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Kippax Parish Council Review and Action Plan

Approved: 21/01/2021 (Item 196a)

Signed by Chair, Councillor Martin Eyre

At the beginning of 2020, it became apparent to Kippax Parish Council that the council was not operating to a standard of best practice and was falling short on its responsibilities to effectively manage and safeguard public funds. This realisation was publicly declared in the council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) in which the council declared "NO" to the following statements:

- We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
- We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances
- We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required
- We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems

Whilst it is important to note that no evidence of fraud or deliberate malpractice has been identified, in order to rectify the maladministration that was taking place at Kippax Parish Council, the council resolved to undertake a number of measures:

- Thirteen councillors undertook bespoke full council training provided by the Yorkshire Local Council's Association (YLCA)
- The council commissioned the YLCA to undertake a 'Review of Governance of Kippax Parish Council' which took place from July-November 2020. The process undertaken as well as the subsequent report published by YLCA can be viewed at Appendix A

Changes to the council:

During this period of review, the former Clerk/RFO resigned from their position with Kippax Parish Council. Councillor M Biscoomb was appointed as Acting Clerk and Cllr M Eyre as the Proper Officer on 20th August 2020.

A new clerk was appointed on 23rd October 2020 and started the role on 23rd November 2020.

Former Councillor, P. Spivey was disqualified from his position due to a six-month period of unapproved absence and the council co-opted a new councillor, Councillor J. Simpson on 15th October 2020.

Former Councillor R Bentley resigned from his position on the Council in November 2020 and the vacancy is being advertised.

Action Plan:

The following action plan was devised and approved by full council at the meeting on 21st January 2021 following a review of the report with YLCA. The plan is informed by the council's learnings and the report published by the YLCA. The plan sets out the steps the council has committed to undertaking and the proposed timeframes in order to ensure the council is operating lawfully and in adherence with best practices and effectively managing public funds whilst serving the community. At each stage of the process, the council has consulted with the YLCA to ensure any new policies and processes are fit for purpose and effective.

DATE	ACTIONS
August / September 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create an 'Action Log' to document all agreed actions and progress for use by the Acting Clerk and new Clerk when in position.2. Revise the format of all agendas and minutes to ensure all actions and decisions taken by the council are accurately and clearly documented and understood by all councillors and members of the public and that the correct wording is being used.3. Establish a Personnel Committee with an initial focus on reviewing the requirements of the council for a new Clerk/RFO and creating a subsequent job description and vacancy pack. Review the policies the council should have in place to effectively recruit and manage its employees.4. Create a Training Policy for councillors and employees which demonstrates a commitment to continued training and development.
October 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Revise the Terms of Reference for all committees to clearly demonstrate the delegated powers and responsibilities of each committee.6. Create a robust Terms of Reference for the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee to clearly define the committees responsibilities for carrying out internal controls on behalf of the council.

	<p>7. Establish an Internal Controls checklist which clearly stipulates which checks have been carried out each month by the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee including: checking payments have been authorized correctly and invoices correspond, checking HMRC liabilities have been met, ensuring cheques are signed and issued correctly, ensuring the cashbook is up to date, checking the bank statements and bank reconciliations, monitoring receipts and income and ensuring VAT is recorded and reclaimed.</p> <p>8. Draft and approve a suite of policies that the council should have in place including: Complaints Policy, Freedom of Information Policy, Vexatious Policy, Media Policy, Recording Meetings Policy, Rules of Public Session, Administration of Agendas and Minutes Policy, Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p>9. Draft and approve a suite of Employment-related policies that the council should have in place including: Stress Management Policy, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Annual Leave Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Equality Policy, Sickness and Absence Policy, Grievance Policy, Substance Misuse Policy, Appraisal Policy</p> <p>10. Arrange full council training on the Code of Conduct and relevant topics including conflict resolution and meeting conduct – 8th October</p>
<p>November 2020</p>	<p>11. Review and revise the Grant Application Policies, Forms and Terms and Conditions and Expenses Policy</p> <p>12. Review all employee contracts to ensure they are up to date, fair and relevant and in line with local council sector guidance.</p> <p>13. Appoint an experienced Clerk/RFO who has relevant professional qualifications or a commitment to obtaining the qualifications at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>14. Review the council's 20/21 budget and the reserves for operational costs and earmarked projects</p> <p>15. Undertake full council GDPR training to understand the requirements and legal obligations of the whole council with regards to GDPR practices</p>
<p>December 2020 – March 2021</p>	<p>16. Undertake a review session with the YLCA to discuss the report</p> <p>17. Review and revise the councils Standing Orders and Financial Regulations</p> <p>18. Undertake and approve a Financial Risk Assessment.</p> <p>19. Update Asset Register and review insurance cover</p> <p>20. Create a budget for 21/22 and consider the precept</p> <p>21. Publish Register of Interests and Approve Dispensation Request Forms</p> <p>22. Undertake a full data audit and develop the relevant GDPR policies and practices for the council including Records Management Policy, General Privacy Notice, Privacy Notice for Councillors and Employees, Consent Form and Consent Management Policy, Security Incident Policy</p>

