

CLERK'S INFORMATION SHEET FOR
EARDISLAND PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 18 FEBRUARY 2016

4.1 Safer Neighbourhood Teams work with local people and partners to identify, tackle and solve issues that matter to the community where you live. Your team: PC 3911 Jo ELLIS Mobile 07977 098394; PCSO 6115 Dick ALLFORD Mobile 07968 462523; PCSO 40067 David BODEN 07970 176814.
Get in touch: Tel:101 to talk to your local SNT or report a crime. Email: kw.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
Website: www.westmercia.police.uk Facebook /Twitter @NHfdShireCops
No update received since last meeting

4.2 Roger Phillips, Email: rjphillips@herefordshire.gov.uk
This is the time of the year when the Council sets its budget and the Council Tax. Extracts from the full briefing note on the impacts of the Government's settlement and the medium term financial plan to ensure the Council remains solvent are given below. In the ten years from 2010 to 2020 Herefordshire Council have and will make over £87 million of savings. The headlines are that the Council Tax will increase by 1.9% plus the Chancellor's 2% social care levy. The police and Fire are also looking at a 1.9% increases. The Government's plan is reduce their revenue support grant, which use to account for a third of our budget to zero by 2020. Leaving Local Authorities funded by just by Council Tax, Business rates, fees and charges.
We have a very strong community life around our parishes and last week the new Community awards were launched to recognise extraordinary contributions in our community. Details can be found on www.herefordshire.gov.uk/champions16
Some particular events to mention this month are the Pop up Pub at Lyonshall village hall on Saturday 20th and on the same day at the Pembridge Coffee morning the Police will be attending with various gadgets for household security. In the New Inn on the 19th is a promise auction raising money for a Leominster Meeting Centre for people with dementia and carers. The Centre will open on 1st February 2016 and is located at the Multi-Agency Offices in Coningsby Road, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8LL. Funds raised will go towards much needed activity equipment. Locally a company has taken over the Kington Surgery practice running the back office and supplying an additional full time doctor and new practice manager. The walk-in service lead by Mrs Christine Johnson is very successful and I think has helped considerably with the pressure on doctor's time. In this month's update, I summarise the figures for last October of the grey boxes I had installed 10 years ago in my three main villages and I also give a report of my experience with a planning inquiry. The ward contacts are at the bottom of the Finance briefing.
As ever if I can be of any help please do not hesitate to contact

Roger

Traffic Monitoring

Ten years ago I had monitoring boxes installed in Shobdon, Pembridge and Lyonshall and I enclose the traffic numbers and types of vehicles that went passed the boxes in the month of October in 2015 and 2014. I wasn't representing Eardisland at the time and they do not experience the volume and scale of traffic of the other three. The figures are a seven day average and during the working week the figures are higher particularly in Shobdon figures. Next month I will share with you the speeding figures. I have used these figures consistently to ensure we have the evidence on the impact of vehicle movements through our villages. I have recently submitted to the Local Transport Plan to impress that the monitoring continues and also the impact on listed buildings.

October 2015

SHOBDON had 3,579 vehicles travelling per day (including motorcycles) on east side of the village. With 2,896 cars, 506 Ridged lorries, large vans and minibuses, 150 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

PEMBRIDGE 2,626 vehicles per day (incl Motorcycles) on the western exit of the village. With 2,057 cars, 403 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 129 Articulated HGVs\Buses

LYONSHALL had 2,031 vehicles per day (including motorcycles) at the Curl Bridge. With 1,608 cars, 324 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 53 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

October 2014

SHOBDON had 4,027 vehicles travelling per day (including motorcycles) on east side of the village. With 3,243 cars, 552 Ridged lorries, large vans and minibuses, 204 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

PEMBRIDGE had 2,587 vehicles per day (including motorcycles) on the western exit of the village. With 2,012 cars, 413 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 135 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

LYONSHALL had 1,995 vehicles per day (including motorcycles) at the Curl Bridge. With 1,585 cars, 308 Ridged lorries, large vans and mini buses, 54 Articulated HGVs/Buses.

