

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Two years ago at the Parish Assembly I expressed grave fears that in spite of the revaluation of rateable property the rates before many years would be back to the same poundage and one would be paying in hard cash twice as much as formerly. This trend is now obvious as for 1966-67 the County Rate has gone up 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ % and the Rural District by 12%. When one realises that these rates are exclusive of normal development growth in the rateable value -- about 3% to 4% per year -- the actual amount of money received by the County and Rural District is very large indeed and the increase is nearer 16%. Unless these Councils obtain real value return for the money they spend and also conduct a rigorous and ruthless curb on inessential expenditure I can ^{see} little, if any, hope of containing, let alone reducing, the insatiable demands now made regularly each year by the rating authorities. Both officials and elected councillors appear to agree that increases must come as a matter of course but none dare tell anyone that such expenditure must, of necessity, stop. At present there appears to be no end to such increases.

Our own Parish rate was reduced in 1965-66 to 1d. but this coming year your Parish feels that it may be called upon to find extra funds for special cases so a 2d precept has been asked for. I would point out that the financial demands met by your Parish Council would result in a much higher rate were it not for the interest obtained from investments made from the the sale of the old Allotment Field which in the past year realised after tax very near ~~the~~ the proceeds of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d rate. In 1966-1967 when no income tax will be levied the interest should result in proceeds very near a 3d. rate. It is for this reason your Parish Council feels very strongly and unanimously that it must support a prudent financial policy of not frittering away its capital, the interest from which will be available not only for ourselves to enjoy but for the generations which come after us.

Your Parish Council can levy up to a 4d. rate in its own right while this Assembly has also the power to recommend a further 4d. rate for a special purpose if it so desires. Thus the proceeds of an 8d. rate now producing £ 1032 ~~is~~ from the rating authorities without they denying the Parish Council. Your Councillors, however, feel that all reasonable projects can be financed from the interest of investments plus the normal precept of 2d.

and second?

Sedlescombe Parish Council's Investments

These consist of :-

£ 3,635-9-8d stock 5% Exchequer Bonds 1967	worth approx.	£
£ 2,500 of 5% Development Bonds	worth approx.	£ 2,500
£ 1,890 of 4½ % Defence Bonds	worth approx.	£ 1,890
Original Cost = £ 8,100	Total	£ 6,890

It is your Parish Council's ~~intention~~ intention to encash the 4½ % Defence Bonds and re-invest the proceeds in 5% Development Bonds. Gross income from the above securities during the year was £ 391 with a total of £ 221 being income tax having to be paid to the Inland Revenue. You will, however, be pleased to learn that from 5 April 1966 no further income tax will have to be paid by local authorities to the Inland Revenue. This will appreciably relieve your Parish Council to the tune of £ 160 approx on the best part of 1½d rate which is of no mean benefit to our Parish. In short, Ladies & Gentlemen, we are beginning to enjoy the fruits of having sold the derelict Allotment Field.

Your Parish Council's NAMES ARE IN 500s SHARE

Financial Statement 1965-66. Draft accounts for this period are now laid on the table for public inspection. You will, however, appreciate that these cannot be finally approved and adopted by the Assembly as they have yet to be audited by the District Auditor.

For the year 1965-66 the approximate details are as follows :-

<u>Income.</u>		<u>Expenditure.</u>		Sundries £ 21
Opening Credit Bal.	£ 212	Donation to: Village Hall	£ 100	
Gross interest	£ 391	Playground	£ 25	
Sundry credits	£ 4	Neptune Enterprise	£ 10	
Precept	£ 126	Upkeep of Village Green	£ 50	
		Footpaths	£ 20	
		Administration	£ 64	
		Legal fees	£ 15	
		Income Tax	£ 221	
		Cr. Bal. carried forward	£ 207	
Total Income	£ 733	Total Expenditure	£ 733	

In short your Parish Council estimated to spend £ 310 but actually spent

14 1965-66.

