

RATTLESDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Report to the Ordinary Meeting of 31 October 2017

Agenda Item 5: Parish Clerk's Report

Bridges on Footpaths: Gaye Reid (Footpaths Officer) has identified some bridges which the County Council has failed to repair in almost a year. Back in February, she walked all the footpaths and generated a list of problem bridges which the County Council committed to reviewing for action. It would seem that we need to 'chase' yet again for action. The worry is that they are deteriorating to such an extent that they could become a genuine hazard for walkers as autumn progresses and winter approaches.

External Audit 2017-2018: New auditors have been appointed for the next five years in the form of PKF Littlejohn LLP. New fees will be based upon on bands of annual income or expenditure, whichever is the higher. If neither annual income nor expenditure exceeds £25,000.00 then the Council can claim to be exempt and no charge will be due. However, should income or expenditure exceed that figure, then the base fee is £200.00 (the Council fee for the most recent audit was £100.00). An Annual Return will still need to be completed. Currently, the projected income for the Council is significantly less than £25,000.00. Projected expenditure for the year, however, is very close to the threshold and, given work on the Cemetery extension, is quite likely to go over the baseline. Accordingly, it would be prudent to budget for the £200.00 fee.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): The Council has received the first payment of CIL funding - being the 15% neighbourhood portion of money due from liable development within the parish. While it is good news, there are some constraints on what it can be spent, i.e.

- ◆ the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- ◆ anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

It is also accompanied by a potentially rigorous reporting and audit process such that parish councils should:

"...consider preparing a Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan (PIIP) to inform their spending decisions. Proportionate to the size of the community and anticipated levels of development within the area a PIIP may help PCs to audit existing facilities within the locality, capture opinion on the needs and wants of residents and identify opportunities for collaborative spending with other groups, PCs, etc. to achieve the best use of funding sources for the benefit of the community."

How it is spent must be itemised, logged, subject to a report to MSDC as well as audit and published on the Website.

Grit bins: I have purchased the three additional grit bins required this year, as authorised by the Council, which have been delivered to Cllr Jewers. As per the previous order, he kindly agreed to receive them and to put them in place in the village.