

Rogate Parish Council Chairman's letter

It only seems like yesterday I was typing the first newsletter of 2023 and now it is time to look towards 2024. Makes you think how fast time flies.

In the December newsletter I mentioned that we were seeking a budget increase of 5% for 2024/25. This is 5% based on the total sum collected in 2023/24. The allocation on the council tax bill is based on the number of properties in the parish and a notional band D rate is used. We have since been informed by Chichester DC that the number of properties now exempt from council tax or are on a reduced council band has increased by 20. As a consequence, whilst the total amount has increased by 5% the percentage amount on the council tax bill will be slightly higher due to a fewer number of properties paying the full rate. In terms of £s, the percentage increase amounts to an additional £3.82 a year for a Band D property.

Apart from the strange way the bill is calculated the big question is what we do with the money. The most obvious factor is, as we all know, everything has gone up in price. We need to invest in and maintain our playground equipment. We must also continue to support the churchyards and maintain our open spaces as well as providing some financial support for worthy community projects.

We have good news on the proposed reduction of the speed limit to 30mph along Rogate Road near the Jolly Drover. We had been told that the proposal had failed at the penultimate stage because it was not supported by Sussex Police. On behalf of the residents along this stretch of road, Councillor Adrian Collins and County Councillor Kate O'Kelly successfully challenged this decision of WSCC highways. The proposal is now to be taken to the final stage which is public consultation before being implemented.

We need to consider closely this experience in deciding on the way forward for our application for speed limit on Fyning Lane. We are still awaiting the outcome of our Community Highways Scheme submission for a 20mph zone in the centre of Rogate.

At the start of the month we became aware that the District Council were threatening to remove the green waste collection services from the spur roads at the north end of Fyning Lane. A big thank you to Tim O'Kelly, the District Councillor, for his excellent work in removing this threat.

At this time of year, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues on the Parish Council for their work and support in 2023. Like me, they appreciate the reliance of others in the community to keep things running in the background such as those who keep the bus shelters clear of litter, mow grass, plant bulbs, check playgrounds, change the batteries in the speed signs. A massive thank you to all of them.

Best wishes for the new year.

Max
Chairman, Rogate Parish Council