£ 305. This excludes the heavy Income Tax charge of £ 221. A credit carry forward at the end of the financial year is estimated at £ 207. ~~that might be available for by local authorities.~~ You will appreciate that no monies were spent during 1965-66 in providing sport field facilities but that in the draft accounts now before you for 1966-67 an estimate of up to £ 200 has been made of which £ 150 is rent due to be paid to the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust under the agreement made with them and signed on the 12 June 1964. I have the pleasure of putting these draft estimates before you and shall be grateful if they could be proposed and seconded for adoption in principle.

~~Estimated~~ Income and Expenditure is given with details in the statements -- all now have. With a credit balance of £ 208 at the beginning of the year, plus £ 390 interest from investments and a 2d. precept producing £ 258 your Council will have ~~estimated~~ a total of £ 857 ~~is~~ available in 1966-67.

As regards expenditure this is estimated ^{IN DETAIL} in the statements before you. The main items are £ 100 to the Village Hall Trust to ~~me~~ help cover administrative costs; £ 200 to cover cost of rent (£ 150) of the new Sports Field and an extra £ 50 which may be needed to help with initial costs of getting the Football & Cricket Clubs on their feet during the first year. Upkeep of the Village Green will cost about £ 70, administration and legal fees £ 97. The estimated credit balance at the end of the financial year would be approx £ 305. This is a high figure but has been deliberately made so to allow for possible extra demands for financial help from The Village Hall and other local Trusts operating within the ~~Village~~ Parish of Sedlescombe. I would once again strongly emphasize that sudden demands for financial help cannot be as suddenly met without adequate warning and due notice given. Normally such demands should be ~~given~~ submitted at any time before Xmas so that the Parish Council has time to consider the demands before the Parish Precept ^{is} ~~is~~ decided upon. This is usually done in January.

u January

I may say that your Parish Council is unanimous as regards its policy on finance. It firmly believes that the capital as shown in the invested funds held by them ^{and} funds in trust for future generations and that the capital should not be touched. They feel that the income from the invested funds plus any normal precepts ^{shown} cover all reasonable demands ~~for~~ for financial help made by local Trusts. ^{SUCH HELP REALLY DOES} ~~is~~ support ~~to~~ the amenities enjoyed by those living in the Parish of Sedlescombe.

Sedlescombe Village Pump Seats. At our last Parish Assembly it was agreed that the condition of the oak seats gave cause for anxiety and your Parish Council was instructed to look into the matter.

Your Council's task was met by Mrs. O. Haddon offering to replace (4) both seats with oak replicas in memory of her husband, the late Major J.H. Haddon, who had died during the past year. Your Parish Council gratefully accepted this very handsome offer and anyone now looking at the new seats in the Pump House on the Village Green can only say what a marvellous improvement they ~~are~~ ^{are} to the Pump House and ^{to} the Village Green. These seats are of a great benefit to both old and young as they afford a beautiful place of rest and enjoyment. They also form an appropriate memorial to a man who loved the Village of Sedlescombe and ~~is~~ its inhabitants so much and who was regarded by us all with much affection as "The Major". He will indeed be sadly missed ~~by some of us~~ but we are most grateful to his widow, Mrs Haddon, for a ^{lasting} memorial which will give so much pleasure to us all in Sedlescombe.

Sedlescombe Village Hall Trust. Your Parish Council fully appreciates (5)
what a great social service the Village Hall affords the community of the
Parish - hence the Council's donations of £ 100 for each of the past two
years to cover administration costs. Your Council, however, does feel that
the Village Hall should be able to be self supporting as regards running
costs rather than be heavily subsidised by the rate-payer especially as
the Village Hall is used so much by all sections of the community.

Your Parish Council is aware that the Village Hall Management
Committee has been seriously been considering for some time the need to
extend and refurnish the kitchen premises but the estimated cost has been
much greater than originally envisaged. When a decision has been reached
by the Village Hall Management Committee I can assure them that any pro-
posals for financial help will be seriously considered and given every
consideration. At present final and detailed proposals have ~~been submitted~~ ONLY JUST BEEN PUT
before your Parish Council.

