

PARISH BRIEFING



Rutland
County Council

Also available online at:
www.rutland.gov.uk

Monday 4 March 2019

Agenda Setting

If you would like to suggest agenda items for a future Parish Council Forum, please email a description to: governance@rutland.gov.uk.

Dates for future Parish Forums are as follows, subject to confirmed at Rutland's Annual Council on 13 April 2019:

- 15 July 2019
- 21 October 2019
- 13 January 2020
- 23 March 2020

Community Safety

The Parish Council Working Group plans to invite the Chief Constable of Leicestershire to take questions at the Forum planned for Monday 15 July, where there would be a focus on Community Safety within Rutland.

Any questions regarding community safety in Rutland can be forwarded to governance@rutland.gov.uk in advance, so the Group can gauge interest.

Your questions should be sent in to Governance by 30th April at the latest so that arrangements can be made with the Chief Constable in good time.

Grounds Maintenance Contract

Rutland County Council has started a new grounds maintenance arrangement with Harborough District Council.

This maintains current scheduling arrangements for towns and villages, with all grass expected to be cut 10 times per year between March and October, along with regular hedge cutting, maintenance of cultivated areas (shrub beds) and two annual herbicide applications (weed spraying).

Having previously informed you that we were intending to reduced the grass cutting at closed churchyards to seven times per year, this will now stay at 10 times, at no extra cost to the Council.

Flexibility must be maintained, so the arrangements allow for more or less grass cutting, according to the weather.

Again, flexibility will also continue where the parishes are concerned, with each parish council having the option to take on their own direct grounds maintenance arrangements in their area. This can be any mix of sites and / or functions from highway verges to public open spaces and grass cutting to hedge cutting.

With this in mind, officers are drafting two documents:

1. A 'customer charter' will summarise what can be expected of the County Council contract in terms of what will be done, when we expect it to be done, and the standards to which it will be done.
2. Where a parish has opted to take on their own direct grounds maintenance arrangements in their area, the customer charter will be supplemented by a 'service level agreement' detailing what will be expected of the parish regarding the relevant sites and functions, along with the associated money that will be payable to the parish.

Both documents will be circulated by mid-March and, subject to feedback, will be finalised by the end of the month.

Officers are confident that these new arrangements will provide improved future grounds maintenance standards across the County.

Any questions can be sent to Mark Loran, Senior Environmental Services Manager, via environment@rutland.gov.uk.



Compliments, Comments and Complaints Procedure

Getting feedback is very important to us, whether it's a general comment or observation about a service we provide, a compliment about something we've done well or a complaint about something you're not happy with.

We are committed to listening to your feedback and acting on what we hear. The feedback that we get helps us to look at our services, build on the good aspects of how they are delivered and identify we can make improvements.

If you have a Compliment, Comment or Complaint from a member of your Ward, or would like to submit something yourself, information on how we deal with these, and the processes that we will follow, can be found on our website at:

www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/have-your-say/comments-compliments-and-complaints

Please email all Compliments, Comments and Complaints to letusknow@rutland.gov.uk. You will receive an acknowledgement and your email will be logged and passed to the relevant officer to deal with. All the timescale involved are detailed in the relevant policy or protocol, which can be found using the link above.

Local Elections May 2019

Candidates and Agents Briefing Sessions

Following our two prospective councillor events in November and February, we are planning two Candidates and Agents Briefings aimed specifically at assisting those wishing to stand for election. The sessions will cover the nomination process from start to finish, the campaign, the timings of key events during the build-up, such as the opening of postal votes, polling day itself and of course the counting of votes and declaration of results, not forgetting to cover candidates expenses.

There will be two sessions, one on 7th March and another on 13th March, both starting at 6.30pm, in the Council Chamber at Rutland County Council.



Nomination packs for Parish Councillor

Providing you are willing to do so, I can organise my elections team to prepare parish nomination packs for you to issue directly from the parish (please note that this will be for parish elections only). If you would like to take advantage of this please let our elections team know as soon as possible so they can be prepared for you. We would ask that you collect these yourself from the Council (please contact 01572 720907 or 01572 758385 to arrange a convenient time – we will aim to make nomination packs available after 14th March. Packs will also be available to those attending the briefing sessions in the council, and a digital copy will be placed on the website.

Counting of Votes

The counting of votes will take place in Oakham at Victoria Hall on Friday, 3rd May, the day after the election. Whilst we will endeavour to complete the count on the Friday, depending on how many Council Wards and parishes are contested, it may require us to continue the count on the Saturday. The count is a closed event attended by invitation only, but it is something that many candidates and agents will wish to attend. Our plan will be to verify the total number of votes to be counted (this takes time as all votes are counted at this stage to verify against ballot paper accounts for transparency – a key part of the process) and then count the votes cast in the County Council Ward elections first. This will be followed later in the day by the count for parish elections. We will have a reception area in Victoria Hall where candidates will be able to call in to find out which votes are being counted to give an indication of where we are in proceedings.

Please keep reading for a full timetable of local elections in England on 2 May 2019...
