. Councillors accepted this report and resolved that it addressed the issues raised. This properly called Annual Parish Meeting, which is a statutory requirement for every village, is further evidence of that recovery. Many of the issues in the Issues Arising Report had already been dealt with in the autumn of 2016 as BDO had chosen to readdress some of the problems that had already been raised in the Public Interest Report.

The village website is crucial to WPC's compliance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. This requires that certain matters must be published on the site including Notices, Minutes, Agendae, financial reports etc. I would like to express my very real gratitude to Kay Ungless for all her help with putting items on the PC web page.

3. The accounts for the year 2016/7 are not complete but will be by the end of next week. These will then go to SALC, our internal auditor, and be brought back to the Annual PC meeting on 15th May for the Council to sign the Annual Return ready to be submitted to BDO.
4. At the end of the 2016/17 year Council reserves will be very low with an expected balance of around £5000.00. The Council has set the Precept for 2017/18 at £12,000 but funding applications for repairs to play equipment and other projects are planned. In the next few years the Council will need to rebuild reserves to a more acceptable level in order to maintain services.
5. I would also like to express my thanks to Philip Kett for collecting the Allotment rents and for preparing a very comprehensive list of village assets in order that the Council can study this and ensure that everything is included in its Asset Register and insured as necessary.

Mary Mitson-Woods 13/04/2017