



## Clerk's Report

Number	Item	Time
6.	<b>Parish Community Speed Watch (CSW)</b>	10 mins

On 10th February, the Council resolved to invite a member of the CSW Team to the next meeting to provide further information regarding their request for an additional Speed Indicator Device (S.I.D) post to be situated opposite to Little Springfield Farm, Ifold ([C/21/033\(2\), page 4](#))

Feedback from the CSW Team is that the S.I.D post situated at 'Haycroft' is too close to the Foxbridge Lane junction and much of the traffic is still building up speed after leaving the junction. They have asked for another post opposite Little Springfield Farm. The 30mph post already in the vicinity could possibly be used; however, WSCC Highways would need to conduct a site visit and consent. If the existing post cannot be used, the Council would have to instruct Balfour Beatty, as before, to install a post. In any event, the Council will need to purchase a 30mph sign. The cost to install 4 posts and 2 30mph signs was £1,273; therefore, the cost to install 1 post/sign would be less. The agreed Traffic Calming budget for 2020/21 (£5,000) is already £1,600 overspent.

The CSW Team have provided the average weekly S.I.D results along Plaistow Road, Ifold between Nov 2020 – Jan 2021. [See Appendix A.](#)

Email feedback from the Parish PCSO is as follows:

- Those reported through the Speed Watch data receive a letter from our Operation Crackdown Team. This information is not fed back directly to us, but I will forward the query to our local "expert" to see if I can get any follow up information.
- I will submit the data to our Roads Policing Department based at Arundel in an Intelligence Log so they are aware of the level of the number of offenders. I cannot promise that they will attend, but I will make them aware.
- I will also discuss this with my Sergeant with the view to getting a day or days of action and enforcement in the area to target this with Fixed penalty Notices. I will update on how that request goes.

It would be advantageous for the Council to appoint a CSW Team Liaison Member. This Councillor would be a point of contact and support for the CSW Team.

The Newsletter called for volunteers to establish a Plaistow branch of the CSW Team. Two people have responded. Consideration is needed as to how these volunteers are directed and supported either via the established Ifold branch and/or the Council.

7. **Highway Matters** 5 mins

Residents living along Rickman’s Lane, Plaistow received the following [letter](#). The public consultation was also advertised in the recent Newsletter mailed to 840 addresses in the Parish. The consultation concluded at 4pm on Wednesday 3rd March. At the time of writing, the Council has received nine (9) responses. The consultation feedback needs to be considered and a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application progressed by the Council, if supported /deemed necessary.

Hitherto, Cllr. Alan Pearson has been the Lead Member for the Traffic Calming project, which included the successful TRO application in Ifold. However, Cllr. Pearson imminent departure necessitates the appointment of a new Lead and/or Steering Group to progress the project.
8. **Financial Matters** 3 mins

It is best practice for a Parish Council to change its Internal Auditor every three (3) years. The Council has used Mr Frost for at least 3 years. The Clerk has received Auditor recommendations from Kirdford, Loxwood and Wisborough Green Parish Councils, who likewise use/have used Mr Frost. However, the Council may feel that maintaining Mr Frost’s services to review the 2020/21 accounts is preferable. Continuity at this unprecedented time is a legitimate consideration and one which other Parish Councils are adopting.
9. **Operation Bridge review** 2 mins

Operation Bridge is the national plan which will be implemented by all levels of Government and the Church in the event of a Royal Family death. The [policy](#) will need to reflect the details of the new Chair following the meeting, however the substance of the document(s) will remain unchanged.
10. **Newsletter update & website analysis (including Quiz page)** 3 mins

Cllr. Glavin is the Lead Member for the newsletter and website and will present the update. At the time of writing, there has been over 30 E-

Newsletter sign ups via the website and a couple of requests for a physical copy. The next newsletter will be issued in September. The Newsletter has been well received and the feedback positive.

11. **Scrap metal on Plaistow Village Green** 3 mins

Further to discussions with former Cllr. Sallie Baker and her email correspondence with members of the former cricket club, apart from the grass roller, all other items can be disposed of. Mr. Goddard has offered the use of his scrap bin at his yard and has confirmed that there is nothing of value on the Green. Scrap is £40 per ton. The Council may need to consider setting a nominal budget to convey the scrap metal to Mr. Goddard's yard. Some items are large and heavy, such as former cricket net poles and a large metal bin currently embedded within a hedge.

