

Clerk Report February 2021 Full Council

CLERK NEWS

On the second week of every month, I will be working for Warbleton Parish Council on a Wednesday instead of Thursday. I will email all Members the week before to remind them of this change.

I attended my first CSAG (Community Safety Action Group) meeting on the 25th January. CSAG meetings will take place every four months, lots of local representatives will be invited as well as the Inspector for the local area. The next meeting will be May 24th at 10am. A Councillor will have the opportunity to attend with me and I can also submit any reports regarding Parish Council concerns.

All attendees had received Cllr Smythe's report on Road Safety prior to the meeting. Crime data was discussed and compared to this time last year. The results showed a decrease in crime although the police attributed this to the pandemic. 90% of reported crime takes place in Upper Horsebridge, Hellingly and Hailsham. There was one reported commercial burglary in Warbleton. The police have several different campaigns running currently. In an effort to reduce rural crime a letter is being sent out to 350 businesses in rural locations. They will be asked to download an app which provides moment to moment suspicious activity which feeds straight to the police.

Road safety is a priority across each CSAG. Speed Watch groups are being supported, there had been ticket activity before Christmas and a blitz approach with an increased police presence in the area with hot spots noted which included Rushlake Green. They recommended that any data collected by local Speed Watch groups should be taken to the next meeting. I will liaise with Cllr Smythe.

The police are still compiling a list of all local organisations and volunteer groups that the local Community Police could communicate with on issues of crime prevention and safety; this includes: Residents' Associations, Neighbourhood Watch Groups plus any other relevant community organisations. If possible, please could you send me the contact details of any such groups you are aware of in our parish obviously with their prior permission.

I have attended the New Officers Finance webinar organised by SSALC and run by Keith Robertson, Warbleton's Internal Auditor which I found very helpful and informative.

I will also be attending the Year End Finance webinar organised by SSALC on Tuesday 16th February.

Lastly, I will be attending the SLCC Practitioners conference from 23rd – 25th February. The cost of £75 has been split between the three Parish Councils. There are approximately nine different webinars per day and I am hoping to gain lots of useful information.

CORRESPONDANCE RECEIVED/ANSWERED

I have received 10 items of correspondence from members of the public since the last Full Council meeting. All correspondence has been answered and if relevant circulated to all Members.

UPDATES FROM THE LAST FULL COUNCIL MEETING

The Internal Auditor has been booked for Tuesday 27th April. The Clerk, the Chairman of the Parish Council and the Chairman of F&GP will be attending the virtual audit.

I am continuing to chase Trevor Leggo regarding Resolutions en masse. He has yet to respond.

Wealden District Council have confirmed receipt of the Parish Council precept request.

East Sussex County Council have acknowledged the Parish Council's decision to not take part in the Reduction in Rural Grass Cutting Trail.

As a result of Bob Bowdler's and Bill Bentley's request I have been in contact with Karl Taylor the Assistant Director of Operations at East Sussex County Council regarding the licence costs charged to Parish Councils. Disappointingly the response was:

"The fees charged by the County Council for these licences are agreed annually by Full Council as part of the Council's budget setting, so I am afraid I am unable to offer any discount or dispensation. I do have to ensure these charges are applied fairly to all those who wish to place objects on the public highway. The licence fees are set out by ESCC and not Costain and they are not new."

Adding Cllr Graham to the bank mandate is still ongoing.

St John the Evangelist BSG passed on their thanks to the Parish Council for both grants, they have been very gratefully received.

St Mary the Virgin Church Warbleton have expressed their gratitude for the grant awarded by the Parish Council.

David Morris the Police Community Support Officer has been sent a zoom invitation to the Full Council meeting.

GENERAL NEWS

I have been informed by the Chair of the Village Players that owing to an uncertain situation regarding COVID-19 their production of "Way Up Stream" which was due to be performed on Rushlake Green Village Green from 23rd-26th June has been cancelled. They are hoping to put on a production in the Dunn Village Hall in November.

A member of the public has brought to the Parish Council's attention a fingerpost in need of repair. It is located at the junction of Chapmans Town Road and Kingsley Hill and is leaning at an angle. The base appears to have split and rotted. This item has been added to the February CIL agenda.

Due to the continuing COVID-19 social distancing regulations Wealden District Council will be sending the Local Hero certificate straight to Tony at the Rushlake Green Village Stores and the Parish Council will also receive a copy.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

A meeting has been arranged for Thursday 4th March at 6.30pm.

A permanent Chairman is still needed for this committee. Please contact me directly if you are interested in this position.

Wild About Warbleton have been consulted regarding items for the agenda.

A member of Wild About Warbleton has requested that Councillors on the Environment committee visit Barley Mow Lane to see the damage caused by hedge-cutting and ditching in very wet weather. If anyone requires any more details please contact me directly.

Orchard Landscapes have confirmed there will not be any contracted work starting before the meeting.

DAVID BYSOUTH BENCH

I have now received 3 quotes for the installation of the David Bysouth bench. All the quotes were higher than previously agreed at Full Council. This will be an item on the next CIL agenda for consideration.

BODLE STREET GREEN NOTICE BOARD

A new location for the notice board was agreed at the January CIL committee meeting. It will now be situated on the front of Bodle Street Green village hall to the left of the main entrance doors.

As a result of this decision the Parish Council no longer need to obtain any licences from Highways which will be a saving of £445.50.

The notice board also no longer requires legs and a new quote has been received from Jakk Country Furniture for £500, £240 cheaper than previously agreed. Thank you to the Chairman and Cllr Velten for chasing the quote on my behalf.

It was agreed at the CIL meeting to add locks, an additional £30 and infill the engraved words an additional £20.

To conclude the new location has saved the Parish Council £635.50.

I am in contact with the secretary of the Bodle Street Green village hall who has confirmed in writing they agree to the notice board location. They would also like to convey their thanks to the Parish Council for the notice board provision. I am awaiting final confirmation of the agreed contact who will liaise directly with Jakk

Country Furniture when the notice board is fitted. I am also awaiting information on the two different lock options offered by Jakk Country Furniture before I can proceed.

BODLE STREET GREEN GATES

I have now received confirmation from Robin Hayward an Enforcement & Claims Support Supervisor that the costs of the licences required should the Parish Council decide to go ahead with this project (subject to approval by ESCC Traffic & Safety and the LIS sign off) are as follows:

We will need 1 X Structures Licence (s115) to cover the number of Gateway Structures we decide to have and approved by way of a Schedule. The cost of this licence at present is £58.28, however in line with ESCC approval there are small increase in the licence fee as from 1 February 2021. This licence will then cost £60.14.

However, each site where a Gateway Structure is to be installed will need a Highway excavation licence (s171). The cost of each licence is currently £387.22 and as from 1 February it will be £399.61. They will also carry out the necessary searches where the excavations are to take place to identify the locations of any buried utility apparatus within the highway.

This will be an item on the CIL agenda to discuss the viability of the project. The extra cost of the licences needed would total £1,258.97.