	<p>23. Create a new 'Publication Scheme' for the council detailing what documents are available and commit to publishing as many documents as possible on the council website for accessible public review</p> <p>24. Review the council's internal audit requirements and appoint a new internal auditor to carry out a thorough and detailed internal audit of financial and procedural practices</p> <p>25. Draft and approve all outstanding policies that are recommended best practice to having including Health and Safety Policy, Lone Working Policy, Flexible Working Policy, Chairman's Allowance Policy, Communications Policy, Photography Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Business Continuity Plan, Scheme of Delegated Powers, IT Policy for councillors and employees.</p>
<p>March 2021 onwards.</p>	<p>26. Produce an update report detailing which actions have been achieved and implemented and what tasks are still outstanding</p> <p>27. Commit to working towards obtaining Foundation Level of The Local Councils Award Scheme (LCAS)</p> <p>28. Arrange Chairmanship training for all Chairmen of committees/council</p> <p>29. Implement electronic banking for Kippax Parish Council</p> <p>30. Establish accounts with relevant providers for the purchase of goods</p> <p>31. Develop a strategic plan for the remainder of the council's term</p>

YORKSHIRE LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATIONS
REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE OF KIPPAX PARISH COUNCIL – 2020

Background summary

1. Kippax Parish Council is a council in the area of Leeds City Council. The electorate of the parish is around 7,600 people. The parish council has 16 councillors who represent three wards. The Council is a fairly new authority being created in 2004.
2. Kippax parish councillors tend not to represent political parties. The current Council's term of office began in May 2019 and will end in May 2023.
3. The Parish Council has a Clerk /Responsible Financial Officer and one other member of staff, a Caretaker. At the commissioning of this report, the Clerk was contracted for 10 hours per week. At the publication of this report, the Council has recently made a job offer to a successful candidate on a completely revised job description and sufficient hours to do the job required.
4. The chairman of the Council, Cllr M Eyre, was appointed to the position in May 2020.
5. Prior to the Council commissioning this report, the councillors and clerk had seen relationships becoming strained and YLCA had noted an increase number of enquiries to its advisory service. The deterioration continued to a point where these Associations offered to conduct an external review of governance to try to bring some understanding and cohesiveness to the roles and responsibilities of the people involved.

These relationship difficulties seem to have their origins in differences over the way the Council is run and whether proper procedures are followed. Internally, this led broadly to some members of the Council being dissatisfied with the governance of the Council and actions of individual councillors and clerk.

Methodology

1. This review has not been about investigating any specific complaints or grievances, including any specific past incidents. Our focus has been on working with the Parish Council to address the way it could operate more effectively in the future; not to adjudicate on things that may have happened in the past.
2. The YLCA review team consisted of two people – Sheena Spence (Chief Officer) and Nicola Moorcroft (Local Councils Officer).
3. In carrying out this review, we had the full co-operation of everybody that we spoke to at the Parish Council and we would like to thank them for the open and constructive way in which they approached the review and were willing to answer our questions and provide us with all relevant information we requested. Four councillors were not interviewed for various reasons although every member was contacted by YLCA.
4. Our proposal set out five aims:
 - a. To review the council's processes and procedures to ensure that the right tools are in place to allow the council to operate effectively.
 - b. To understand what the underlying issues are and help the council, its members and its officers to consider how they can work more effectively and as a team.

