

CLERK REPORT FOR NOVEMBER MEETING

1. STREET LIGHTS

DCC have identified a suitable location near Westleigh for a Base Station to ensure they can cover Holcombe Rogus with the Telensa signal, and will be ensuring the new LED luminaires and cells are connected to this system.

The actual dimming or switch of timings are yet to be agreed, but they will be in touch in this regard. Once all is in place they can start to progress with the trial.

2. PLAYPARK

- a. The new wording for the land registry document has been discussed with John Butler and Ashfords Solicitors and it is proposed it will read:

"No disposition of the registered estate by the proprietor of the registered estate, or by the proprietor of any registered charge, not being a charge registered before the entry of this restriction, is to be registered without a certificate signed by Sally Ann Waite of Quantock Cottage Hilltop Lane Kilve Bridgwater TA5 1SR or their personal representatives and Tracey Mary Fewings of Greenacres Frog Lane Holcombe Rogus Wellington TA21 0PH or their personal representatives or their conveyancer that the provisions of clause 12.8.2.1 of a transfer dated 11 August 2021 made between (1) Sally Ann Waite and Tracey Mary Fewings and (2) Holcombe Rogus Parish Council have been complied with or that they do not apply to the disposition".

- b. The layby outside the playpark gate is not part of the land registry map and needs to be discussed by Councillors. Do they wish to take any action over this or is the consensus that it is part of highways. This is what Ashfords have said:
- c. "You are right, you can lodge a Caution against first registration. The Land Registry fee is £40 and an appropriate person at the Council would need to make a statement of truth setting out why the Council is interested in the land. You cannot use a Caution to protect a freehold interest, so we would need to consider the wording used.

If you would like us to deal with this and the title indemnity insurance, we would be happy to do so and I would estimate our fees for both would be in the region of £750 - £1000 (exclusive). I would ask Olena (a paralegal) to do the majority of the work to keep the costs down. Unfortunately, obtaining title indemnity insurance can be quite labour intensive as our professional conduct requirements dictate certain procedures we must follow.

- d. The land registry needs to know the value of the land for their fees! I have confirmed it is under £80,000, which brings us in at the lowest fee.
- e. As indicated in the annual inspection the metal bench needs to be replaced. I have sent you a few suggestions for you to discuss.

3. PRECEPT

The maintenance costs for the Parish have risen considerably in this financial year, but we have kept within the budget so far. I am estimating we have a further £5720 to spend before the end of the financial year. Our current general fund is at £10,011 so this would leave us with approximately £4000 at the end of year.

In the forthcoming financial year in addition to the precept we can expect the interest income to reduce as we will have spent the £15,000 on the street lights but the vat income is usually around the £400 mark. This will be relevant as we move into the 2025/26 financial year.

It has been rather difficult to estimate the costings for next year but I am estimating the costs for the next financial year will be between £14,000 to £15,000. So, I am proposing a precept of £12,225 and the interest and vat refund from this year will add a further £950. The shortfall of £200 can be found from the general fund.

This would be a 5% rise in the precept and as you will see from the attached it is a rise of £2.46 for a band D parish charge.

Please remember we do have a further £5000 as our baseline reserves.

Clearly this is a decision for the Councillors and if you would like me to work out a different figure for the precept then please let me know.

Leslie Findlay

Parish Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer