

District Councillors Report

February 2022

There are a number of exciting events taking place at the Novium museum during February half term: - Tuesday, 22 February: Wizarding themed craft at The Novium Museum - Wednesday, 23 February: A Wizarding World Workshop at The Guildhall - Thursday, 24 February: Autism-Friendly Brick Wonders SEN Sessions at The Novium Museum - Friday, 25 February: Space Explorers sessions at The Novium Museum. The Lego brick exhibition continues to June and has proved to be highly popular.

Midhurst Vision A series of potential project ideas for the Vision have been identified by Deacon design which were presented to key stakeholders for feedback in December. The area boundaries for the work go just beyond the two main CDC car parks to include potential arrival points identified in the SDNP led Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The next stage is to prioritise all of the ideas into a masterplan with visualisations/explanations. This will be presented to the key stakeholders for feedback in late February, followed by a consultation with the wider group of stakeholders in April 2022.

For those interested, the latest Parking Services Annual Report has recently been published www.chichester.gov.uk/parkingservicereports

Businesses across the Chichester District are being urged to register now to be part of a virtual high street created for independent shops, which is free to join until the end of March.

ShopAppy is an online shopping platform that shoppers can use to book, buy, collect or get a convenient home delivery from small, local businesses with one simple checkout. www.shopappy.com

Grant funding which has helped boost economic growth and create new job opportunities across Chichester District has been confirmed for another year. The £71,000-worth of Enabling Grants from Chichester District Council will give small businesses in the Chichester District the opportunity to grow and develop.

Businesses will be able to apply for up to 50% of the total cost of growth projects, subject to a maximum of £2,000. The grants will not be offered to fund spend incurred by businesses retrospectively. Smaller grants up to a maximum of £500 will be available for start-up businesses, without the need for match funding from the applicant. www.chichester.gov.uk/business

Work is underway to notify the public that charges will be increasing by the rate of inflation from 1 April 2022 and notices will be displayed shortly in car parks and in the local press to advise of this, with signage in car parks and works to machines to take place shortly.

Latest vacancy rates are Chichester 12.4%, East Wittering 0%, Midhurst 8.3%, Petworth 4.5%, Selsey 5.4%. There are three vacant shops in North Street, Midhurst about to be occupied.

At their January 2022 meeting, the Grants and Concessions Panel approved proposals for a small fund for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations later in the year. As with previous national commemorative events, such as VE Day and the Centenary of the end of the First World War, a pot of £10,000 has been identified and bids limited to £250 per parish/town/city council.

The demand for home energy support services has increased significantly during Winter of 2022 and is expected to continue. Energy price rises, the Elizabeth Reed 01243534816 / Andrea Smith 01243521175 rising cost of living and the effects of the pandemic are just some of the factors fuelling this need. The West Sussex Affordable Warmth Partnership of which CDC is member, has produced this very helpful information sheet providing a brief overview of the home energy support services, eligibility, and contact/referral details to be used West Sussex residents. <https://westsussexenergy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Fuel-povertyguidance-Councillors-2022.pdf>

On CDC's most recent outreach, there were two individuals found to be street homeless. This figure can fluctuate between 1-3 dependent on clients deciding to access accommodation or sleep out for a night. Currently all 9 rooms are in use at Winter Beds, with 3 clients expected to move into long term

accommodation in the next 10 days. The winter beds programme has seen a good flow of clients from street homelessness to their own secured housing

Parish Councils are asked to promote the following webpage to anyone who may benefit from financial support and/or checking that they are receiving everything due. This includes financial help, debt management advice along with a range of other services. For further information please visit

<https://www.chichester.gov.uk/helpwithfinances>

CDC is in the process of ordering its first 2 all electric refuse collection vehicles as part of an upgrade to its fleet of vehicles.