- c. To help the council's reputation through demonstrating that there is a culture of high standards and good governance.
 - d. To ensure there is a good understanding of the different roles of members and officers of the council and that both can do their job effectively; and
 - e. To develop an action plan to help the council resolve its difficulties and work cohesively moving forward.
5. To carry out a review we divided our work into six phases. These six phases were:
- Phase 1** – A YLCA officer sitting in (as a member of the public) in the July meeting of the full council plus two of its committee meetings in that month.
- Phase 2** – To prepare for and hold discussion meetings (40 minutes) on a one-to-one basis with the chairman, councillors and the clerk to help us to understand the underlying issues and current state of governance. This phase was to be conducted via remote meetings. The same questions were asked of everyone involved as far as that was possible. The clerk covered how the Council is administered.
- Phase 3** – Analysis of the results of the council meetings and one-to-one discussion meetings.
- Phase 4** – To undertake a thorough review of the council's current policies, processes, administration and management.
- Phase 5** – To produce a report that will encompass our findings and recommendations coming out of attendance at meetings, the process of interviews and the policy/procedure review and to present the report and its recommendations to the Council. (This meeting is to be held but it may not now be needed because of what has transpired between the commissioning of this report and now).
- Phase 6** – To draw up a plan of action, based on discussions with the council and feedback from the phase 5 meeting. Part of this plan will be continued support from YLCA to ensure that it is implemented effectively and has long lasting positive results.
6. Meetings attended for phase 1 were the Communications Advisory Committee, Finance and Corporate Governance Advisory Committee and Planning Committee, all held on 6 July 2020 and attended by N Moorcroft. Although it was intended to attend the full council meeting in July, this meeting was not formally held as it was found that the requisite three clear days' notice had not been given. N Moorcroft attended an extraordinary meeting of the full Council on 20 August.

Phase 2 was completed in July and August.

Phase 3 was completed by YLCA between September and October. This was delayed slightly due to sick leave.

Phase 4 has, we feel, been overtaken by events, mainly the resignation of Mr C Child, the former Clerk, Cllr M Biscomb being appointed as the Acting Clerk and Cllr M Eyre as the Proper Officer. In the period since the resignation, the Council has worked with YLCA under its advisory service to produce, review and implement several new policies, addressing many aspects of the Council's administration.

Phase 5 is this report. It may be possible that improvements are such that the Council will take the written report and work through its recommendations, some of which may already have been dealt with. However, the offer of attendance at a meeting to discuss these remains on the table if needed.

Phase 6. We are aware that many of the actions that would have been encompassed in a plan have been addressed by the acting clerk. Again however, we are prepared to assist with the compilation of an action plan as originally undertaken should the Council feel that this remains necessary.

Findings and recommendations:

Observations from the Council meetings that we attended.

These observations are a collective, not from any specific meeting.

Observations	Recommendations	Action for improvement/resolve
<p>Chairmanship – the decision making process could be clearer and better structured</p>	<p>The chairmen of full council and committees to ensure that they try to accommodate everyone’s views fairly, manage the meeting well and ensure that decisions are made where these are needed. In the decision making process, chairmen will remember to go through the action recommended opposite to ensure a lawful decision is made.</p>	<p>Chairmen to attend training in Chairmanship provided by YLCA and if unsure about their role, to contact us to discuss any difficulties. If committee chairmen need assistance, they can contact us for information (not for advice for the Council however).</p> <p>There is a lot to manage at a council meeting. If a chairman has forgotten to go through the recommended process, another councillor can constructively remind them that this is what needs to happen.</p> <p>Chairman to try to ensure that everyone is heard at a meeting. However, councillors to avoid repetition in the interests of time and giving everyone a chance to put differing views forward.</p> <p>Chairmen will: Summarise the debate; Invite a proposal; Ensure the proposal is seconded; Ask for those in favour of the motion to vote by show of hands (or whichever method is used at remote meetings).</p>

