

## Chairman's Report including Financial Summary 2017 – 2018

### NOW DELIVERING YOUR PRIORITIES

Your annual Council Tax payment includes our precept and enables us to provide ongoing services but for major projects we are dependent upon grants and in the future from the Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL). In 2017 we received our first Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL), payment from Sevenoaks District Council, (SDC). This amounted to £157,411 and enables us to action the Community's main strategic priorities as listed in my 2017 report.

#### THESE ARE

#### 1 Parking and Traffic.

At a cost of £14,000 we have awarded a "design and price" contract for the improvement and extension of Costells Meadow car park, an increase in Madan and Hartley Roads' parking spaces, with maintaining the green areas and the construction of a car park on Crockham Hill Playing Field. When we know the overall cost for these improvements further progress can be made set against available funds.

#### 2 Toilets Fullers Hill.

These will be replaced in approximately 12 weeks time with a unisex unit on the same site at a cost of £48,000, providing separate male and female toilets is beyond our financial capability. Council now owns the freehold of the site and therefore better placed to ensure routine maintenance and cleaning, where initially the cleaning will be twice daily.



Now



Proposed

#### 3 Darent bridge replacement.

No other authority has been prepared to contribute to its urgent replacement and the existing bridge is beyond repair. Without it there would be no access to King Georges Playing Field from the Darent car park. At a cost of £22,650 and all relevant permits in place we have contracted for the work with an estimated completion before the summer holidays.

Before



After



#### 4 Bollards around the Green.

With thanks for our County Councillor Nick Chard's Member fund contribution, the footpath on the Northern side of the Green looks all the better for its new set of stylish black and gold bollards. We are currently reviewing extending the replacement of bollards elsewhere in the Town as part of our commitment to "Keep Westerham and Crockham Hill attractive."





**5 Westerham and Crockham Hill Planning Design Statement.**

This has now been approved by SDC as a Supplementary Planning Document valid for the next ten years, in support of the new Local Plan, (2015 – 2035). Public consultation and formal examination by the Planning Inspectorate follow. It is intended for use by developers, Town Planners and residents as guidance for future developments to be sympathetic to the historic setting of the Parish whilst managing its growth and change in a sensible and sensitive way.

**6 Protecting Green Spaces.**

We have been Partners in the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme since 2016 with the aim of extending the footpath and cycle path's start/ finish from Chipstead to Westerham at King Georges Playing Field. We have made two of five monetary contributions which will ensure the release of Heritage Lottery funding. Working in partnership since 2016 with the **Sevenoaks Greensands Commons project**, Heritage Lottery funding has been obtained aided by Council's own five year contribution. The plan will improve our three Commons' accessibility and performance.

**7 Crockham Hill Playground equipment replacement.**

Council provides funds for the Playing Field Trust to maintain and manage the playing field and playground in Crockham Hill. The Trust has successfully obtained substantial grants of £28,951 from a BIFFA Landfill Communities Award, £8,092 from the Playing Field Trust, £2,000 from the Kent County Council Members Fund and £2,000 from the Crockham Hill Broadband CIC towards the overall cost of £46,044 which is needed to replace all the existing and long outdated play equipment. Westerham Town Council also contributed £7,900 to the project.



**YET TO DELIVER**

**King Georges Playing Field Pavilion refurbishment, Skate Park and Multi Use Games Area project.**

These are complex projects and major funding challenges which are unlikely to come to concept and planning fruition in 2018.

**Footpath to Crockham Hill School, Church and Village Hall.**

Whilst funding is available pedestrian safety and vehicle movement issues are as yet unresolved.

**Youth antisocial behaviour and vandalism.**

The Police and various agencies have been ineffective in curtailing a continuing and concerning increase in this blight upon our Community.

Council intends to call a **Meeting of the Community** to which all relevant agencies will be required to attend. We will extensively publish this event so that a maximum audience can be achieved with the object of leaving the agencies in no doubt about the most urgent need to bring about a cessation of this unacceptable activity.

**Development of the Local Plan 2015 – 2035, House Building, Relief Road, Which Way Westerham etc.**

As part of the Annual Town Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018, Council will use most of the time available to continue its policy of "Keeping the Community Informed." Following this meeting extensive circulation of the known position to the Community will be organised as before.

We expect the next Public Consultation to be in Summer 2018 when SDC will publish its draft Local



Plan. In the same way as the 2017 Issues and Options consultation all Sevenoaks District households will be surveyed as to their opinions and your Council is likely to repeat its Westerham and Crockham Hill household vote at the same time. Central to Council's planning position is the protection of the Green Belt and this issue is the key factor relevant to housebuilding and relief road permissions. Our policy is to protect the fabric of our community whilst promoting its continuing regeneration and renewal to make it an attractive and enjoyable place to live and work.

#### **Professional Advice.**

Responding to the Local Plan issues is complex. Your Council is being advised by external professionals in planning and housing and infrastructure project development. Council will engage other professionals as appropriate.

#### **Housebuilding in Westerham and Crockham Hill.**

In the last 10 years 119 dwellings have been built plus many dwelling conversions from offices. In the recent Issues and Options Consultation SDC assessed the proposed housing numbers in the Parish at 156 from the first call for sites.

In addition, past experience would indicate it is reasonable to expect applications for new dwellings on a judicial infill basis and continuing office to housing conversions to be similar to the recent past. This over the period to 2035 approximates to 10 per annum or 150 in total.

This adds up to 300 dwellings, a sizeable increase in population and in our opinion adequate to ensure sustainability over the period.

