

# Report to Hadlow Down Parish Council April 2025

## **Local Government Reorganisation**

The government required authorities on the Accelerated Programme to have their outline plans into Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local government by last Friday. The County Council and D and B's all agreed the proposal that would see the abolition of the County Council and the five District and Boroughs and the formation of a new Unitary Council. Oddly despite approving that document Wealden District Council are still promoting a coastal unitary which would presumably leave a northern unitary. Neither of these would fit within the 500K population suggested by the Govt.

Mayoralty elections are still on course for 2026. Elections for the Unitary in 2027 although it will operate as a County Council 'till vesting day in 2028.

My view is that this is too long and a vesting day should be 2027 but the constraint is Govt capacity.

## **Council Monitoring Qtr 3**

The overspend on Children's services is predicted to be £15.4million at the year end. The main pressure is on Early Help, Placements and Home to School Transport although the number of solo taxis has been slightly reduced. Adult Social Care is forecasting on overspend of £13m due to demand pressures and complexity of need.

## **Household Support Fund**

This has been approved for another year although Govt have reduced the funding by 18%. The fund finances the poorest families during the school holidays. Currently £15 a week for the 2 week Spring holiday and 1 week half terms. The summer holiday grant is a total of £60 with £50 at Christmas. Given the funding reduction the latter may need to be reduced to £40. Surprisingly approx. 6% of eligible families don't claim the vouchers. The payments are in the form of vouchers and not cash.

RWS April 25