

## ITEM 5 ENVIRONMENT AGENDA

The below email was received from ESCC:

Dear Council,

I am writing in relation to the **rural** grass cutting service for 2023. For 2023 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is offering all Parish and Town Councils the option of reduced rural cuts to aid biodiversity. This is being done as an extension to an ongoing trial that took place in 2021 and 2022. We have provided some further information in the attached document and would be grateful if you could let us know whether your Council would like to take part this year.

### **Response Deadline**

If you would like to be involved, please let us know by **Friday 3rd March 2023**, we also ask that all Parish and Town Councils who wish to be involved advise how they will notify their residents. This has previously been done through social media, minutes from a meeting or a Newsletter.

### **The following feedback was submitted to ESCC as a result of WPC being part of the trial in 2022:**

The success of the rural verge trial was discussed at great length at the parish council's September 2022 Full Council meeting.

The council agreed that the rural verge trial was a success and it was a positive move towards supporting environmental issues. Some councillors noted a reduction in speed of passing traffic at certain points.

We did have a few residents who raised concerns over sightlines and some residents took matters into their own hands and mowed the verges themselves. However, I cannot confirm if these verges were part of this trial or if they were the verges included in the urban grass cutting service.

The parish council did note that it would have been easier to judge the success of the trial if there had been some official documentation available from yourselves that summarized the results of the data you had been collecting.

We had considerable support from the Wild About Warbleton Group who regularly had members of their group attend Full Council and Environment meetings to inform the council they were continuously monitoring the levels of biodiversity of the verges and they were very pleased with the results. They also regularly re-affirmed this via email.

The parish council would like the option to consider taking place in future rural trials.

If ESCC could provide maps of the routes that could easily be uploaded onto a parish council website that would be a positive step for the future. Also, a report which showed the findings of this year's trial for the website. This would clarify to the public exactly what is happening

to verges and why. It would also help alleviate the public's suspicion that this is as much a money saving exercise as it is for saving the environment.

I hope you find these comments useful and if you need any clarification on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**The urban grass cutting options have no relation to the rural grass cutting trial.**

**Warbleton Parish Council resolved Option 1 at Full Council in September 2022**

### **Grass Cutting Maps**

You can now access the [grass cutting maps online here](#), please scroll in on the map until the grass loads. This map is being continually updated and validated by our asset team and they welcome any feedback through the contact us button within the link.

Please be advised, the m2 for Urban has been validated for this year and the allocated amounts confirmed as below. Any changes to the map will affect the allocated amounts for the following year. All Parish/Town Councils receive the same amount per each m2.

### **Options**

**Option 1 - Standard:** Two cuts over the course of a year to be carried out by ESCC at no cost to the Parish Council. Urban grass will be managed for safety purposes only.

**Option 2 - Extra cuts:** Parish Councils may fund an additional four cuts to be carried out by ESCC, totalling six cuts (two standard and four extra) over the course of the year. This would cost the Parish Council a total of £172 for the year.

**Option 3 - Self delivery:** Parish Councils take on responsibility to deliver all urban grass cutting in their area. This must include a minimum of two cuts over the course of the year. ESCC will not carry out any urban grass cutting in the area. ESCC would pay the Parish Council the sum of £86 to do this.