**Report to Broadbridge Heath Parish Council**

Cnty Cllr Christian Mitchell

Monday, 1 February 2021

**Update on budget**

Cabinet considered the proposed budget on 22 January 2021. On 12 February 2021 Full Council will be asked to support the final Revenue Budget for 2021/22, Capital Strategy 2021 – 2026 and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021/22.

This year has been extremely challenging for all local authorities, both in terms of the usual level of demand for services but intensified by the pandemic.

**Business of the County Council**

Full Council meets on Friday, 12 February 2021 (remotely).

**Learn to love pollinators at bee-friendly event**

Passionate about pollinators? Buzzing about bees? WSCC is hosting an un-bee-lievably exciting free event this February for anyone eager to learn more about protecting local pollinators.

Taking place online, the event will include talks by bee expert Professor Dave Goulson, the Sussex Wildlife Trust, guitarist Richard Durrant and West Sussex County Council's Youth Cabinet, to delve a little further into how we can all love pollinators better. Anyone joining can expect to learn about the importance of bees and pollinators, what work is already underway to protect and enhance pollinator-friendly spaces and how to create bee-friendly habitats at home.

The ‘Who loves a pollinator?’ event will be held on Thursday, 18 February 2021 from 7pm. Tickets are available [here.](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/who-loves-a-pollinator-2021-tickets-133703957135)

**WSCC aiming for net zero carbon emissions by 2030**

WSCC has set ourselves the target of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030. This includes the carbon emissions released from running our offices, schools, fire stations, libraries, street lights and business travel. To achieve this, we’re reducing our energy consumption and reliance on fossil fuels. We’re also contributing to a greener grid by investing in solar farms, battery storage and reducing carbon by investing in local projects which have social and environmental benefits for West Sussex.  These include saving energy and improving the efficiency of streetlights by switching to LED lighting.

Since 2011 WSCC has already halved our carbon emissions and carbon consumption for the first half of 2020/21 dropped by more than a quarter in April-June and almost a third in July-September compared to the previous year.

If you would like to find out more, take a look at WSCC’s [carbon management plan.](https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s20924/Management%20Plan.pdf)

**Looking at new ways to adapt to climate change**

WSCC are continuing to discuss how to adapt to climate change and protect the environment. The Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee looked at the progress WSCC has made far since adopting our [Climate Change Strategy](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/14787/climate_change_strategy_2020-2030.pdf)in July 2020.

As well as reducing our carbon emissions, other measures include:

* Increasing the number and use of pool bikes and electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles in the council fleet.
* Securing external funding, match contributions, and private sector investment to deliver renewable energy projects.
* Supporting community groups and residents to lead on projects to enhance their local green spaces.

You can find out more and watch a webcast of the meeting [here.](https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=163&MId=2366&Ver=4)

**The Police and Crime Commissioner Panel**

The Police and Crime Commissioner Panel met (remote) 29 January 2021 and supported the Police Commissioner’s proposed precept increase of £15 p.a. at band D property for 2021/22. Sussex has the seventh lowest precent of any PCC in England and Wales at £199.91 at Band D equivalent household in 2020/21.

<https://sussexpcp.gov.uk/meetings/previous-meetings/2021-meetings/>

ENDS

**District Councillor Update for Parish Council meeting 1st February 2021**

Two proposed developments, that would be very significant if they were to go ahead, have received some press attention this week. We have asked the Director of Place for a meeting to update us on both of these proposals.

The first is the proposal to remove the running track and to build up to 100 homes on this land. Councillors will be aware that this was initially proposed back in 2014 and that there have been several alternative sites in the District proposed for the track, all of which have so far come to nothing. HDC have previously committed to either retaining the existing track or rebuilding it elsewhere. There is no getting away from the fact that the current financial situation, makes any fight to keep the track a much harder one with it currently running at a loss for HDC. In addition, this would be a brownfield site and, as council owned land, a high proportion of the new homes would be much needed social housing. We have made our view clear that no decision should be taken on whether to remove the track unless an equivalent site within the District has been agreed.

The second is the proposal to develop the land where the WSCC depot is currently located to build a retail park. This would include various units including a fast food restaurant and a discount supermarket. The proposal has received some attention this week because WSCC, who own the land, have given it their approval (as we understand it). Obviously it will be for HDC, as the planning authority, to determine whether permission is given. We have very significant concerns about the impact that this would have on the community. The proposed businesses are ones that would generate a high volume of customers and the C622 already has significant issues without them. There are further concerns about the impact such units would have on the town centre. We’re keeping a close eye on this one and will update when we know more.

We have had an update from HDC on the TRO to prohibit HGVs using the roads in the village. Wilbur (the engineers who are being used to design and carry out the works) have estimated that it will take 6 weeks to draft the TRO and that the temporary signage can be installed while this is happening. HDC are still waiting on WSCC to give the go ahead on payment as they want to collect data before committing – until that financial commitment is received Wilbar cannot be instructed to begin, so that is slowing things down a bit at the moment.

We’ve been in contact with Countryside in recent weeks and are aware that landscapers have been onsite in the WHG development, working to complete the outstanding works on the parcels of land. These seem to be on track to be completed in the next few weeks. Matt attended a meeting with Andrew Fisher and a resident last week to discuss possible solutions to the OWL problem. Speed bumps to significantly slow vehicles down have been suggested and Andrew Fisher is now discussing this option with WSCC.

The budget for next year has been agreed by Cabinet and will now go forward to Full Council for final approval. The key recommendation is that council tax will increase by £5. Unfortunately, the Medium Term Financial Strategy shows that the council is likely to experience budget deficits in the next few years. Hence there has been some recent talk about the future of the running track. The full budget and accompanying documents can be found on the council’s website, under the agenda for the last cabinet meeting.

Matt has followed up with WSCC on the previously discussed lighting on the rural footpath on the C622. He outlined the brief proposal and has queried whether S106 monies could be used to fund this scheme as a sustainable transport project. We hope to receive an answer soon.

Finally, a new provisional date for the agreement of the regulation 19 Local Plan document has been set. This date is 25th of March. It could change and relies on the external bodies preparing documents for this date. Further commentary on the local plan will be made by us once information becomes public, but of course members of the Parish Council are welcome to discuss their concerns regarding future development with us at any point before then.