

Henry Potter

Westhampnett PC Meeting, 14/04/2025. District Councillors Report.

The main focus this past month has been modifying the Local Plan to accommodate the comments and advice of the Planning Inspector after his initial study of the submitted Plan and having taken into account the representations made to the two hearing sessions held in the latter part of last year. These Main Modifications have been produced in a new document, the Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039, the Modification Consultation Version. I have a paper copy of this document if anyone wishes to read it, it is also available by visiting the CDC website. It is equally as comprehensive as the original submitted document with much redaction and substitution and there are some poignant changes.

The Council has also published an Annual Progress report on its Climate Emergency Plan. This Plan has a target of a reduction of 10% of greenhouse gases year on year. Between 01/10/2023 and 30/09/2024 emissions of 2,903 tonnes of carbon dioxide were recorded, only a 5% reduction on the previous year. The current action plan has resulted in 75 actions having been implemented, solar panelling installed on several public conveniences and Leisure Centres. Under the Warmer Homes Scheme 68 homes have had 131 measures completed, 3 more electricity vehicles have been added to the CCS fleet in addition to the 2 electric refuse collection vehicles. Much lighting in all CDC buildings has been replaced with LED units, and the list goes on. Costs?? The modifications to Westgate Leisure Centre alone cost £1.3 million!! Funded mainly by Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and £210,000 from the Councils Reserves. Incidentally, the Councils application for funding from the National Lottery "Climate Action Fund - Our Shared Future" was rejected. This would have helped support a network of climate action groups in the District. Work on this will continue but at a much reduced pace.

Finally, at the full Council Meeting, last week it was announced that the Chief Executive, Diane Shepherd, will be reducing her work with the Council to concentrate on the extensive programme towards the Devolution process. This is transpiring to be a very complex process requiring many meetings between the Executives of the Authorities involved, CDC and the other District or Borough Councils, East and West Sussex CC's and Brighton and Hove Council. To compensate for Diane's absence, John Ward has assumed a new role of Chief Operating Officer to oversee the day to day affairs of the Council. Eventually when the Unitary Authority reaches the 'Shadow' stage with an elected Mayor, Diane hopes to take full retirement after 40 years working at CDC during which time she rose to become the CEO for the past 13 years. This will possibly be in 2027. An extensive Public Bulletin has been issued by her Office.

Councillor Henry Potter.

Ward Member for the Goodwood Ward.