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Sedlescombe Village Green. The Village Green as usual has been kept neat & tidy during the past year and I should like to compliment Mr. Campbell, the contractor, in keeping the grass so well cut during what was undoubtedly an abnormally wet summer. Both inhabitants and visitors have all expressed their pleasure at the way the Village Green is kept.

We continue to have a certain amount of trouble from vandals who drive their cars across the Village Green ~~and~~ the turf and also by those who strew litter on the grass. Collection of this costs money while it always remains unsightly if not picked up.

The proposed new layout of roads across the Village Green as suggested by the East Sussex County Council i.e. the Highway Authority has not been able to implement its urgently needed alterations. This is due to the ~~present~~ financial stringency imposed by the present Labour Govt. How long these financial measures of stringency will continue I do not know nor can the Highway Authority enlighten us in anyway. However, your Parish Council will continue to press to have the new layout implemented as soon as possible in view of the rapidly increasing accident hazard potential of Brede Lane ~~and~~ its greatly increased use by fast moving traffic. The new development both actual and potential within the next year or two can only accentuate the great need for Brede Lane to be widened with footpaths for ~~the~~ pedestrians and also for a new ~~road~~ layout for traffic to join the main A 229 road with the maximum of safety.

over the Green.

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New Sports Field. You will remember that at the last Parish Assembly a proposal was put forward that the Agreement dated the 12 June 1964 between the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust and Sedlescombe Parish Council be cancelled upon substitution of a New Lease but an amendment that the matter be referred back to the Parish Council was ~~passed~~ carried by 18 votes to 1. The object of the new Lease which would be between the Sedlescombe Playing Field Trust and the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust was to obtain a 50% grant from the Ministry of Education and Science.

Your Parish Council took the matter up with the officials of the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust and with the Trustees of Sedlescombe Playing Field Association. Legal advice was also sought and a special Meeting of the Parish Council was held in committee on the 14 June 1965 when the matter was fully discussed with the Parish Council's Solicitor. He advised that Queen's Council should be sought on whether the Trustees of Sedlescombe Playing Field Association as well as the Parish Council could legally enter into a three party Lease solely to obtain a 50% grant from the Ministry in favour of the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust to help cover the charges incurred on developing the new Sports Field. The new Lease offered was to run for 14 years as against the present Agreement in force which can be cancelled by either side on 6 months notice being given.

Queen's Council gave his opinion that such a Lease could be entered into by all parties but in view of the public monies involved which were large he recommended that the minimum period should be at least 21 years and that the public should have the same right to use the Sports Field for all days of the week instead of on Saturdays and Sundays only as laid down in the Agreement now in force.

It had been hoped that the new Sports Field would have been ready for football last October but the contractors were unable to recommend such an early start. In view of the bad weather experienced including continuous ~~weather~~ weather and flooding the decision not to use the Sports Field was a wise one. It is hoped that cricket will ~~start~~ be played this summer starting with the first home match on Sunday 5th June 1966.

The Management Committee under the Agreement in force has now been convened and I am glad to say has started functioning. It has many problems to solve and I have no doubt that there will be a number of teething troubles. However, with goodwill by the users of the Sports Field; by the Management Committee; by the officials of the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust and by Sedlescombe Parish Council I have every confidence that what is now starting will develop into a strong and fruitful association and partnership between the Parish of Sedlescombe and the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust. I can assure everyone here that every help and encouragement will be given by the Councillors of Sedlescombe Parish to make a great success of what I confidently hope will be a happy and lasting association.

Footpaths Four small concrete sign posts were erected during the past year to indicate the exit and entry of public footpaths from main roads. Your Council has budgetted for another four signposts to be erected during 1966-1967. Cost of purchase and erection is £4 approx for each signpost which it is hoped will last for many years if not centuries. Very little financial powers to spend money on footpaths are available but your Council does its best with what monies are permitted to be spent. Any information on footpaths and their condition will be welcomed by the Parish Council's Footpaths Committee who can be contacted through the Clerk to the Parish Council.

