

Report by Councillor Michael Lunn – Wealden District Council

Southern Water – Sewage issues

As will recall there have been many concerns regarding Southern Water. There have been many calls to object to new housing until such time that Infrastructure can support such growth. This is not a new subject and one which was addressed by the former administration. The new administration has requested and sort further legal advice from Kings Counsel and we are currently waiting on advice.

AONB Management Plan consultation

As you will be already be aware the AONB Management Plan is up for a further consultation. I would encourage as many persons to formally respond to the consultation. One area which I would encourage the Parish Council and other stakeholders who have any interest in protecting the High Weald AONB, is to call upon the new administration of WDC to formally adopt the management plan as a formal policy within the emerging local plan. This would assist the emerging local plan significantly if the objectives of the management plan were to be incorporated within the emerging local plan. <https://highweald.org/aonb-management-plan/management-plan-public-consultation-2023/>

Environmental Framework for Licensing

The Council's declaration of a climate emergency and the new Council plan requires all Council actions to be reviewed. The proposal is to develop an environmental framework to guide future licensing policies and applicants for licences.

The following are areas where guidance could be issued:

- a. Event Organisers: Events could be planned to be net zero in carbon emissions, by having travel plans that promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport and by reducing energy use and the use of renewable energy. To compensate for carbon production, a means of offsetting by carbon capture could be provided. Events and persons attending should be facilitated to be sustainable in the use of materials by reducing consumption, reusing or recycling materials. Food and refreshments could be provided, which minimises carbon production. Single use plastics could be discouraged, reduced or not used.
- b. Taxis: the use of electric, hybrid and less polluting vehicles could be promoted, in that hierarchy. Taxi sharing by passengers to be encouraged.
- c. Animal welfare: any activity involving animals should carefully consider their welfare. In many cases animals should not be exposed to any harm or risk e.g. not giving "pets as prizes".

The Council plans to consult on these matters but no link has been issued yet.

Michael Lunn
Councillor – Representing Hadlow Down and Rotherfield
Wealden District Council