

CLERK REPORT JULY 2023 FULL COUNCIL

It has been another busy month and as you all know I have sadly handed in my notice. My last official day will be Tuesday 1st August. I will be supporting the council through the process of recruiting a new Clerk going forward.

The picnic benches have been installed at the Bodle Street Green Village Hall and they are very pleased with them. At the moment, they do not offer disabled access. However, it would be easy to unbolt one of the seats from the main frame to rectify this.



The picnic benches at Ruslake Green have also been installed and I have been informed they have been very well received. Pictures of the benches have been sent to WDC for their portfolio of CIL projects.



I have updated the council website and all the new councillor details are now online.

I have advertised the new Flexibus with a poster at the village shop, notice boards, village halls, Osborne House, and the parish council website.

Speed Watch were invited to speak at this Full Council meeting but unfortunately a representative was not available. A representative is hoping to attend the September Full Council meeting.

New councillor training courses are available. Please let me know if you wish to enrol in any training. Cllr Sterling has already completed planning training and is being enrolled on a LANTRA Basic Tree Survey and Inspection course at the South of England Showground, Ardingly on Wednesday 27th September. There is a training session for councillors/officers who already have good knowledge of the planning system but want to keep up with all the consultations and proposals for changes which are constantly emerging, plus what this might mean at local level. The course has been organised for **6.30pm on the 18th July** on zoom. The session should last for approximately 2 hours at a cost of £40+vat per attendee.

A date has been organised with Ian Johnson to analyse the speed survey results - Wednesday 9th August at 10am at the Dunn Village Hall. It would be great if as many councillors as possible can attend to ensure we can make informed decisions using the data going forward. Thank you to Cllr Long and Cllr Bowdler for volunteering their time so far. Ian Johnson will also be presented with the signed agreement from the council regarding the number and position of the speed roundels for Rushlake Green. I will also be bringing to his attention the response from ESCC regarding the delineation line at the front of the Osborne House car park. They have stated they do not have any records showing a white line outside Osborne House and the first available Google Maps image in March 2009 did not show any white lines. They appreciate that the area across the vehicular access to Osborne House looks like it is a designated footway, however they would suggest that this is because this area has likely been resurfaced at a different time to the running carriageway. Footways are not continued across vehicular accesses and they would not install a white line across a vehicular access to delineate a pedestrian route.

I have attended a webinar on essential documents for a parish council and will present some new policies at the September Full Council meeting.

Cllr Ansell represented the council at the CSAG meeting on the 25th May.

Unfortunately, Cllr Ansell and Bowdler were unable to attend the WDALC meeting on the 12th July.

A plant sale took place on the Osborne House car park. Thank you to Cllr Long for help with the signage and coning off the area. It was very successful and thanks were given to the parish council.

Cllr Ansell has very kindly printed copies of a map of the parish for all councillors.

I attended a meeting for all Clerks at the Ringmer Depot where an introduction and presentation was made by Balfour Beatty the new Highways contractor.

Balfour Beatty already have several existing contracts with large councils so have a proven track record. The back log of cases they took on, approximately 4000, are now nearly completed with only 100 still outstanding.

A new operational control hub will be shortly opening at Ringmer. There will be large screens in a big office space where employees will be located. Their performance statistics and live targets will be constantly displayed on these screens.

A pot hole repair should last 2 years. Any additional repair works required before this time-frame expires is completed at the cost of the contractor.

Their contact centre is outsourced. They confirmed that additional staff will be available during busy periods and staff are rotated to cope with the type of calls they receive. They believe this will offer the consumer a better-quality service.

Once the parish council has set up an account it will be possible to view all their open and closed cases at once.

If you reporting a defect, please do include photographic evidence as this will help the contact centre to classify the severity of the defect quicker.

To summarise Balfour Beatty are promising an improved service as a result of:

- A better quality of repair work
- A higher number of gangs in place to complete repairs
- An extra steward is now in place to cover annual leave
- A high level of supervision – photos are taken before, during and after any repair work has been completed. 100% of work can be audited.

Unfortunately, the problem of gangs repairing a group of potholes but leaving one unrepaired if it has not met the criteria has not changed.

There is now an additional £5m available for drainage and patching as well as an additional £15.7m that can be spent on the roads.