I have consulted all my Parish councils on highways in the Parish that they consider should be submitted into next year's capital programme. There is not as much funding as the last two years but clearly plenty of issues. If you need to report any defects please use links below. <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/cg-report-problem>

Planning Appeal

Last year I looked after the Mortimer ward following the sad loss of Cllr Olwyn Barnett and succeeded in supporting the community and persuading the planning committee to reject the building of 45 houses in Leintwardine. The applicant appealed against the decision and this month I attended the appeal in the Town Hall and gave evidence to the planning inspector. I was cross examined by the applicants barrister on the impact on the landscape, local affordable housing, infrastructure and the sustainability of the local area.

After three days the appeal finish and I will be interested in her decision. What is clear to me is that developments in our rural villages must be of a proportionate nature enhancing the community and countryside, reflecting the needs of the local area and not adversely impacting on the local landscape and infrastructure. Large numbers in one application like this one ride roughshod over the desire of local communities.

COUNCIL BUDGET and Medium Term Financial Plan briefing notes.

At the Council meeting in February the Council will have the following proposals to debate with the attached briefing notes.

- i. approval of a 1.9% increase in council tax in 2016-17;
- ii. approval of an additional 2.0% increase in council tax in 2016-17. This will result in a total council tax increase of 3.9% increasing a total band D charge from £1,275.10 to £1,324.83 for Herefordshire Council in 2016/17;
- iii. approval of the draft 2016-17 revenue budget (at appendix 1 to this report);
- iv. approval of the draft medium term financial strategy (MTFS) which incorporates the capital programme approved by Council on 18 December (at appendix 2 to this report);
- v. approval of the draft treasury management strategy (TMS) (at appendix 3 to this report); and
- vi. in the event of final central government funding allocations being above or below the provisional settlement level any variation is managed by an adjustment to general reserves.

Central government has reiterated its commitment to achieve a budget surplus by 2020, as a result of this Herefordshire Council is having to address challenging financial conditions, entering year seven of a ten year 'austerity period'. The council is on schedule to meet these challenges, delivering savings of £59m by the end of 2015/16.

Whilst focused on delivering services to residents it has been necessary to reduce the size of the council, demonstrate efficiency and ensure good use of resources by:

- Reducing the workforce.
- Rationalising buildings we owned in order to centralise in fewer business centres.
- Making stronger connections across public sector organisations – making resources go further.
- Reducing wasted expenditure on paper, and shifting as a first choice to digital, in our offices.
- Supporting the shift of staff to mobile working, rather than from fixed locations.

Council will be asked to approve the 2016-17 budget on 5 February 2016. It will also approve the medium term financial strategy and the corporate plan to 2019-20.

Autumn statement

The Chancellors autumn statement on 25 November included the following specific announcements that impact Herefordshire:

- Support (as yet unquantified) to secure launch funding to create a new university in Hereford, focused on engineering, in 2016.
- Provision of £250m nationally over the next five years to tackle potholes, details awaited.
- The introduction of a new apprenticeship levy at 0.5% of employer wage bill from 2017/18, £200k for Herefordshire plus a further £200k for schools.
- Reductions to the education support grant by 75%, 10% in 2016/17. Herefordshire receives £1.5m. The local authority role in running schools is expected to be reduced and a number of statutory duties will be removed. However, Herefordshire has already reduced or removed a number of activities covered by the current non-ring fenced grant.
- Higher costs for rural areas to be recognised by quadrupling the current sparsity grant by 2020.

Provisional funding settlement

The provisional local government settlement 2016/17 – 2019/20 was announced on 17 December 2015 and included additional reductions in revenue support grant (RSG). It was subsequently updated by the department for communities and local government (DCLG) on 23 December 2015 and for Herefordshire:

- Reduces RSG by £25.9m (98%) in 2015/16 to just £0.6m in 2019/20.
- A standalone sparsity grant of £1.3m in 2016/17 rising to £4.1m in 2019/20.

