

April District Councillor Address

Local Updates

Tribute to Cllr David Ribbons

My most important update this month is to pay tribute to the extraordinary contribution of David. 27 years is an incredible and generous contribution to the community. My heartfelt thanks and admiration for everything you have done. Your knowledge and wise counsel will be missed by all. I particularly appreciated your kindness when I first took on the role of District Cllr. I hope you enjoy your free time now – you have certainly earned it. Thank you so much.

Land West Of Guildford Road Loxwood West Sussex

Several residents in Loxwood have contacted me recently asking for an update on this. The last update I received from Jo Bell cited the Water Neutrality issues. I have written again to her asking for an updated.

Townfield Application, Kirdford – I have been liaising with the officer responsible for this application to ascertain which way determination will fall. The Water Neutrality issues are still holding this application up. The last reply back in early March demonstrated that the applicant had not resolved the water neutrality issue and the officer was due to meet Jo Bell in order to work out how to proceed. I have been in contact with the officer asking for an update since it is now a month later

21/02849/FUL-Land South West of Willets way

A couple of residents have raised concerns over the proposed solution to the Water Neutrality issue by sinking five 3000 gallon tanks on site with absolutely no detail as to how they will work. There are obvious concerns as to the noise element to operate these. I would be interested to hear the views of the Parish Councillors and will then liaise with the planning officer as this is potentially concerning. I am aware that one resident has also written to the Parish Council.

Hyde Housing – Several residents have approached over concerns with the communication process and the quality of the housing stock. I am working with the Cabinet Member and CDC to apply pressure on Hyde over these issues. I have also asked a CDC officer to visit some of residents who have raised significant concerns and these visits will take place in the coming weeks. Last week I asked SLT the following question:

“In asking this request I would like to say that I am by no means directing criticism at the portfolio holder for social housing and I have been grateful for all Cllr Sutton has done to try and help me but the issues with Hyde with regards to extremely poor communication, unresolved issues, poor treatment of their tenants and poor housing stock with serious issues of mould continue and are having an impact on our residents mental health and well-being. I have lost count of the amount of residents who are contacting me on this issue and it is not just Loxwood Ward or Chichester District wide but on talking to residents and a cursory review of sites such as trust pilot it would appear this is a national issue. Therefore, will the CEO at Chichester District council write to the relevant Government department to demand that Hyde is held accountable for these ongoing issues and get this sorted once and for all?”

I have since had communication from Louise Rudziak who is the Director of Housing and Communities who has agreed to investigate the growing issues not just in this Ward but across the district.

Lagoon 3 – the next progress review meeting between parish councils, CDC and EA takes place on 14th April at 10.00am

Loxwood Claypit – The latest update that has been issued from WSCC Planning is that they are working towards this going to committee by 26th April 2022. Updates will be provided once it is known

Fracking – Last month at the Wisborough Green Parish Council I was asked the following question:

In view of the government’s moratorium on fracking, the Chairman was interested to know if CDC had any change in policy

I received the following reply:

“As fracking is a minerals operation, planning control falls to the County Council, and any necessary planning application would be submitted to that authority to consider. CDC would likely be a consultee if within our district, however on previous applications we have responded that we do not have the necessary specialist technical expertise in our Environmental Strategy Unit to make comment on such applications. There is no specific District Council policy in relation to fracking.

*The best contact at WSCC for the Parish would be James Neave
- james.neave@westsussex.gov.uk”*

Chichester District Updates

Full Council Meeting (Budget)- At the council meeting on 8th March the Lib Dem group were successful in getting to motions through. These were:

- 1) To employ a full time Growth and Sustainability Officer to promote economic growth in the District by supporting Local businesses and the creation of local apprenticeships and jobs - all in the context of supporting the Climate Emergency Action Plan
- 2) To employ a full time Landscaper Officer to provide specialist landscape design advice on development management matters and to monitor and manage the discharge of conditions on development sites

£150 energy bills rebate 2022

The Chancellor announced on 3 February 2022 that council tax payers in properties in tax bands A to D will receive a one-off payment of £150 to support households with rising energy bills. It was also confirmed that this rebate will not need to be repaid. Good progress has been made on the preparations for administering the energy rebate scheme and CDC will be starting this work in early April. CDC will be

prioritising those paying their council tax by direct debit followed shortly thereafter with those not paying by direct debit and opening up the Discretionary Energy Rebate scheme. Residents who pay their council tax by direct debit will receive their £150 Energy Payment quicker.

Water Neutrality

On 16 March 2022 Natural England (NE) published updated advice on Water Quality and Nutrient Neutrality for 27 protected Habitat Sites, including the Solent. The advice issued by NE amends the methodology used to calculate whether a proposed development would be nutrient neutral.

<https://www.chichester.gov.uk/nutrientneutrality>

CIL Spending Plan

Projects in the published IBP CIL Spending Plan have been approved by Full Council in principle (as at that stage the full details of a project are not normally known).

Before CIL money is handed to infrastructure providers the following procedures take place in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 41-46 of the S106 and CIL protocol. https://www.chichester.gov.uk/media/36358/Section-106-and-CILProtocol/doc/S106_and_CIL_Protocol_v4.docx

The full details about a project are requested once a project on the CIL Spending Plan for the current year is reached and sufficient CIL is available to cover their costs. At that point the infrastructure provider is asked to complete and return a detailed pro-forma. The information submitted is checked and either returned with a request for more information, or if satisfactory is used to draft a report to either the Director of Planning (projects less than £50,000), Cabinet (projects between £50,000 - £100,000) or Council (Projects over £100,000) for drawdown of actual CIL Spend.

Once the spend is approved the completed pro-forma is attached to the legal agreement and the information in the pro-forma is used at the quarterly S106/CIL monitoring meetings to ensure that the milestones are met.

DEFRA Consultation on new environmental targets:

DEFRA is currently consulting on long-term targets as proposed by the Environment Act 2021. The consultation, which closes 11 May 2022, is seeking views on a number of new targets (biodiversity on land, biodiversity in the sea, water quality and availability, woodland cover, resource efficiency and waste reduction and air quality). From the Environmental Protection Team's point of view the relevant proposal is to introduce an air quality target for fine particulate known as PM2.5 and to reduce the population's exposure to PM2.5 by 35% by 2040. It is not yet clear how these targets will impact on the council's duties under Local Air Quality Management. The council will be party to a joint response to the consultation from the pan-Sussex local authority air quality group called Sussex-air.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/natural-environment-policy/consultation-on-environmental-targets/>

Surgery Dates

My next round of District Councillor Surgery dates are as follows:

Sat 9th April (12-2pm) The Foresters, Kirdford

Sat 23rd April (12-2pm) The Half Moon, Northchapel

Sat 9th May (11-1pm) Plaistow Stores, Plaistow

Sat 21st May (12-2pm) The Stag Inn, Balls Cross

Sat 11th June (11-1pm) Old Mill Cafe, Wisborough Green

Sat 18th June (12-2pm) The Onslow Arms, Loxwood

Should these dates not be suitable I am always happy to visit residents in person or arrange a call/zoom conversation. I can be contacted by phone 07958918056 or by email gbevans@chichester.gov.uk