

Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR)

Parish – Warbleton Parish Council

1st October 2024
10.45am

Location: Dunn Village Hall, Rushlake Green
TN21 9QD

Lead Highway Steward: Dominic Ward

Stakeholder Liaison Officer: Wayne Gibbs

MINUTES

1	<p>Welcome and introductions.</p> <p>Attending:</p> <p>ESCC: Ruth Brittle Stakeholder & Engagement Team Manager, Wayne Gibbs Stakeholder Liaison Officer, Jo Reed Traffic Safety Officer, Dominic Ward Lead Steward, Bob Bowdler ESCC Councillor</p> <p>WPC: Councillors Katy Whymark (Chair of the meeting), Andy Long, Chris Wells, Buster Ansell and Jeanne Peterson (Parish Clerk)</p>	
2	<p>Acceptance of previous meeting minutes of 29/02/2024 as a fair and reasonable record of the meeting:</p> <p>There was a request made that the minutes stood subject to a change in date of the previously accepted minutes. The minutes of the previous two meetings have since been checked for date inaccuracies and there are none to be corrected.</p>	
3	<p>Re-painting of parish roadway markings:</p> <p>It was noted that there is a 3-4 week turn around in relation to defects in road safety markings. Some carry more weight as to prioritising work depending on the function.</p>	<p>ACTION: Warbleton Parish Council (WPC) to email the document to the Liaison Officer showing pictures of and locations of erased road markings.</p> <p>ESCC to prioritise action to remedy current failings.</p>
4	<p>Reporting Emergency Tree incidents; ESCC Reference TRE002618 and ESCC Reference GEN004766 no action by Highways despite reporting:</p> <p>WPC is concerned that although incidents have been reported to ESCC as an emergency with roads blocked by trees, there has been a lack of response and obstructions have had to be cleared for safety reasons by local residents.</p>	<p>ACTION: ESCC to look into the reporting system specifically in relation to these two incidents and will report back to WPC</p>

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	It was noted that there may have been a misunderstanding of specific location details.	
5	<p>General overgrown trees/hedges, ongoing issues.</p> <p>WPC has reported overgrown vegetation that has caused damage to vehicles, and no action has been taken.</p> <p>ESCC confirmed that land registry searches are used to prioritise cutting back on overgrown vegetation. Any reports of this nature must be sent to the ESCC Liaison Officer, who can then direct the report to the correct contact.</p> <p>ESCC will only take action to maintain unregistered land if there is an obstruction caused to a highway.</p>	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>It was agreed that ESCC will review actions agreed at the February SLR meeting in regard to this issue.</p> <p>WPC will continue to report any incidents.</p>
6	<p>Dip in the road at the Rookery Lane/village green junction in Rushlake Green reported to ESCC reference POT023966</p> <p>WPC reported this to ESCC in May 2024, and thinks there is water beneath the surface of the dip.</p> <p>If it is a utility problem then ESCC can only flag that with the utility company and has no authority to act.</p>	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>WPC to send over the site picture of Rookery Lane as an example of the dip level</p> <p>ESCC to ask the drainage team to look at these sites and report back.</p>
7	<p>There is a similar long-standing issue in Middle Lane, and a dip appearing at the top end of the green/junction with Marklye Lane, possibly following on from works to install a new sewer main 10/12 years ago.</p> <p>This is also thought to be due to water passing beneath the road which creates flooding issues in local gardens. The drainage gates are blocked and not cleared which results in the flooding.</p>	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>It was agreed that the local ESCC steward would make sure that an eye would be kept on the gullies on a cyclical basis and to keep them clear as a matter of course to prevent blockages.</p>
8	<p>Damaged road signs have been reported but no action to date.</p> <p>The sign damage had already been reported to ESCC in June 2024.</p> <p>While it was noted that Wealden District Council are responsible for street signage, ESCC asked for details of the damage to be emailed across to them as it could be resultant of their verge cutting contractor's work.</p> <p>It was confirmed that ESCC are responsible generally for cleaning road signs including finger posts. These should be reported via the ESCC reporting link.</p>	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>WPC to email across to ESCC the pictures and locations of the damaged signs.</p> <p>WPC Clerk to share the ESCC online reporting link to councillors.</p> <p>WPC to report to ESCC which signs need cleaning</p>

