

TEMPLE GUITING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk's Report for

Thursday 16th May to Friday 28th June 2019

(Points numbered according to the minutes of the last meeting.)

6. **Minutes.** Clerk has posted the previous minutes to the website and the noticeboards.
9. **Planning.** Clerk has posted 'No objections' comment to CDC planning portal.
10. **Litter picking.** Clerk has liaised with TG school to determine dates for the litter picking - any date in the autumn term (2 September to 31 October,).
11. **Green projects.** Clerk has liaised with Guy Mansfield Smith who has decided not to go ahead with the sustainability education project. Clerk has investigated eligibility for an Electric Vehicle Charge point grant.
12. **Training.** Clerk has checked content of Chairmanship course and booked the Chairman in.
13. **Insurance.** Clerk has arranged insurance for 2019-20.
14. **Finances.** Clerk attended meeting with internal auditor and provided required documents. Audit report since received and added to agenda for July 3rd meeting.

Finances - Reconciliation for July meeting:

Current account 02503759		
Balance at 25 June 2019	£7,594.65	
Deposit account 07859616		
Balance at 25 June 2019	£5,262.12	
Less outstanding cheques		£840.14
Reconciled balance	£12,016.63	

Cashbook summary		
Opening balance 1 April 2019	£9,784.79	
Add receipts to date	£4217.05	
Less payments to date		£1985.21
Cashbook balance	£12,016.63	

Signed:

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Clerk has carried out research to support discussions at the July meeting, including:

Agenda item 8 (a) – Road Safety at Three Gates and on other local roads: possible additional approaches to those proposed by Highways (see below).

Agenda item 8 (c) - Definitions of VAS and SID speed management systems (see below)

Agenda item 8 (e) – Research into verge cutting recommendations from AONB and current practice by Highways, following request from AONB to raise awareness of this with the Parish Council (see below).

Agenda item 8 (a) – Road Safety at Three Gates and on other local roads: possible additional approaches to those proposed by Highways (see below).

Statistics for road traffic accidents

Between 2015 and 2017 Highways data shows:

TG parish had 8 accidents – 3 serious and 5 slight.

Toddington had 4 accidents, all slight

Crashmap.co.uk shows two accidents on the B4077 – 1 slight injury at 3 gates, 1 serious injury at The Plough.

No fatalities have been recorded. None of the accidents involved HGVs or any other form of transport – only cars.

Sources of information about ways to try to reduce traffic issues:

CARS toolkit (Community Approaches to Road Safety) available on the grcc.org.uk website.

Gloucestershire Highways Agency

Ideas taken from these sources:

- ‘Pledges’ which drivers sign saying they will (for example) always drive within the speed limits in a certain area, be considerate of other road users etc etc
- Speedwatch (though we know this only has a very temporary preventative effect and it is difficult to get volunteers out).
- AutoSpeedwatch (automated Speedwatch, records speed, vehicle number plate and other information). Price £295 inc VAT could buy between several PCs for use in the wider area to reduce cost.
- Street furniture – to make the ‘life of the village’ evident to drivers who then slow down (according to research)
- Models at the side of the road – scarecrows, horses, children, people – also evidence of village life and make drivers slow down.
- Removing signs and road markings.
- Gates to define the start of a village – also needs ‘evidence of village life’
- Different surfaces to make the road appear narrower
- Plantings if Highway are happy for this – they evidence the ‘life of the village’ and make the road seem narrower.

ENDS

Agenda item 8 (c) - Definitions of VAS and SID speed management systems

Gloucestershire Highways has offered to install speed management equipment on behalf of TGPC. They have offered a choice of equipment, VAS or SIDs.

Definitions

VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs) flash up the speed limit and often a sign such as 'slow down' irrespective of the vehicle's speed. Glos guidance says 'particular success may be achieved by locating such signs as a reminder shortly after the terminals'.

SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices) detect and display the speed of a vehicle. 'Their use (*is limited*) to non-permanent signage (mobile) and to limited time periods in varied locations, generally to support a specific area based road safety campaign. SIDs do not by themselves inform motorists if they are complying with the law and do not relate to a specific hazard.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2157/vas-guidance-2017.pdf>

Additional information

There's an interesting piece of research about the effectiveness of SIDs in parts of London. It was carried out by Transport Research Laboratory in Feb 2008 for Transport for London. They checked speeds before starting the experiment, then placed SIDs around 100m before the speed limit sign. The results were:

* SIDs were effective at reducing vehicle speeds on 30 mph roads when deployed for a short time. The effects fell in the second of 2 weeks.

* overall speed reductions of 1.4mph were detected across all sites, varying between 0.6 mph to 2.6 mph. (Speeds were recorded at each site from one week before the SID was installed and until 2 weeks after it was removed.)

* The effects were more marked in residential areas than in commercial and of relatively low traffic flows (by which they mean less than 7,000 vehicles per day!!)

Effects only last a short distance after the sign

* There is little or no residual effect on speeds after the signs have been moved, so they should be reinstalled regularly (they did it every 15 weeks for 2 weeks)

* SID batteries can be unreliable.

ENDS

Agenda item 8 (e) – Research into verge cutting recommendations from AONB and current practice by Highways, following request from AONB to raise awareness of this with the Parish Council. (This could form the basis for a ‘green’ project involving increasing biodiversity in the verges/hedgerows.)

Verge Cutting in the Cotswold AONB

The Cotswold Conservation Board recently circulated a document regarding verge cutting. Highways are responsible for verge cutting, but they also have a duty under Section 85 of CROW (Countryside and Rights of Way) Act 2000 to ‘have regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB’. CCB has developed a position paper and recommended management approach for verges in the Cotswold AONB. It includes the following points:

- Litter should be removed before cutting.
- For all routes vegetation should be cut regularly in front of signs and visibility splays.
- .. on minor roads the cutting roadside vegetation should not commence before the end of July, subject to prevailing weather and local conditions. (FAQs for the CCB position statement quote DEFRA as specifying that hedges may not be cut between 1st March and 31st August) . Verge cutting dates can be provided by a number of authorities – Highways, Council ecologists, Wildlife Trusts, CCB),
- Verges on minor roads will usually need to be cut only once and at most twice a year. More frequent cutting should be avoided, as this can be detrimental to biodiversity and result in an urbanised appearance. (Gloucestershire Highways only cuts once in our area).
- The last cut of the year should be the full width of the verge to the base of the hedge, fence or wall.
- Wherever possible (but particularly in SSSIs and other species-rich verges) cut vegetation should be removed and composted off-site.
- Consideration should be given to identifying road verges of exceptional wildlife interest for special management as Protected Road Verges, following the practice already followed by a number of highway authorities in the AONB.
- Where ditches and culverts occur, these should be regularly maintained and any excavated material removed off site to prevent enrichment of the verge.

In addition CCB advocates the following approach:

“Simple walk-over ‘verge surveys’ can be undertaken to:

- note verges which are rich in wild flowers and identify opportunities for linking them together
- identify verges which have been over-mown for ‘tidiness’, which would benefit from less regular mowing
- identify verges with potential for enhancement through sowing or planting locally native wildflowers
- Identify items of historical interest such as milestones
- Identify sections of drystone wall or hedge that need attention. “

Correspondence

Correspondence with Highways and AONB regarding verge cutting following receipt of AONB guidance for agenda item 8 (e). See above research summary.

Correspondence with Cotswold Wardens re: overgrown pathway from Duck Hollow to Half Way House.

Correspondence with Cotswold District Council and BT re: the condition of the phonebox at Ford. BT has again proposed the removal of this phonebox and will be approaching CDC to obtain their consent. No date available for the decision.

Correspondence with Publica Group re: requirement to update 'Emergency plan' for Temple Guiting Parish Council as part of wider CDC plan.

Correspondence with Pensions Regulator regarding mandatory information.

Telephone conversation with Cutsdean w Taddington Parish Clerk re Highways response to issues at Three Gates. Clerk is keen to work jointly to reduce the dangers at this location.

Further correspondence with parishioner in Ford re: increase in quarry traffic.