

ARTICLE FOR SEPTEMBER

ST HELENS PARISH COUNCIL

Members returned to business in September after a summer break, considering another very busy agenda packed with topical issues.

Public Toilets – have your say....

Many will know that IW Council, like all local authorities, are facing some tough political decisions regarding the funding of their services. Some services, like the provision of toilets, are not required by law and so, amongst other financial savings measures, a decision was taken by IW Council some time ago to stop providing public toilets across the Island. Some Parish Councils are now taking them on, and St Helens is no different, funding our two toilet blocks for some time to keep them open but we must now face the difficult decision as to whether to carry on.

By the time you read this, we will have started a 6-week public consultation period to learn more of what our residents and businesses think about how, or if, public toilets are to be provided in future by the Parish Council. See the new website for more background information and for details on how to respond, or speak to one of your councillors. We hope to be able to make a preliminary decision at our November meeting, so we can plan an appropriate budget for 2018 onwards.

Village Greens – parking

We know that there has been a long-running concern for parking on the St Helens Village Greens Common, which is illegal (the parking that is, not the concern!). Now that we have established how they are to be physically maintained, it is time to look again at how they are used and protected. Dialogue continues with IW Council, and we will continue to publish updates as we know them.

There are also parking capacity issues elsewhere around the village and work is being discussed with IW Council staff that may result in a review of the provision of on-street facilities.

Road safety – vehicles speeding

Still on the transport theme, and like many rural communities, St Helens is not immune to the problems associated with vehicles travelling at inappropriate speeds. The Parish Council is considering establishing a Community Speedwatch group, and is currently researching the opportunity. If the council decides to proceed, volunteers will be needed to make up a rota for the road-side groups that will monitor adherence to speed limits, whilst other road safety initiatives are also possible. Watch this space for developments!

Engaging with your local council – Members' Surgeries

The Parish Council is aware that the necessary formality of its business, held in public, can be seen to be inflexible. Whilst it is not possible to alter the actual meetings process, we are now going to introduce an informal Members' Surgery before each formal meeting starts. So, if you would like to raise an issue with one or more of your parish councillors, or with one of your IW Council Ward Councillors who will also be present, then do consider visiting us on the second Monday of every month (except August) in the Community Centre from **6.40pm**. Our formal business will still start at 7.00pm and you are very welcome.

And finally ...

The Parish Council is here to help and to represent your views. Do come along and support our work on your behalf and if you would like your Council to consider an issue do contact either the Clerk or one of your councillors to get that on the agenda. See the community website for more information.

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