

CLERK'S GENERAL REPORT FROM 23 APRIL TO 31 MAY 2016.

Finance/Administration.

1. Accounts up to date.
2. VAT refund for 2015/16 now received.
3. Precept (1st 1/2 year); Localism Fund and Collection Fund grants received - £6,652 in total.
4. BDC Street Cleaning Agreement invoice submitted in the sum of £1,796.76 - submitted late due to BDC not sending details to the correct email address.

Public Footpaths.

1. ECC (Footpath 60, Rivenhall) (Temporary Prohibition of Use) Order 2016. - The effect of this order is to temporarily close that length of footpath from its junction with Forest Road to its junction with Footpath 58. The closure is scheduled to commence on 1 June 2016 and may continue for 6 months and is required while ballast works are undertaken due to poor track quality.
2. Network Rail intend to consult locally on the possible closure of the main line level crossing at Footpaths 45/48. Consultation to commence in June 2016 on their initial options for the crossing closure, and the second in August/September on the preferred option.

General Maintenance.

The entry to the revised Best Kept Village Competition has been submitted.
Request submitted to BDC for the re-erection of "No Parking" signs on the Village Green.
Copy of the maintenance contractor's Risk Assessment Form received; copy of Public Liability Insurance Certificate to follow after renewal.

BDC Local Plan.

Nothing further to report at this time.

Essex Police.

The new Essex Police contact person for Parish Councils is now PCSO 70666, David Endersby; Email at david.endersby@essex.pnn.police.uk

Rivenhall Airfield - Waste Incinerator Site.

Nothing further to report at this time.

Braintree District Local Highways Liaison Panel.

The very latest information remains as follows:

- a. 7.5T weight restriction, Oak Road - New advance signage installation has commenced.
- b. Extended 30mph limit along Church Road. Public consultation underway. **The Police have objected.** ECC officers are asking the Cabinet Member if he will override the objection or not. Implementation by Autumn 2016 if he does..
- c. Grass verge outside 51-53 Oak Road - ECC confirm that grasscrete had been installed and the Chairman agreed to request that it be made good.
- d. Rectory Lane - Quiet Lane status approved. ECC being asked what is the status of RPC request to stop up the Witham end of the lane to vehicles whilst keeping it open for pedestrians and cyclists.

ECC Proposed Bus Fare Increases.

A consultation is being launched on Monday 9 June into changes to bus fares on services provided by Essex County Council. ECC propose an increase of about 5% for the next three years - about 10p per ticket.

Tarecroft Wood.

BDC Clean Team will attempt to clear litter from this woodland.

Following the meeting on 18 April ECC replied as follows:

Set-out below is the work that will be undertaken this spring and summer to inform and support the woodland conservation management that ECC propose to undertake in the autumn/winter of 2017/18 as part of a Countryside Stewardship agreement that encompasses the County Council woodland estate - circa 300 hectares of ancient woodland across 25 sites.

Spring/summer 2016 works/tasks:

- Hazard/H&S surveys - an arboricultural consultant from ECC's Place Services will conduct a site inspection to assess the health status of individual trees with a view to ensuring the continued safety of woodland users.
- Ecological surveys - a Place Services specialist will survey the woods in-line with FC/NE guidance to gain a better understanding of the location of legally protected species such as bats, badgers, breeding birds, dormouse and great crested newts.
- Essex Wildlife Trust - Later this month ECC will be meeting John More who is EWT's Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) officer to discuss conservation management required to conserve and enhance the special features for which Tarecroft has been designated a LoWS.
- Woodland Inventory - ECC have commissioned Clive Ellis an independent woodland expert to undertake an inventory of our woodland estate, and he will visit Tarecroft in May to age and map the different vegetation communities and provide recommendations with regard future conservation management.
- Elms - the presence of a block of elms in a woodland setting is an unusual and special feature of the woodland. The identification and taxonomy of elms is quite complex and ECC intend to send cuttings of the trees to elm experts at the British Natural History Museum to have them precisely identified and to help inform any necessary conservation to ensure their long-term survival.
- Trust for Conservation Volunteers - ECC are currently working together with TCV (formerly BTCV) to submit a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop a 3-5 year volunteer work programme to help undertake tasks that help local communities better understand and protect the historic and natural heritage of ECC woodlands such as Tarecroft.
- Money for car park and interpretation - A modest amount of funding has been secured from Essex Highways towards improving the access (including the Car Park surfacing) and interpretation at Tarecroft. RPC will be updated in advance of the works being carried out - hopefully in June.
- Woodlands website - ECC have commissioned a local company called FrontMedia to develop a website that will provide information about ECC woodlands to members of the public such as why they are important, what is special about each one and what access arrangements are in place. If any Members have any good photographs of the woodland it would be great if ECC could use them on the website.

ECC Highways Maintenance.

Nothing further to report at this time.

Highways England

Arrangements have been made for representatives from HE to have an informal meeting with the council members on Friday 13 May 2016 at 14.00 hours in The Henry Dixon Hall.

Liaison with Chairman.

Liaison with the Chairman upon various items of correspondence, the agenda for the next meeting and planning application documents as necessary.

Keith Taylor (Parish Clerk)
31 May 2016.