

## **Westhampnett PC Meeting 10/11/2025**

Henry Potter, District Councillors Report

I have little to report regarding the progress of the Local Government Reform other than at a recent meeting of the CDC Joint Employee Consultative Panel which I sit on, we learnt a little more of the intricacies of this proposed LGR. Examples are, harmonisation of Council taxes across a new combined authority (if CDC's preferred option is accepted by the SoS) Adur council taxes are highest, CDC lowest. Pay scales for staff and manual employees' unification, office staff, park ground keepers, refuse collectors etc. will the operating areas need to be reassessed, staff relocation and possible redundancies are of concern, where will the new authority 'Hub' be located, EPH or County Hall too far west, would Littlehampton in Arun be more appropriate, and the integration of all 4 IT systems. This is likely to be the most disturbing and costly area not yet considered. None of this can be addressed until the 'decision' day next spring but no date is yet known! The only thing that we do know is that elections for a new Mayor for the whole of Sussex will take place in May 2026.

Important decisions made by Cabinet on Tuesday 4th are to release £1.8 million from the CIL Fund to expand Primary School facilities at Portfield Primary Academy and a further £1.1 million to provide a second story to Southbourne GP Surgery.

Also, The Great Sussex Way, a platform set up by CDC and partners to promote Tourism in the west of the County is to benefit from a grant of £130,000 per annum for the next four years. Tourism is a significantly important area; it supports 74,000 jobs in the District and has a £5 BILLION impact on the local economies which is welcome.

Again from the CIL Fund, it is recommended to the Council to release £103,000 to Sussex Police to install twelve ANPR Cameras at various locations around Chichester. I see this as a step closer to preventing crime using a motor vehicle, at least they will avoid these areas, or! we may see a rise in number plate thefts!

The Planning Committee Agenda for the 5th November promised to be a long one with 9 applications for consideration. Significant sites are at North Mundham for 92 homes, at Kirdford for 50 new homes, 40% are to be affordable instead of the customary 30% (I can only think this may be more attractive to our planners) and in Loxwood permission is sought to demolish 1 bungalow and garage and build 19 new dwellings. These last two are taking advantage of the recent lifting of the Water Neutrality legislation which was introduced a couple of years ago due to the impact on the environment and wildlife of excessive water extraction in the Arun Valley near Pulborough, though any new dwellings in this area will be subject to a limit of 110 litres per person per day. How this will be monitored and controlled is unknown!

The recent, two weeks ago, flooding that took place at various locations around the City caused disruptions to traffic, I only recorded 30mm of rainfall at home on that particular Wednesday, which is not exceptional by any means, so what we face if we get these amounts of rain over two or three days beggars' belief. Is it the storm water drains that are inadequate? Or too many non-permeable surfaces created by over development? I suspect the latter.

Cllr. Henry Potter

Goodwood Ward Member at CDC