The rural delivery services grant has been removed from the revenue support grant (£1m in 2015/16) and allocated as specific grant funding (£1.3m in 2016/17) in recognition of the additional costs incurred when providing services in sparse areas such as Herefordshire.

Adult Care Precept

Council debated whether it should levy the additional 2% precept at its meeting on 18 December 2015. It resolved that council should strongly consider the 2% precept in respect of adult social care and requires the Executive to consider how this money can be best used to protect services, continue to further transform our local health and social care system, reduce demand and ensure improved services for some of the most vulnerable citizens now and in the future.

For Herefordshire this means that funding of the net budget requirement for 2016/17 has moved from the 2015/16 position to an overall loss of funding of £4.4 million.

2016/17 pressures

Pressures have been reviewed as part of the budget process and revisions made. The government will introduce a national living wage from April 2016 of £7.20 per hour at age 25 and above, rising annually so that by 2020 it is 60% of median UK earnings per hour which, based on data available, is likely to be around £9.30 per hour.

Savings have been reviewed as part of the budget process and revisions made.

- The council tax reduction scheme funding passed to parish councils is withdrawn in 2016/17. Cabinet on 3 December recommended this to Council for approval and for five parishes: Bromyard and Winslow Town; Kentchurch; Kington Town; Ledbury Town; and Leominster Town parish councils, where the impact of withdrawal would result in an increase in the annual council tax charge of 0.4% or more in any one year the withdrawal be phased over a period of up to three years.

Savings plan 2016-17 to 2019-20

The council delivered £59m of savings in the financial years 2010-11 to 2015-16. An additional £28m of savings in the financial period 2016-17 to 2019-20 have been identified. This gives total savings for the financial period 2010-11 to 2019-20 of £87m.

Ward Contacts

If you want to discuss a planning matter please contact: mttansley@herefordshire.gov.uk

If you have a planning enforcement concern: Debbie.Crowley@herefordshire.gov.uk

5. Barclays Bank will now only allow transfer of funds between current and savings accounts with a letter signed by 2 account signatories. This raises risk of cheques being presented before transfer has occurred and cheques not being honoured. As interest on savings account was only £8.75 last financial year and £1.49 in current year, risk outweighs gain and Clerk suggests closing savings account for now. Situation can be reviewed if interest rates increase greatly.

- 7.1 Lengthsman report for work in January/February – cleaning off gully tops and white lines, kerbs round drain on Church Lane/School Lane junction

- 7.2 Footpath Officers – Please see attached photos which hopefully clarify the report.

Jan 19th - Walked most of ED1B to check details so we can order new materials from Herefordshire Council to make improvements to this PROW. Recent heavy rain, frost and cold conditions made the path particularly difficult to negotiate. Unable to access PROW from Home Farm - discouraged by loose dog who did not seem very friendly! Drove round to access on A44. Found well-built stile (Photo 1). Met resident of house opposite stile, Hayley Hanson - very helpful, noted that very few walkers using the path in recent times. A44 cuts across the path at this point - traffic at speeds in excess of 60 mph. Any form of gate inappropriate because of potential risk to livestock and danger to walkers with children or dogs. Stile too high for easy access but very sturdy. Propose an extra step and will order the necessary timber. Also finger post as advised in Oct report by locality steward and clerk. Continued across Home Farm - too boggy to get further than slurry pit. Another finger posts required here (making a total of 4 new finger posts up to the bowling green access in the village - see aforementioned Oct report)