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9	<p>It is understood & noted that individual pot holes should not be featured on SLR agendas and should be reported in the usual way.</p>	<p>ACTION: All local pot hole issues should be reported via the online ESCC reporting link</p>
10	<p>New local signs needed.</p> <p>ESCC reported that four “deer caution” signs are confirmed and will be delivered shortly. These can be moved around the parish as need be to any location.</p> <p>There will also be available signs to use “Remember 30” to discourage speeding within the parish. These should remain in each chosen site for a maximum of three months then changed.</p> <p>WPC raised concerns that there was no demarcation line at the road/car park junction at Rushlake Green where land ownership adjoined ESCC and WPC. It was discussed whether signs should be installed at the car park boundary to Highway, to alert drivers that elderly people may be crossing.</p>	<p>ACTION: ESCC to send 4 x deer caution signs to WPC</p> <p>ESCC to alert WPC when “Remember 30” signs are available.</p> <p>ESCC traffic team will assess the delineation between the highway and car park fronting Osborne House regarding safe crossing to elderly residents.</p>
11	<p>Confirmation required as to the definition and extent of urban v rural single track lanes/roads and verges in regard to maintenance and grass cutting.</p> <p>ESCC confirmed that the definition between rural and urban verges is defined by traffic speed rather than size of the track.</p>	<p>ACTION: ESCC will email to the clerk the map link which defines the verge classifications which will also confirm the appropriate wording in regard to grass cutting</p>
12	<p>Drain clearance on Rookery Lane and Marklye Lane, potential problems anticipated over Autumn/Winter.</p> <p>There is some footage of the problems at Iwood Dip. Essentially, all drains should be checked regularly in the parish to ensure they are clear and unblocked. The Marklye drains are fairly new, but run-off pipes to the stream below are blocked, so they remain ineffective. For Iwood dip, there were new Culvert drains installed, but the Culvert levels are set higher than the road and so surface water just runs past and floods.</p>	<p>ACTION: WPC to resend footage of water course at Iwood Dip to ESCC.</p> <p>ESCC to check whether it is their responsibility to assess obstructions</p>
13	<p>At the WDALC meeting it was noted that a licence is not required for hedge/verge cutting, so clarification is needed on this (there has been no direct response from ESCC to WPC’s request for information), but the directive may relate to farmers cutting other people’s hedges rather than the parish council stepping in to maintain obstructive and overgrown vegetation/ The parish council would like clarification on this.</p>	<p>ACTION: ESCC categorically confirmed that the transfer (temporary or otherwise) of responsibility to the parish for cutting hedgerows is not an option.</p>

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14	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Jet patching: While it appeared to have been well executed in some areas there were others that it appeared not to have been carried out to the specification. There are areas on the road sides that remain not adequately maintained. ii. There are some road signs that are obscured by hedging, WPC asked whether sign visibility could be checked as a general part of the steward's view of the roadways iii. Knotweed has emerged again in Chiltern Lane and Cowbeech Lane opposite Durrants Farm and The Dell. iv. There have been temporary barriers placed at Rushlake Green on the edge of the highway, WPC was keen to make sure that these were made safe or replaced. v. As far as WPC knew there are no measures to ensure traffic safety at the school drop-off point in Rookery Lane. vi. It was reported that grass is growing, and running along the middle of Iwood Lane and that the Lane is not evenly tarmacked. 	<p>ACTION: ESCC noted and will look into these issues and report back to WPC.</p> <p>WPC to confirm where the current school bus drop off point is and report to ESCC regarding traffic safety measures.</p>
15	The meeting closed at 12.20pm	
16	Next meeting – date, time and location	TBC