

Reports from Cllr Standley and Cllr Dixon for Hadlow Down PC meeting 1st November 2022

1. Update from Cllr Standley to Hadlow Down Parish Council November 2022

Most of the excitement has been at Westminster rather than East Sussex over the last few weeks

Budget

Most, not all of us, will be familiar (as old enough!) with the problems high inflation brings to the economy. The problem is not confined to the UK and is partly a consequence of quantitative easing and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We also have a generation who have been used to low cost of finance and any adjustment will be painful.

Inflation will clearly impact the County Council. Pressures include Home to School Transport but also balanced by an increase in return on invested cash balances.

The local government settlement, which often is announced at the last moment, may be earlier than originally expected given Michael Gove has returned to the role he had at the beginning of the summer

Highways Contract

The successful contractor has been announced as Balfour Beatty Living Places. The contract is for 7 years with a further 7-year option. The initial 7 year is worth just under £300m

Apprenticeship Awards

It was a privilege to be able to address and present one of the special awards at the Apprenticeship Award ceremony last week in Eastbourne. Apprenticeships rightly play an important part in increasing the skills of East Sussex residents. The days of apprenticeship being linked only with “blue collar” jobs have been consigned to history. East Sussex needs to attract new investment to bring skilled and well paid jobs to East Sussex.

Local Transport Plan 4

The initial consultation will begin on Monday and at this stage is gathering information from all interested parties. I am sure Hadlow Down will not need to be persuaded to respond!! LTP4. Once agreed it will run from 2023 to 2050. The plan will clearly have to take account of national policies and also emerging District and Borough local plans

2. Update from Cllr Dixon to Hadlow Down Parish Council November 2022

Management Structure WDC

With the departure of Isabel Garden and Averil Price, Wealden have restructured their management team. They have appointed two new directors for Legal and Customer Services, Kristina Shaw-Hamilton and David Plank respectively. This is in addition to Chris Bending who had been appointed earlier. There are also four new appointments at Head of Service level, including a

new member of staff, Nichola Watters who has taken over the planning policy role, vacated by Chris Bending.

Local Plan

This has not changed since last month. There is some indication that the high target, for the country, will remain in place and the new (old) SoS will continue with the levelling up bill but there is still scope for changes to spread of housing which could result in lower number for Wealden. Work on the plan continues and there will be an update at the parish cluster meeting later this month.

The Robins

The application was approved with a temporary permission of three years, which was what was hoped for and thanks to David for his attendance and speaking at the meeting.