

## Rogate Parish Council Chair's letter

The December article is the one that is probably least read, with the many pressures from Christmas, hence the normal stance would be to keep this article short. However, our December meeting was much busier than normal and a number of important items were discussed.

Our budget for the next financial year is agreed in December. We are trapped in the usual dilemma, keeping costs down and the increasing expense we need to bear. With increasing costs, we decided on a 5% increase. The tax base we calculate the cost to individual households is complicated and we don't normally know the confirmed figure until after the budget is set. This year we received the information early. The next section is the explanation.

The tax base (the number of properties council tax is charged to) has increased significantly - it went up by 46.3 from 777.6 this year to 823.9 for next year. Chichester District Council provide these figures and there are many reasons for changes including houses who receive discounts for single occupancy or low incomes reducing the tax base while holiday homes increase the tax base. CDC's decision to double the cost of council tax for second homes from next April has significantly increased our tax base which should cover our increase precept and you should not see any change in the cost of the parish council element of your council tax bill.

In November we learned that The SDNP were looking at new sites within the national park to build additional houses. One of the proposed sites is land opposite Rogate Village Hall which was mentioned in last month's article. At our December meeting a number of people gave representation on the reasons why this site (which is not within our Neighbourhood Plan) might be unsuitable. Particularly as North Street is narrow and not suited for access, extra traffic and the danger to pedestrians. At present the site is only being considered. We are seeking to arrange an early meeting with the SDNP Officers and once we have more information we will seek to arrange an open public meeting. Consultation for the site is due to start on 20<sup>th</sup> January for 8 weeks. Once we have details on the consultation process, we will circulate.

Finally, a member of the public raised the issue of speed and motorcycle noise on the A272 at the eastern approach to the village and in particular the Fyning Lane junction. This has been a subject that has been considered many times. We have implemented measures, such as the speed indicator device, which has had some impact and are hoping to install village gateways. But as part of the new traffic scheme in Rogate village centre the planners would not accept a speed reduction on this stretch of road. It would be interesting to hear what you think would help to make this section of road feel safer.

A lot to consider in the New Year. For the present Best Wishes for the New Year.

Max  
Chair, Rogate Parish Council