

The final 2018 meeting of ES&BG Parish Council took place on Wednesday 12th of December at the Ecchinswell Village Hall.

Our County Councillor, Derek Mellor, told us about the joint Hampshire and Basingstoke consultation on travel and transport in the Basingstoke and Deane borough which is currently underway. In this area, traffic management plans for the A339 are a prime concern. All residents in the borough have the opportunity to take part in this consultation at www.hants.gov.uk/basingstoketransportstrategy. Our clerk will be sending more information out to those on the parish email list early in the month. We urge you to complete the questionnaire to have your say. We need to make sure that the outlying parts of the borough are represented. The closing date is the 28th January 2019. If you wish to be added to the parish email list, please let the clerk know at clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council is also reviewing its planning guidance related to heritage areas and buildings. This document has heightened our council's awareness of the rich heritage we have in our parish. Did you know we have a significant number of listed houses, farm buildings and landscapes outside the Ecchinswell Conservation Area? The new guidelines will be of help to the council when considering future planning applications.

In the last couple of months, the council has spent time planning for the next financial year. We have been able to make a few savings and expect a small increase in income, so we are pleased to announce that we will be lowering the parish precept by 8% for 2019/20.

As 2018 ends, the council wanted to thank the numerous volunteers around the parish who help to improve it. Throughout the year individuals and small groups have cleared paths and kept the litter down. There have been several instances of blocked paths over the autumn as small trees have succumbed to the high winds. Without the volunteers these would have been long term obstacles for walkers. If you notice any blocked paths when you are out and about, please contact the clerk at the email address above. We can then do our best to get the path cleared.

As you read this in early January, you may still be thinking about making New Year Resolutions. Maybe you now have time to get more involved in your local community? The parish council still has two vacancies and would be pleased to hear from any resident with an interest in our parish and a small amount of time to spare. If you have any queries about what the role entails, do ask one of the current councillors. Our names and contact details are on the parish website. Better still, come to a meeting to find out what goes on.

The next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 9th of January at the Ecchinswell Village Hall and, as always, members of the public are very welcome.

Cllr Marian Dain
Vice Chair