		Ask for those against to do the same; If necessary, ask for any abstentions. This process will be undertaken relatively swiftly and effectively.
Committee agendas compiled by committee chairmen, not clerk.	That committee agendas are compiled by the Clerk. This will be clearly written as a responsibility of this officer in the job description for this post	We believe that this issue has now been addressed, but if not, our recommendation should be followed.
Insufficient notice of meeting	Notices of meeting and agenda to be either posted in a conspicuous place in the parish or on the parish website and as a matter of good practice in both locations	We believe that this issue has now been addressed, but if not, our recommendation should be followed.
No information provided to members of the public on how to join a meeting	The joining link for a remote meeting, be that full council or a committee meeting must be shown on the agenda or notice of meeting, ie freely available to any member of the public without having to request it.	To implement this recommendation if the practice has not yet been altered.
Agendas not sufficiently detailed to comply with the requirements of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972	The agenda must specify the business to be transacted and the items must be sufficiently described to support lawful decision making	We believe that this issue has now been addressed, but if not, our recommendation should be followed.
Minutes of meetings, poor quality	Historically, the minutes have been produced within the agenda document. In our view, they have been lacking in detail.	We believe that this issue has now been addressed, but if not, our recommendation should be followed.
Incorrect wording on the agenda for councillors to declare their interests		We can see from recent agendas that this issue is now resolved.
The item 'Any other issues' on the agenda	Bearing in mind that an agenda item must be specific to support decision making, any issues raised under a non-specific heading of 'Any other issues' does not support decision making. This	Councillors to ensure that whenever they contact the clerk to request an item for any agenda, the provide a form of words that is sufficiently specific to support decision making.

	<p>applies to the full council meetings and committee meetings.</p> <p>Best practice is not to have the agenda item and councillors being aware that they contact the clerk with any items that they want including on the agenda.</p>	<p>Remove this item from all agendas and issue instruction to councillors to supply specified agenda items in writing to the Clerk.</p>
<p>Legal powers to act not confirmed</p>	<p>The Clerk (and Chairman to some extent), should always ensure that before any action is agreed by the Council there is a legal power to act. The Council has undertaken some actions in the past, that in our opinion it did not check the legal power for, an example is the production and selling of the village calendar, including the VAT implications</p>	<p>Legal powers to be identified by the Clerk and by taking advice from YLCA if necessary. Councillors to be vigilant about this and not agree to any action until everyone is sure that there is a legal power to act. If the Council is unsure of a legal power, it should defer the matter at hand, consult with YLCA and then be able to make an informed decision at the next meeting.</p>
<p>Lack of financial documents presented to meeting to enable councillors to have a good knowledge of the authority's finances or budget against spend position</p>	<p>Information to be provided at the monthly full council meetings to include a list of payments to be made on the agenda (or in an accompanying paper), invoices to be seen by councillors (a system to do this should be arranged for remote meetings), monthly bank reconciliation and comparison of spend against budget</p>	<p>We note that improvements have been made in this regard already. The new Clerk should be clearly instructed in what financial documentation the Council needs to see at Council meetings. Set out this requirement in the Financial Regulations (if not already detailed in that policy).</p> <p>Financial information to be provided with council papers, ie at least three clear days' in advance of the meeting. Again, this can be incorporated into the Financial Regulations as a policy of the Council so that everyone is clear how this will work.</p>
<p>Lack of terms of reference for committees</p>	<p>Completely revise all terms of reference</p>	<p>Much of this work has now been done and the Council has adopted new terms for all its committees.</p>

<p>Submission of planning responses to the Local Planning Authority by Chairman</p>	<p>That this task is part of the job description of the Clerk</p>	<p>Hopefully, this task is now included in the Clerk's job description that has been prepared as part of the recent recruitment exercise.</p> <p>The Clerk may need training in how to respond effectively to a planning application. Attendance at a YLCA planning course.</p> <p>Councillors to also attend planning training (where they have not already done so).</p>
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Observations from our discussions with councillors and the former Clerk.

We are aware that since these discussions there have been changes in the Council and some of these issues may now have been addressed.

Roles and Responsibilities – Councillors and employees

<p>Concerns reported</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Action for improvement/resolve</p>
<p>Lack of understanding of the role of the clerk and of being a councillor</p>	<p>A robust job description for the clerk. Councillors to understand their role.</p> <p>Councillors acknowledge that the new clerk will work differently to the previous clerk – the job description provides for this. The new clerk will have responsibility for much more and actions agreed by the Council will be dealt with by this officer. If councillors, including the chairman, try to take over what is from now on the clerk's role, there will be relationship breakdown.</p>	<p>We understand that the job description of the Clerk has been completely reviewed and re-written as part of the recent recruitment exercise.</p> <p>Councillors to be informed of YLCA ongoing training programme by the Clerk, join in the free discussion sessions provided by YLCA and have access to the YLCA website to obtain information and guidance.</p> <p>Clerk to be instructed to circulate YLCA information to all councillors when it is received.</p> <p>Councillors to have a copy of the suite of 'Good Councillor' guides (if not got them already).</p> <p>Council to include a budget provision for training of councillors, clerk and</p>