**NOTE THAT any house building permissions granted to the Which Way Westerham project and others within the Local Plan would be IN ADDITION to these numbers AND THEREFORE IN THE ORDER OF 1,000 NEW DWELLINGS.**

#### **Covers Farm Restoration.**

As at the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 no Planning Application had been submitted to Kent County Council for the restoration of Covers Farm but is believed to be imminent as is a planning pre-application to KCC Highways for the proposed relief road.

#### **Moorhouse and DPD Transport Warehouse.**

The site developers Roxhill still maintain on their website that they intend to pursue a planning application for their clients DPD.

#### **FINANCE, REGULATORY AND AUDIT.**

1. The distribution of our spending is explained in the "pie chart."
2. In the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 Council activities and spending were within its authorised Budget. At the same time our accounts, financial activities and risk controls have been audited without qualification.  
The Annual return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 is published at the end of this report.
3. Council reserves, both General and Specific, remain adequate in respect of foreseeable risks and planned capital expenditure.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY.**

In the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 Council spent £285,000 set against a Precept of £196,000.

In the 2018 – 2019 financial year Council will spend more than £400,000 in the community set against a Precept of £205,575.

I believe this demonstrates Westerham Town Council to be outstanding value for money for the Community.

#### **Councillors and our Staff.**

I am grateful for my colleagues contributing what they can when they can, set against an increasing and ever more complicated workload. Our Council staff are committed and professional.

We cannot ask for more but often do.

**Alan Wesley**  
**Chairman Westerham Town Council.**



# WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

## COUNCIL MEMBERS 2017- 2018

**Alan Wesley**

**Helen Ogden**

**Philip Ashley**

**Loretta Bird**

**Eddie Boyle**

**Alex Bates**

**Michael Craig**

**Anthony Holman**

**Alan Jowett**

**David Le Breton**

**Hannah Marsh**

**Neil Proudfoot**

**Sharon Sheen**



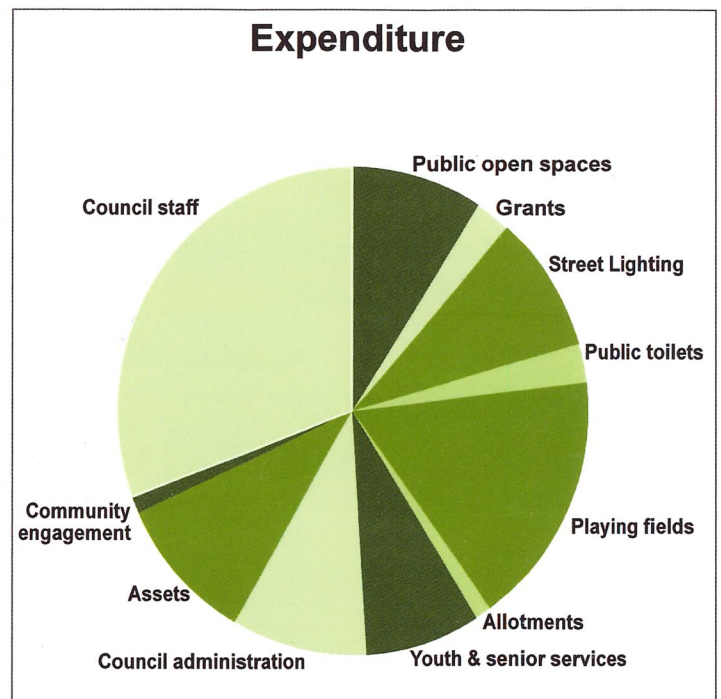
**£1.99**  
per week

### Where does Westerham Town Council get its money from?

The Council's expenditure for 2018/19 is budgeted to be £271,825.

The Council generates income of £66,250 from rents, leases, grants and business contributions (Christmas lights/hanging baskets etc). The balance of £205,575 is called the precept, which is paid by local tax payers. Council tax band D houses in Westerham/Crockham Hill will pay £103.56 per year or £1.99 per week. This is a 4.6% increase on last year, an increase of 9p a week.

### How will the budget be spent?



## WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL RETURN 2016/17 Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017

BALANCE B/F	£230,800
PRECEPT	£187,175
TOTAL OTHER RECEIPTS	£75,927
STAFF COSTS	£81,069
LOANS	Nil
TOTAL OTHER PAYMENTS	£153,153
BALANCE C/F	£259,681
TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS	£260,168
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS AND LONG-TERM ASSETS	£2,031,896

### What do we do ?

**Allotments:** Bloomfield, Currant Hill & Farley sites

**Assets:** Russell House Council office & chamber, Doctor's Surgery, Wolfe & Churchill statues, Domesday Mosaic, Fountain, Jubilee Clock, War Memorials, bus shelters, defibrillators, dog bins, notice boards and public seats

**Council administration** including business rates, audit fees and legal fees

**Council staff:** office staff responding to public enquiries, project management and managing council business

**Community engagement:** tourism, events, newsletter publication

**Grants** to local organisations

**Playing fields:** Crockham Hill and King George's Playing Fields, pavilions, playgrounds, tennis and ball courts, skate park, car park & outside gym and a groundsman managing the playing fields

**Public Open Spaces:** The Green, Verralls Corner, Grange Island, Bonneval Garden, Crockham Hill Garden, Ash, Granville, Hartley, Madan Roads: weed killing, mowing, tree work, planting/hanging baskets, Xmas lights & tree

**Public toilet** (Fullers Hill)

**Street lighting**

**Youth & senior services:** youth club, street workers, holiday play schemes and forget-me-not café

If you have any queries or comments please contact Debbie Marshall, the Finance Officer via [office@westerhamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:office@westerhamtowncouncil.gov.uk)