**ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

The January meeting of the Council had a very light agenda. The meeting took 55 minutes and most of that time was taken up by public questions and reports from our Principal Council representatives.

We met at Winchelsea Beach and as you might imagine, with tankers outside the front of the building a lot of the time was taken up discussing the sewerage problems. The good news, if it can be described as such, is that Amber Rudd has already asked Southern Water for a full report on the current unacceptable problems. Despite the amount of work done sealing the sewers, at the first sign of real rainfall, the tankers are back. We are told that it is partially due to a technical problem with Morlais Ridge pumping station.

One issue that did come out of the meeting was that many residents are not reporting problems, as they don’t wish to be a nuisance. I can only stress how important it is that all issues are reported as soon as possible. You are welcome to report them to the Clerk or one of your Parish Councillors, so that we can take them up with Southern Water on your behalf.

The other issue that caused your Councillors some concern was a report that Southern Water were suggesting that residents were likely to be charged for calling out Southern Water to clear drains, after the first two call outs. If the reason for the call out is that the sewer is surcharged, that is Southern Water’s responsibility and they should not seek reimbursement from their customers. Please keep the Clerk informed of any suggestion of a charge related to the sewer being surcharged. These will be taken up as a matter of urgency.

**The Great British Spring Clean**

The Parish Council has again agreed to organise a clean-up in our villages over the weekend of the 2nd to 4th March – we will be arranging meeting points and equipment - if you would like to take part in any of the teams in our 4 villages then please let the Parish Clerk or one of your Ward Parish Councillors know.

These sessions have been both enjoyable and a great way to show you care about your community in the past. Be lovely to see you there. More details to come nearer the time.

**Shaping the Future of England's Strategic Road Network**

This is a consultation by The Highways Agency relating to motorways and main trunk roads. The document and the form to send a response can be found at <http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/shaping-the-future-of-englands-strategic-roads-ris2>

Responses need to be in by 7th February 2018.

Your Parish Council has expressed concern that there appears to be less intended investment in the very busy South East and what there is, is mostly North -South, rather than East-West. Would you want to see more investment in, say, the A259? This is your chance to express your view on future Strategic Road Investment in our area.

**2018/19 Parish Council Budget**

This has now been set at £170,234 and will represent an increase of under 2% on the Parish precept. You are unfortunately likely to see a larger increase from Rother, East Sussex and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

**Annual Parish Meeting**

As I indicated last month, this will take place on Monday 5th March. The full agenda will appear on the Parish Notice boards about two weeks before that date. Inspector Dan Russell of Sussex Police has confirmed that subject to any operational demands he will attend the Meeting. If you have any questions on Police matters, please let the Clerk have the questions by the 28th February so that she can give Inspector Russell advanced notice of the questions he might face.

**Winchelsea Beach new bus passenger shelter.**

The Clerk and myself met with representatives of East Sussex Highways and Stagecoach on 5th December. The outcome of that meeting was that Stagecoach are asking East Sussex Highways to insist on works which they want but are not willing to contribute to. They are expecting the Parish Council to pay. They even raised the issue of bus stop signs, which they think the Parish Council should pay for. The main work they want is the raising of the kerb height, in association with a build-out to make wheelchair access possible, without the driver having to get out a ramp.

We are currently waiting for detailed information from East Sussex Highways on exactly what works they think are necessary, before they will agree to licence the erection of a bus passenger shelter within the highway.

My concern is that these demands will increase the costs beyond the budget that the Parish Council can make available. I will report further once we have the detailed information and can estimate costs.

Peter Turner

.