**ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

On behalf of the Parish Council and its Officers I wish you all a Happy and hopefully Prosperous New Year

**Council Meetings.** The dates for the next Council year have been published. The Annual Parish Meeting is on 5th March at Winchelsea Beach.

Council meets on 2nd Monday of the Month. Dates for Winchelsea are April, August and December. For Winchelsea Beach they are January, May, September and January

**Winchelsea.**

In October I wrote about the Marsham Older People’s project. This month I write about a project for Winchelsea residents, **The Winchelsea Car Ring Service.** The Mayor tells me that this important service for those who do not have a car, is not being used and it appears that some residents are unaware of its existence.

This service is designed to assist residents without transport get to medical appointments, either at the Conquest Hospital, Rye, Winchelsea and District Memorial Hospital or any of the Doctor’s Surgeries serving the Parish. It would go further afield if necessary. There are 11 volunteer drivers, so that even if you needed to use the service regularly for a few weeks, the load would be spread amongst the volunteers, so you would not need to worry that it was imposing on one driver.

If you need to use the service please ring Nathan or Danny at Winchelsea Farm Kitchen (01797 226287) with the date, time and location of the appointment. They will then organise one of the 11 volunteer drivers on the car-ring to act as a **FREE taxi service** for the appointment.

I know how difficult it is to get to the Conquest by bus. I also know from personal experience that some of the clinics they run cannot offer the treatment you attend for, if you have driven yourself there. Using public transport is not usually acceptable either.

**So please use the service which the volunteers so willingly provide.**

**Traffic Calming** – The speed survey has taken place. The Clerk was hoping the results would be received in time for Council to debate it on 13th November. Unfortunately, it had not been received in time for the November Meeting

**Winchelsea Beach**

**Bus Passenger Shelter**

The Clerk and myself were due to attend a site meeting with Stagecoach and ESCC Highways representatives on 5th December. This was the day after the Christmas submission deadline.

**November Council Meeting**

**Consultations from Rother District Council.**

**Decriminalisation of Parking**

Rother had asked for views on three issues:-

Do we want them to ask ESCC to introduce decriminalisation of parking across Rother District?

Do we want to enforce just the existing parking restrictions or make changes (which will delay the implementation of the scheme)?

Do we support paying the cost through local taxation or introduce parking charges?

The Council agreed to respond yes to Q 1, as soon as possible to Q 2 but they were regrettably reluctant to be so positive about the question of who pays. They resolved to offer no comment to Q3.

**Public Space Protection Orders.** The Council asked for Flyposting to be added to the issues to be covered by the Orders. Flyposting is a particular concern in the vicinity of the A259 and Sea Road junction.

**Budget for next financial year.**

The Council has had a preliminary meeting to discuss the first budget draft prepared by the Officers. The Officers are now revising the budget as Council determined that the precept should not increase by more than 2% on last year’s precept. This does not quite keep pace with inflation but is not likely to create any financial problems in the short term.

It was noted that the level of donations received from users of Rye Harbour car park had already exceeded the figure projected in this year’s budget. Some of this income was attributed to the Council agreeing to the use of the car park by film units during photo shoots. Something which we hope will continue in the future.

**Annual Audi**t. The Clerk report that the external auditors had completed the audit with full assurance and no comments.

**Winchelsea Beach Community Hall**. Council approve the usual grant to support the Community Hall.

**Rother Rural Trust**

This is a local grant fund to which the Parish Council contributes each year and overseen by the District Council. It provides funds for those in need in our area. Recent grants have included funding a student's expenses at Plumpton College and the start-up costs for a community friend's scheme and it will consider any worthwhile local need if it can be demonstrated that the cost cannot be met from other non-grant sources.

If you know someone locally or a local group who could benefit from this, please contact one of your Councillors with details, so that an application can be considered.

Peter Turner