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Report to Parish Councils – November 2023

This report is written is for Parish Councils meeting in November. It is for all 7 parishes in Northern Rother.

Some of the items here are from information circulated by ESCC but which may not have drawn the attention of parish councillors and others.

This is much shorter than last month's 4 pager. Less has been happening!

Water Supplies

I reported on this at length last month.

I have new had a call and emails with the 'Alternative Water Coordinator' at South East Water and have pushed for a pilot scheme involving the 7 locations identified with each Parish Council, mostly at village halls. He was very positive about this and I hope that we can get this moving soon. Key points would be:

- **Pre-assessment** of locations to check access etc.
- Possible use of local volunteers with appropriate training given in advance

Flooding

The amount of rain and saturated ground has obviously affected many areas in the Division, though not as badly as in Hastings. I have had emails and calls from a number of residents and have raised these with Highways or others as appropriate.

Over the last weekend (28/29 October) and since then the Assistant Director at ESCC has been working to help monitor the response. In particular Highways were unblocking drains where flooding was reported.

I have visited a number of locations and raised cases with Highways. In some cases these are for clearing drains but also include requests for raising kerbs and adding new kerbs where appropriate.

As I write this, we are also expecting Storm Ciaran in the next few days which may cause more issues.

Please keep raising any issues with me or preferably Highways directly (but copy me on the case number and details).

Gigaclear

Gigaclear are a private company providing direct fibre high speed internet connections to properties, which I know residents will welcome. In order to do this, they normally need to dig up pavements or roads. Where these are adopted, public roads as in most cases they need permission from ESCC. For unadopted or private roads they need to give 28 days' notice to the owner of the road or the residents. They also need to restore the road/pavement to the condition it was in.

I have had a few cases where this did not seem to happen. However I have now established senior contact with Gigaclear as has Huw Merriman, our MP. They seem to be determined to improve and put things right.

I know initial installs in Northern Rother were in Northiam and Peasmarsh. They also plan to put fibre into Robertsbridge sometime next year.

Their normal policy is apparently to contact Parish Councils via the Clerk and I have encouraged them to do so as clerks often know of local potential issues.

I am keen to hear of any issues with them you may have.