

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

At our council meeting in October we approved the Rogate & Rake Neighbourhood Plan Submission document. The document along with supporting evidence in a Basic Conditions Statement and a Consultation Statement will be submitted to SDNPA who will initiate a further consultation round before appointing a planning inspector to examine the documents. After any issues have been resolved there will be a local referendum to approve (or otherwise) the plan.

We had an update on the threat to our local bus services as WSCC grapples with further reductions in its budget for next year. We are taking a significant role in the NW Bus Group which is co-ordinating responses to the WSCC review of bus strategy and support for non-commercial services. It is possible, perhaps likely, that WSCC will look to district and parish councils and SDNPA for contributions to the financial support of these bus services. An alternative would be for us to set up a Community Bus scheme using local volunteer drivers. Either way, the costs involved are significant, well beyond the scope of our current budget, and therefore would require an increase in our part of your council tax. This seems yet another example of cuts in services at county and district level having to be taken over and financed at the parish level; and probably less efficiently.

Meanwhile as part of our encouragement of greater use of these valuable bus services, we heard that the replacement of three dilapidated bus shelters is scheduled for December / January.

We have been in discussions with Rogate Youth Club regarding the contractual arrangement around the employment of the youth worker and I am pleased to report that these have now been resolved. The Parish Council provides the funds for the part-time youth worker and all councillors re-affirmed their continued support of the Youth Club.

It was reported that the accounting procedures for the Community Land Trust were now in place.

The Parish Council has a discretionary grant fund that is allocated at this time of year. If you are involved in a local club or organisation and need extra funds for a specific project or piece of equipment then we may be able to help. If you want to know more, contact me or the clerk (clerk@rogateparishcouncil.co.uk).

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