**Councillor reports December**

**District Councillor Martin Lury**

Merry Christmas to one and all😀! November’s Full Council was fairly uneventful, so I will concentrate more on Members’ briefings. On the 16 November a briefing on The South Downs’ National Park took place. This covers a big area and is in fact the largest National Park in the country with a mere 117,000 residents, but 2.2 million residents within a 10 km radius 18 distinctive landscapes, recent Stargazing events with many people going online to watch and some attempt to restore Heathlands which apparently are rarer than rainforests in terms of habitat and species. Renaturing - 76 sites have been identified Findon, Slindon and Arundel - here orchard restoration and hedge laying are being progressed. Finally 1.57 million websites per annum!

A Planning briefing and Planning Committee took place last month and the highlight at Committee was our turning down 131 dwellings at Tye Lane in Walberton which the developers had won on appeal only to ignore the Inspector’s recommendations in terms of a front line of bungalows and interspersing two storey chalet bungalows instead - a point I emphasised with some vigour!

The next briefing pertains to Arun’s financial situation with essentially a £4 million gap in funding with proposals to reduce costs by a £1 million, increase income by a further £1 million and use £2 million from earmarked reserves. Staff reviews and a freezing on recruitment will ensue and the Chief Executive warned that in two years’ time as a result of government funding reforms the deficit would rise to seven million pounds! The joys of local government!

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**D. Cllr report – Gill Yeates – 13th Dec 2022**

Merry Christmas to all and a happy & healthy 2023!

1 Economy at ADC – 22nd Nov

Items mainly related to Littlehampton (beach hut project, Pier Road closure to traffic, and KPI relating to number of retail units vacant in L’ton).

2 Planning Policy at ADC –24th Nov

A representative from W Sx Highways attended which was useful and informative whilst discussing the Transport Apportionment Study. More interesting than its title suggests perhaps. Concerns raised that amount of S106 money allocated to Comet Corner had reduced (this would be the minimum, but further work to be done, which might update plans). I raised the issue of the number of proposed schemes where West Bersted is named as the ‘lead’ development, most particularly the A259/A27 roundabout at Chichester. I wanted to be sure that the value, raised from less than £1m to £12m wasn’t because other schemes had failed to contribute their fair share or had perhaps been withdrawn, and that more local schemes where W.B. will impact Bersted residents, would not be short-changed. Seems that that is the total amount, although W.B. would be the largest contributor and that this would allow for more ambitious plans perhaps. Other items of interest – Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy was agreed to be finalised and will be used if/when the Local Plan update is resumed. Members expressed a hope that the Housing Market Absorption Strategy would come before Committee in January but it is not certain to be finalised and agreed by then.

3 Housing & Wellbeing at ADC - 6th Dec

The Committee received a report regarding Housing Ombudsman Complaint Determinations. Interesting for me particularly as I have been involved in a couple of these this year on behalf of local residents. This will now become a periodic/regular item on the Agenda. Thankfully, not many cases go to the HO and Arun’s handling of these is improving too. The main item for consideration related to the Housing Revenue Account and the increasing costs as a result of both inflation and re-active rather than planned repairs. Inflation will remain a concern but better planning of repairs/updates will help.

4 Bersted Advisory Group – Chairs’ meeting re Advisory Groups – 9th Nov

Informal meeting with several chairs of the advisory groups and senior officers. As Chair of the Bersted Ad Group, I did request a meeting now that the West Bersted application is in. The best I was offered was early Feb 2023. However, I did press harder and said that we were always promised a proper ‘in person’ public consultation and I wanted to talk to the developers directly to request this. I felt that Feb would be too late and would open the door to a ‘too late’ response from developers. Have now been told that officers will make the request on our behalf. I will chase for a response early January and let you know.

5 Environment @ ADC – 17th Nov (I did not attend, but one item relates specifically to Bersted)

The plan to change Bersted Brooks Nature Reserve into a country park was being considered. I have previously raised this with our Chair and Deputy Clerk. As promised, I did contact the lead officer at ADC beforehand and was assured that the item coming before the Committee was an initial scoping of the idea and that consultation would be undertaken with local stakeholders if the Committee backed the concept. From the Minutes, the vote was in favour of commencing the scoping work. I did make representations for BPC and the Friends of BB and was assured that both would be involved. There is a consideration as to whether any proposals to widen the appeal of The Brooks for leisure, may have an effect on wildlife, and this will need to be considered carefully in light of Biodiversity Net Gain initiatives.

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**Cllr van Koolbergen - December report**

November - delivered Christmas fayre leaflets to 14 households

November - 2 x litter picks around Babsham Lane

22 November - attended FG&P meeting

3 December - volunteered at parish Christmas fayre

6 December - attended David Wilson Barrett homes presentation ref nursery fields site

6 December - attended planning committee meeting

13 December - attended council meeting

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**CLLR D I LAINCHBURY ACTIVITY REPORT DECEMBER 2022**

Various dates – solo litter picking around Bersted Park

Various dates – updates to Parish Business Plan ready for FY23/24

Various dates – budget prep work with Clerk

Various dates – noticeboard updates

\*Currently assisting with a Safeguarding / Child Protection matter which is ongoing with WSCC Integrated Front Door team\*

22 Nov 22 – F&GP meeting

2 Dec 22 – Personnel meeting with Chair & Clerks re prospective replacement candidate for Asst Clerk position

3 Dec 22 – Christmas Fair in Jubilee Hall

6 Dec 22 – presentation by Barratt/David Wilson homes in Jubilee Hall

6 Dec 22 – Small Conversations meeting scheduled at Holy Cross Church – cancelled due lack of public interest!