12. **Lagoon 3 update** 3 mins

On 16th February, Chichester District Council (CDC) hosted a meeting with Kirdford and Plaistow and Ifold Parish Councils regarding the current situation with Lagoon 3 at Crouchlands Farm. The meeting was arranged by District Cllr. Gareth Evans.

\*Participating members of CDC were Andrew Frost, Head of Planning; Alison Stevens, Environmental Protection Officer; Tony Whitty, Planning & Enforcement Development Manager; Cllr. Susan Taylor, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Planning; Cllr. Adrian Moss, Leader of the Opposition Groups and County Cllr Janet Duncton.

\*Gas levels appear to be changing due to bubbling on the surface.

\*CDC stated that, to date, no imminent risk has been identified from the lagoon and site visits have confirmed it has remained very stable. However, if this situation changes and an imminent risk is established, urgent action would be taken by the multi-agency group.

\*A multi-agency visit to Lagoon 3 took place on 21st February. The attending members were CDC, Environment Agency (EA), WSCC Emergency Planning and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. The multi-agency team will undertake a review of the emergency plan.

\* The Parish Councils will be provided with an update and the revised emergency plan at the earliest opportunity and in the case of an imminent risk being identified, immediately.

\*Consideration is to be given to the logistics of taking a sample of the lagoon content for analysis.

\*CDC acknowledged that the time frame for the lagoon owner to comply with the Enforcement Notice is dwindling. The Enforcement Notice runs with the land therefore any potential buyer will need to adhere to its requirements and timescales.

\*CDC and the Parish Council's will meet again on **20th April** for a further review meeting.

13. **Census**

2 mins

The census is now live and everyone should receive a letter in the coming days which contains a unique 16-character access code required to complete the census online. The census and additional information can be found on the gov.uk website [here](#) . West Sussex Libraries are part of the national Census Support Service. Library staff can help support residents who live in Adur, Worthing, Arun and Chichester areas to complete their census forms online. Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council is in the Chichester area. As libraries are currently closed for browsing or computer use, they can complete the form online for residents over the phone. To book an appointment with one of their staff, who are all trained Census Support Advisors, phone 0330 222 3455 Monday to Friday between 10.00am – 4.00pm.

15. **Grant Award Policy**

3 mins

Historically, the Council has automatically awarded grant payments to local groups/organisations such as the Scouts / Billingshurst Community Transport / Homestart, who supports families in the parish / the toddler groups / Village Halls and Pre-Schools to name a few. The annual amounts awarded to each group was based on previous years. More recently however, the Council has sought annual applications from all groups seeking funding and has implemented a best practice grant award policy. Nevertheless, the Clerk has prompted known groups (via email) to complete the application forms, which can be found on the Council's website. This year, the Clerk has not prompted and to date has received an application from the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the upkeep of the churchyard, and enquiries from Billingshurst Community Transport and Homestart. Given the current climate, it would be advisable to once again 'prompt' our local organisations and permit them to apply by the end of March. (Our local groups are obviously not in the habit of applying via our website (yet) and have not added the deadlines to their diaries!) This will allow the Council to include the grant payment costs to its 2021/22 budget and make payment, as per the policy, by 30th April.

The Financial Steering Group can consider the grant applications at its next meeting (early April) and the Council can approve the applications at its April meeting (14th).

### **Grants explained!**

All actions of the Council must be permitted by law. The Council has certain legal powers (things it *can* lawfully do if it wishes) and statutory duties (things it **must** do) regarding expenditure and service provision. For example, the Council has the power to plant trees and maintain roadside verges / provide and maintain bus shelters / spend money on community transport schemes and contribute financially to traffic schemes, to name a few. The Council has a duty to provide allotment gardens if the demand is unsatisfied. Where there is a power or duty, the associated expenditure is unlimited (within reason of course). However, in some circumstances there is no specific power/duty to incur expenditure. In these situations, s.137(4)(a) Local Government Act 1972 provides the Council with the necessary power, which includes giving grants. However, the annual expenditure under s.137 is capped.

