

District Councillors Report

January 2022

I hope you have all had a decent festive season and ready for another fun packed year.

The District Council continues to monitor Covid related sickness but with a few changes and staff movements, continues to offer all of its services, including the refuse collection service, vital to Cocking and other rural locations.

Booster vaccination have reached a high level in the north part of the District. Free transport is available to vaccination centres is available. The NHS transport co-ordination team can be contacted on 01444 275008 or by emailing vaccinations@sussexct.org.uk

CDC has received a letter from the Environment Agency thanking the council for the excellent work that it is doing to help reduce the risk of flooding to the communities across the area. The Environment Agency is seeing difficulties of continuing to deliver capital works in the face of Covid, but they stated that CDC continues to find ways to deliver excellent results. As a council they are spending £300,000 this year alone to help the Environment Agency reduce the risk of flooding to over 5,000 homes across Sussex and Hampshire over the next six years.

The Government has informed CDC that it will allocate £2.8 million to distribute in rates relief to those businesses who did not qualify for Extended Retail Relief, for example factories or offices.

CDC has introduced a scheme to help keep people warm and well called the Chichester Warm Homes Initiative. This scheme is for residents on low income

living in a property with poor energy efficiency. It can contribute towards the installation of an efficient heating system, as well as loft and wall insulation. If you know someone who may benefit from this, please encourage them to get in touch with CDC's delivery partners by visiting <https://arunchichestercab.org.uk/contact-us/energy-2021> or calling 01243 974063.

The new Brick Wonders Lego exhibition is now open at the Novium and will run until 5th June 2022. It has an amazing 500,000 bricks making up some stellar exhibits.

The council's web site continues to be upgraded and the parking section has just had a major revamp with new functionality, making life easier to apply for permits and pay for parking. They have also been awarded another Plain English Crystal Mark for its use of words and useability.

The Farmers Market returns to Chichester on 21st January in East Street.

Shop vacancy rate is Chichester 12.4%, East Wittering 0%, Midhurst 8.3%, Petworth 4.5%, Selsey 5.4%.

CDC is providing independent businesses across the district's high streets with the opportunity to join the ShopAppy virtual high street platform. ShopAppy, is an online shopping platform that customers can use to browse products and services from high street businesses and pay for them online to be delivered or for click and collect. ShopAppy is being used across the country with great success for independent businesses, the closest to us being Winchester <https://shopappy.com/winchester/>.

The platform is also available to service businesses and not just retailers in order to reflect the changing nature of shopping for goods and services.

Parish councillors are asked to promote the following webpage to anyone who may benefit from financial support and/or checking that they are receiving everything due. For further information please visit <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/helpwithfinances>

Avian flu is causing concern. In response to the heightened risk of H5N8 highly pathogenic avian influenza, APHA (Animal & Plant Health Agency) advised near the start of November that an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) had been declared in England (Scotland and Wales). This introduced additional biosecurity measures for all poultry and captive bird keepers to protect them from the risk from wild birds e.g. all birds should be kept housed. The measures apply to all poultry keepers (including game) whether you keep birds commercially or as pets. Further details, including the measures that apply in the AIPZ, can be found at GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu-national-preventionzone-declared>. If anyone has any concerns about the above then CDC would advise contacting APHA directly in the first instance.