		<p>caretaker.</p> <p>Delegation to the clerk to approve the training requests of councillors and training that he/she feels is relevant for the caretaker within the scope of the relevant budget. Clerk training requests to be approved by the Personnel Committee.</p> <p>Induction pack to be produced for new councillors.</p>
Human resources and employment procedures poor	<p>Improvements to be made in the management of employees. To include appraisal and performance</p> <p>Council and clerk to appreciate that it is the Council that instructs the clerk in his/her work. The Clerk should not be resistant to reasonable instruction that is within the remit of his/her job description. The same applies to the Caretaker.</p>	<p>The Council has a Personnel Committee which is now meeting regularly. It needs to continue to do that and to ensure that in the terms of reference for this committee, that the body has delegated power to act in employment matters where this is deemed necessary.</p> <p>Uniform appraisal process to be applied to both employees.</p>
Untrained Clerk	<p>Clerk to be trained to the level of being a 'qualified' clerk, ie Cilca.</p> <p>Clerk to also take training opportunities offered regularly by YLCA</p>	<p>That the Clerk's Contract of Employment compels him/her to undertake the Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) and the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).</p> <p>Clerk to be allocated a 'line manager' or perhaps better described as a 'liaison point', (someone from the personnel committee would be sensible), who will liaise with the officer regularly, discuss workload, work priorities, care and consideration for the employee and any other issues that arise. Preferably someone if possible, with experience in this task but if not, someone that</p>

		<p>understands what is required and someone with a friendly and understanding disposition.</p> <p>The line manager of the Clerk will report to the Personnel Committee and will appreciate that he/she cannot decide on any issues relating to the employment of this officer.</p> <p>Have due regard for the fact that the new Clerk will need time to get familiar with the Council, its policies and its procedures.</p> <p>For the Caretaker this may be the Clerk (as part of the job description). Reporting to the Personnel Committee.</p>
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Policies and Procedures

Concerns reported	Recommendations	Action for improvement/resolve
<p>Councillors acting in matters without prior approval of the Council, including making expenditure</p>	<p>This must stop. It is difficult when councillors are enthusiastic and want to get on and get things done, but this cannot be at the expense of the Council acting unlawfully and the creation of liabilities.</p>	<p>Use powers to delegate decision making to the clerk where needed, ie for expenditure that is approved – to pay between meetings.</p> <p>Electronic banking with effective security measures, to be established if it does not already exist.</p> <p>If by not making a decision, there will be a liability on the authority, ie a decision must be made and there is no delegation for the purpose to the Clerk, the chairman will convene an extraordinary meeting so that the action being proposed can be specified the agenda and a lawful decision made upon it.</p>

<p>Councillors paying for goods and services, particularly the chairman, and then being reimbursed for them.</p>	<p>This method should only be used in exceptional circumstances</p>	<p>The Council needs to establish accounts with providers so that it receives a VAT invoice (where the company is registered to charge VAT).</p> <p>As all expenditure should be approved or delegated, there should be no need for personal payments to be made.</p>
<p>Lengthy meetings</p>	<p>Everyone present can help to reduce the time taken at meetings and this may indeed have reduced due to holding remote meetings</p>	<p>Chairman to be succinct in handling agenda items. Handle decision making effectively as explained above in this report Councillors to propose that business is moved on if they feel that a matter is ready to reach a conclusion.</p>
<p>Actions agreed taking a long time to come to fruition</p>	<p>Keep an ongoing decision log so that members can keep tabs on decisions made and what has been done to address them.</p>	<p>Clerk to be instructed to create the log which will be updated daily if necessary and presented to the main monthly full council meeting. This will be a constantly evolving document.</p>
<p>Uncertainty as to council policies</p>	<p>Well informed councillors</p>	<p>All councillors to be given a copy of all adopted policies and committee terms of reference.</p>
<p>Village Services Group</p>	<p>To ensure that everyone concerned has a good understanding of what this group does and how it acts.</p> <p>Our recommendation would be that it is the clerk that reports the issues raised by this Group to Leeds City Council or other relevant body.</p>	<p>To discuss this group's remit with the Clerk as he/she will need to understand how it works. Normally, the reporting of matters such as are undertaken by this group, would be done by the clerk and not done by councillors direct.</p> <p>Ensure that everyone knows how to get up to date information on action taken by the Group, or the clerk be tasked with ensuring that</p>

