Paul Gadd County Councillor Update

Wendens Ambo Parish Council 6/2/23

**[*Note, items in italics are repeats from last month, still unresolved]***

1. Locality Fund:
   1. Possibly £500 still available
2. Highways matters affecting the parish:
   1. *[I’ve now got my second allocation of 18 potholes, so let me know if there are any others that you would like me to nominate]* – officially now finished, but I have registered the one by the level crossing in case they will take late entries!
   2. *[On the LHP scheme to introduce a 40mph zone west of the village, we’re still no further forward – we had a LHP panel meeting on 24/10, and the scheme still hasn’t even progressed to the validation stage, in common with many others. There are many complaints at the way the LHPs are failing to produce results, and apologies that there is still no progress.] [Sorry, still no change; I have chased again and been told that they have more resource to do validations, but most of the validations for the schemes I submitted more than a year ago still haven’t been done. The LHP officer is back on 9/1/23, and the next LHP meeting is on 16/1/23, so I hope I will have some more news soon.]* Sorry, still no change – I had a separate meeting with the LHP officer and the validations have still not progressed – I keep chasing
   3. Church Path ownership – I’ve discussed with Gail, and it seems to be public highway until the church
   4. As the validations for last year are going so slowly, we haven’t even been asked to put forward any schemes for this year’s LHP. We’re also still waiting to hear what the funding allocation will be for the forthcoming year.
3. Drainage issues:
   1. *[I’ve raised with my drainage contact the issues around the Station Road junction and whether the pipes south are blocked and I’m waiting for him to come back to me.]* – [*same as July I’m afraid – I’m waiting for an update as to whether it’s been done; my drains contact had thought that work was going to be done on the gullies on the south side of Station Road and doesn’t understand why they were marked for work and then the markings disappeared without work being done. I’ve chased a couple of times but I’m waiting for him to come back to me]* .[ *I have been told that the gullies on the south side have been dug and the pipe cleared, but clearly there was flooding again over Christmas. My drainage contact thinks that the pipe may be blocked at the outfall end, which would be a landowner issue, but I’m trying to get him to confirm whether ECC have properly jetted the pipes to see if there is a blockage so I can chase the landowner if necessary.]* I’ve spoken with Audley End Estates and ECC – Audley End Estates are pretty clear that the fault is with the ingress nearest to the B1383 as it drains very quickly if that is cleared; my drain contact is away at the moment – I’ll discuss with him when he’s back
4. ECC Matters:
   1. We’ve got an ECC Full Council meeting this week at which the main item of business will be the budget. This year, councils who provide social care are permitted to increase their council tax precept by up to 5%, and I gather that the vast majority are proposing to adopt the maximum increase (compared obviously with inflation at around 11%). ECC are proposing an increase of 3.5%, which will inevitably lead to a further diminution in services;
   2. You will probably have seen that ECC have announced a new booking system at their Recycling Centres with effect from 13 March 2023. From that date, residents will only be able to use the HWRC if they have booked a 15 minute slot not later than the previous day. The proposal follows a trial in Rayleigh which was positively received for reducing congestion and queuing. It did however also lead to a 13% decrease in waste being taken for recycling, and it’s not clear where that waste has instead gone – presumably either fly tipping, bonfires or left for the district councils to collect. I’ve received more complaints about this than almost any other subject on the basis that there isn’t any problem at the Saffron Walden HWRC and it will just make residents’ lives more difficult. I’ve asked ECC to halt the introduction of the new system and in the meantime R4U have set up an on-line survey to get a better feel for Uttlesford residents’ views – see [ECC Recycling Centre Access Survey (google.com)](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScTCTS-bLWD0sDDC3-T_TYbHZyVtUz6NGqZyDbiM1kuCrB0-g/viewform)