

District Councillor's Report

February 2023

CDC's application to the government 'Levelling Up Fund' has been successful. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will cover up to March 2025, and is designed to encourage economic growth and improve quality of life for people across the district. The spending plan was officially approved by the Government just before Christmas. CDC will share more details with over the coming months. However the government also turned down a further bid for £13.7. Only 1 in 5 of the bids were accepted, mainly based on levels of deprivation.

The district and parish elections are on May 4th. The big change this year is the need to show photographic ID to be able to vote. You may have noticed that the Electoral Commission has launched a big campaign - www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id - to make sure that everyone is aware of this significant change, and as a council we have been busy sharing their messages. It's important that people know that if they do not take an acceptable form of ID to the polling station, CDC poll clerks will not be allowed to issue a ballot paper to them. Even if someone's ID is out of date, as long as it looks like them, it can still be used. Anyone who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID will be able to apply for a free voter authority certificate online at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate or by completing a paper form. They must apply for a voter authority certificate no later than 5pm on 25 April. To apply for the Voter Authority Certificate, the person will need to provide a photo, full name, date of birth,

the address at which they are registered to vote and their National Insurance number.

I had my usual clash at the last District Council meeting over the amount of money that is poured into Chichester city. With only 25% of the District's population, the city absorbs over 80% of the council's revenue spending and over 90% of its capital expenditure.

The community consultation findings were presented at the Midhurst Vision partners meeting on 12 January to help inform and prioritise the next steps for the Vision. The Vision concepts of a greener/pedestrian/cycle friendly Midhurst were very well received by the community with high percentages of respondents (86%) in support. Over 80% of respondents were local residents and there were more positive comments than negative. Over two thirds (67%) were prepared to park in the car parks instead of on street. 79% were in favour of a 20mph zone. As a result of feedback received it was agreed that the Grange car park and route to the Old Town and North Street car park projects should be the first priorities to develop and seek funding. This could include improvements to road signage to assist with the flow of traffic in the town and to assist with promoting walking in the old town.

You might recall that in October 2022 CDC resolved to join WSCC's contract for the installation of electric vehicle charge points (EVCP) on-street and on public land. In late January, as part of its Phase 1 installs, the provider (Connected Kerb) installed the first two Chichester District locations for on-street EVCPs

(Palmers Field Avenue, Chichester and Merryfield Drive, Selsey). Other locations will be considered by the WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport for a decision as to whether they will be implemented, as they received at least one objection during the pre-Christmas Traffic Regulation Order consultation. There may be an opportunity for Midhurst to apply for a charging point, possibly in North Street.