2nd stile pictured below (Photo 2) is also on A44 - again not safe to replace with a gate but too high for comfortable access, particularly on field side where it drops away. Suggest two new steps, one low down on field side and another, higher than current step, crossing the second bar of the stile. Also tyres to be removed. Unable to cross field here because of boggy conditions so drove round past Pigmore Common to other end of the PROW. Met owner of Round House, Mrs Williams - very accommodating - gave permission for metal kissing gate to replace stile on her property (Photo 3) allowing easier access to ditch bridge. Mrs Williams keeps PROW on her land very well maintained. Next stile sturdy and safe. Third stile is unsteady and poses risk to walkers. (Photo4) Another metal kissing gate recommended but need landowner's permission. Two complaints received referring to ED7. Second stile beyond Weir towards Pembridge. See Photo 5. Dilapidated stile surrounded by waterlogged area. Need to discuss this with landowner. Also way marking inadequate on this section of ED 7.

A copy of this report has been sent to Locality Steward, Lara Edwards, who will provide landowners' contact info and pass on the order for materials to Hereford Council when we have the necessary permission to proceed.

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Clerk now clarified – P3 can be spent on betterment, ie metal kissing gates instead of stiles, waymarkers, finger post installation – but not for repair or maintenance of stiles eg. extra steps for stiles etc.

- 7.3 Eardisland in Bloom – We will report back on 10th March. The bin opposite Staick House needs some running repairs which I think the E Team can deal with.
- 7.4 Play Area – All appears in order following the weekly checks. Cost of inspection £50.60 +VAT
- 7.5 EVH – Suggestion made that PC could arrange Broadband access in the village hall as a wifi hotspot. One-off connection cost of installing phone line £30 + one-off £6.95 for home hub delivery; ongoing cost for unlimited Broadband and line rental £32.99 per month = £395.88 per year. Would not need to have a handset.
- 7.6 Website – Work to revamp website underway. Clerk speaking to Glenn at caravan park shortly re sponsorship.
- 7.8 Cost of Sentry box is £595 plus delivery and kiosk signage is £25. Need electrician to connect it, cost approx. £80. Emergency telephone is £341 installation + £1/week running cost. Can also have training for £175, but WMAS may provide it free – Clerk following up on this. Need to get agreement who will do weekly checks of the box and who will cover when needed.
- 7.9 Tree assessment undertaken 11.2.16, report awaited. Diana Palmer undertaking Tree Warden training session on 20 February.
- 7.10 Email from Balfour Beatty and response: Joel.Hockenhill@bblivingplaces.com, 22 Jan - I regret that this scheme is not listed in the 2016/17 annual plan, we have a restricted budget and all potential schemes have been prioritised and ranked accordingly. Joel
Response from Parish Clerk - Thank you for your email. The pooling that is now occurring outside Swandrift is the direct result of the resurfacing undertaken in 2014 by Balfour Beatty or its subcontractor. Therefore what is required is not new work but correction of a situation caused by work undertaken. It does not seem acceptable that any corrective work must now wait until 2017-18, especially given that this issue was first drawn to the attention of Balfour Beatty in November 2014, within about a month of the resurfacing being done!
- 7.11 Walk from Hay Bridge to Twyford on 26 January – some work needed, waiting for input from Matt Kerry. EA will not remove tree on caravan park unless it falls and blocks the river! Flood reporting form only available online at HC site, waiting for information about hard copy version
PROPERTY LEVEL PROTECTION EVENT – Saturday 5 March 10.00-12.00 in village hall – need to agree flyer and distribution.
- 7.12 Chain of bonfires/beacons planned for Thursday 21 April. Clean for the Queen litter pick 4-6 March.
10. Correspondence – received as follows:
- From HC – Funding update for January and February
 - From HC – Change to rural litter bin emptying
 - From Clerks and Councils Direct – January magazine
 - From HC – Service to Civvy Street leaflet
 - From HC – Community Champions Award for 2016
 - From HC – Call for Sites for Gipsies and Travellers
 - From Herefordshire Rural Hub – E-newsletter
 - From BB – Parish newsletter
 - From HC – Affordable warmth strategy meeting
 - From HALC – Information Corner with attachments