⊗ under the Chairmanship of Mr. F. Spencer Chapman who has worked so hard for amicable relations between the inhabitants of Sedlescombe Parish and the Pestalozzi Children's Village Trust.

P. C. V. J. Council not in the way of the new lease

(8) Planning Notification. You will remember that a year ago the ~~Parliament~~ ~~was~~ ~~not~~ ~~only~~ ~~one~~ ~~absent~~ ~~ion~~ ~~a~~ ~~resolution~~ ~~supporting~~ ~~Sir~~ ~~Frank~~ ~~Pear-~~
~~son's~~ ~~Private~~ ~~Members~~ ~~Bill~~ ~~to~~ ~~confer~~ ~~certain~~ ~~rights~~ ~~upon~~ ~~Parish~~ ~~Councils~~
in connection with applications for planning permission under the Town and
Country planning (Amendment) Act. Unfortunately this Bill was not after
all introduced on the 26 March 1965 inspite of strong support from all
parties owing to an all night sitting of Parliament which prevented the
passage of any bills to be heard the following day. It was hoped that the
Bill would be heard at a future date but now with a General Election on
hand the Bill will have to be re-introduced under a new Parliament. This
has been most disappointing to Sir Frank Pearson ~~and~~ Arnold-Baker of the
National Association of Parish Councils who had worked so hard to get the
Bill to Parliament. It is interesting to learn that over 50 Sussex Parish
Councils wrote to Sir Frank Pearson giving him their full support.

A number of Parish Councils are now regularly being notified by
Planning Authorities of all Planning Applications, some Authorities even
insisting that Parish Councils put up lists of Planning Applications in
public places. I regret to say, however, that the Rural District Council
of Battle still continue as Planning Authority delegate to deny Parish
Councils such essential information which is being more and more regularly
given so extensively over the rest of the country. Every effort should be
made to ~~the~~ councillors elected to the Rural District and East Sussex County
Councils to remedy this retrogressive attitude that Parish Councils should
not be given any information, save as a favour, about planning applications
in their own Parishes.

General. During the past year your Parish Council has also dealt with items such as the re-siting of the telephone kiosk which the Post Office wished to erect on the Village Green but ~~we~~^{we} were finally persuaded to place opposite the Village Hall.

(9) A strong protest was made by your Parish Council against the proposed alteration of the bus services going to and from Hastings & St. Leonards. I am glad to say that in spite of the forebodings of many who considered the protest would be a waste of time our representations among with others certainly made the Bus Company think again. Finally they agreed not to make any alterations to the present service as such change would have caused great inconvenience not to say expense to all who lived in the Parish of Sedlescombe. The Boundary Commission's work has now been suddenly closed down, just why I do not know but the Boundary Commission is certainly now in a state of "suspended animation"! Its work and findings were due this year and local authorities had done much ground work as regards their own representations. Sedlescombe Parish would in no way have been affected by the work of the Boundary Commission being more fortunately situated than some of our neighbours who border such large urban areas such as Hastings, Bexhill and Eastbourne. Parishes here were in grave danger of being absorbed often completely into the larger urban areas, some disappearing completely. Now such proposals are completely suspended.

Before I conclude, Ladies & Gentlemen, I know your Parish Council would like me to express our grateful thanks to your admirable Clerk to the Parish, Miss P. Reeves. Last year I regret to say that she was seriously ill for a long period but I am glad to say that she has now recovered and is back at work. Parish administration has greatly increased during the past few years and I personally am much indebted to Miss Reeves for all the work she so willingly does on behalf of all of us. She carries out a task which has more "kicks than halfpence" as the saying goes. Mr. Everett also deserves our thanks for taking over and carrying on the Clerk's work while she was away. Without such help it would have been difficult to carry on the Parish Council's normal functions.