Each year the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) notifies the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) of the appropriate sum for the purpose of s.137 expenditure. In England for 2021-22 it is £8.41 per elector. Plaistow and Ifold Parish currently has 1,640 registered electors; therefore, in 2021/22, the Council has a maximum budget of £13,792.40.

To clarify, the Council's annual grants to the PCC for the upkeep of the churchyard / Billingshurst Community Transport / the two halls in Plaistow and Ifold DO NOT fall under s.137, as the Council has the power to incur expenditure providing / supporting these services; therefore, there is no limit on the amount we can spend. However, grants to the Youth Club, Scouts, Pre-Schools, toddler groups etc all fall under s.137 and therefore the Council must be mindful of the annual spending cap.

17. **Council representation on CDALC / WSCC North Chichester Local Committee and CDC All Parishes Forum.** 5 mins

Cllr. David Ribbens has been the Council's representative on these bodies for many years. However, after careful consideration and many years of dedicated service to the Parish Council and community, Cllr. Ribbens wishes to retire at the end of 2021. He has asked if other Members can be assigned these roles moving forward and has kindly offered to provide them with support.

The Council should appoint a named Member to attend the **Chichester District ALC.**

Each District Association meets 3 / 4 times per year and primarily elects a Chair/Vice Chair who then sits on the West Sussex ALC Board of Directors. In addition to appointing WSALC reps i.e. the Chair/Vice Chair, the district associations also discuss information coming from

WSALC/NALC and ensure that the interests of their district area is represented at County level. They also invite speakers to their meetings.

The two other bodies - **WSCC, North Chichester Local Committee** and **CDC, All Parishes Forum** - are essentially similar. They provide an opportunity for Parish and Town Councils to meet with their elected County/District Councillors to discuss matters. These meetings are also open to the public and are well attended by Councils. Both forums meet around 4x per year. The person attending on behalf of the Council can be different each time, (including the Clerk). Sometimes there is grant funding available from WSCC/CDC and other matters of interest to the Council, so it is good to have someone attend and feedback. Currently both meetings are via Zoom, but in better times, the venue is a village hall within the wider area and is 'hosted' by the hall's local Parish or Town Council. We have hosted in the past and may be asked to host again in the future! Members can seek reimbursement for their travel expenses if so minded – the Council always budgets for this!

20. **The appointment of a new Chair of the Council**

10 mins

Cllr. Alan Pearson is moving out of the area at the end of March and therefore can no longer sit as a Councillor / remain as the Council's Chair. Therefore, the Council must elect a new Chair. Any Councillor wishing to be considered for the position of Chair can nominate themselves at the meeting. Voting will take place by way of signed ballot (via Zoom private message / email to the Clerk). In accordance with our Standing Orders, where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chairman of the meeting (Alan).

Regarding filling a casual vacancy, we have received confirmation from CDC that we now revert to the pre-Covid rules. Therefore, the process to fill the vacancy will begin on 10th March, at the moment Alan steps down. The Clerk will complete the Notice of Vacancy on 11th March and submit to CDC for publication. The Notice of Vacancy provides electors 14 working days to request a By-Election (concludes on 29th March). A By-Election must be held if 10 electors or more request one. In the event this requirement is not met, then the matter reverts to the Parish Council to Co-Opt someone into the position in the usual way. If co-option is necessary, the Parish Council will advertise the vacancy for no less than four (4) weeks and invite interested electors to submit their application by a specified date. Thereafter, the Parish Council will hold

interviews and make an appointment, if appropriate to do so at its May full Council meeting (12.05.2021).

21. **HR Steering Group**

2 mins

The HR Steering Group is made up of the Chair, Cllr. Colmer (Chair of the Finance Steering Group), Cllr. Ribbens and previously Cllr. Reynolds. Therefore, a new Member needs to be appointed to the Steering Group. The HR Steering Group is responsible for the Clerk's employment and appraisals. A meeting should be held sometime during the week of 15th March, to allow Cllr. Pearson the opportunity to provide feedback to the Clerk and handover to the newly appointed Chair.