		information is distributed regularly to all.
Council reserves	Comply with the recommendation for reserves as set out in Governance and Accountability (Proper Practices) March 2020	To add to an agenda item (probably aligned with the budget discussion), to review reserves alongside the guidance stated. Ensure Financial Regulations contain a provision for the level of reserves to be kept, ie no more than 12 months running costs unless the Council has earmarked the funds for a specific capital acquisition.
Decision making processes	All decisions to be made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 39, ie at a meeting or via delegation to the clerk.	Decisions taken in no other way than recommended and explained above. No decisions made by councillors, always at meetings or by delegation to an officer.
Timing of committee meetings	Acknowledgement that by holding meetings in normal work hours, the council could be marginalising some councillors	Have regard for this recommendation and hold meetings at times that are convenient to as many councillors as possible.
Lack of information between meetings	Keeping all councillors informed and updated is vital.	Minutes of meetings to be typed within one week of the meeting where possible and circulated to councillors for information. That would be a reasonable instruction for the Council to give to the Clerk, acknowledging that from time to time there may be extenuating circumstances causing the minutes to be slightly later than instructed. Councillors to remember that aside from minor typos which can be notified to the clerk in advance, the place to propose amendments to draft minutes is at the meeting at which the minutes are approved as a true and

	correct record.
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Behaviours

Concerns reported	Recommendations	Action for improvement/resolve
The excessive number of E-mails between councillors	Only liaise with each other between meetings if it is really necessary to do so. Otherwise, it will be the Clerk that is sending information out and it is this officer that councillors will discuss matters with. Refrain from complaining and copying everyone else in. Try to resolve complaints informally wherever possible to avoid relationship breakdown.	Heed recommendations. Complaints from councillors to be dealt with either via the chairman for minor complaints or the council's complaints procedure or disciplinary procedure (if complaint about an employee).
Clash of personalities	Acknowledge that this will happen	Have respect for everyone's views and consider these when put forward. Think before speaking or acting.
Lack of patience at meetings and unpleasantness in meetings	Acknowledge that not everyone present will have the same degree of understanding of some issues as others. Remember why you are a councillor, ie to work with others on the council to deliver services and facilities for the people of the parish. That takes teamwork and trust. If trust is not present, the current councillors are not going to be able to deliver for the people.	Everyone, particularly the chairman, to be reasonable in exercising patience. However, when action needs to be taken, the chairman should politely explain that he is moving on with the business and do that as seamlessly as possible. Chairman to lead by example. Differences to be put aside so that the Council works together for the people.
Councillors to participate in meetings	All involved to acknowledge that some councillors do not want to participate in their council other than attend the monthly meeting. This is fine and has to be accepted by other, perhaps more active members.	Everyone should use their seat and particularly their vote wisely. Read papers beforehand, ensure that you join in discussions, vote and give a view. If you are not doing this, ask whether your seat could be better used by

		someone else.
Possible improper use of the council's e-mail account	Councillors to fully understand what they can, cannot do with the e-mail account that they are allocated	A clear policy to be established, which explains the do's and don'ts of using the council's e-mail account including data protection and that the account is private to the councillor only, no one else.

Going forward

Concerns reported	Recommendations	Action for improvement/resolve
Not recognising the need for a strategic plan or action plan for the remainder of the term of office of this Council	Forward planning is necessary in local councils even though many do not do it. It feeds into the budgeting process and gives a council an opportunity to ask parishioners what they want or need from the Council in the next few years.	Look for examples on the Internet and use the expertise of councillors who are prepared to do some work on this. Draw the new clerk into the exercise. If necessary, convene a meeting specifically for the purpose of planning for the future and looking at what can be achieved during this term of office.
Worried that the Council may not embrace change?	It will need to do so to act lawfully going forward	All to acknowledge this. Acknowledge that Kippax Parish Council is a local authority and as such it must adhere to legislation that is laid down for it.

Moving on

The next stage is for the Council to receive and consider this report and its recommendations. There may be a number of questions arising from it and if so, we suggest that a remote meeting is held with YLCA so that everyone has opportunity to ask these and hear our responses. As mentioned above, we are unsure whether there is now need to draw up an action plan to address the adoption of policies as many of these are now drafted and some are already in place. We can be led by the Council as to its requirements in this regard.

YLCA
October 2020.