

# District Councillor Report

## September for Cocking

1 The District Council, along with WSCC were one of the first authorities to agree to take refugees from the current Afghanistan crisis. One family has already been housed and ore are expected.

2 A recent survey of CDC's staff produced the following results, which reflects well on the way that the council is managed.

- 93.2% of staff said that they were well informed.
- 93.6% of staff meet regularly with their teams
- 98.3% feel confident in raising concerns.

3 This is from a note on CDC's 'Vision' activities

"Midhurst Vision CDC has approved funding for Midhurst Vision Partnership, with contributions from Midhurst Town Council (MTC), to help develop the first phase of the agreed Midhurst Vision Strategy to articulate a strong and coherent sense of place for the town. Three Landscape Architect practices were invited to pitch to an agreed brief, proposals were submitted and presentations given by each company to the Midhurst Vision core team, which included CDC and MTC.

Based on their Tania Murphy (01243 534701) proposals, the Vision team agreed that the work should be awarded to Deacon Design, subject to contract. Deacon Design will create a unifying public realm and landscape framework document for Midhurst which will respond to the individual tasks set out in the briefing document, enabling the delivery of the wider Midhurst Vision Strategy. This work will include an overarching masterplan/wayfinding route with key areas identified to provide a flavour of which areas could be improved as part of the wider wayfinding/streetscape improvements. They will officially start work on 1 September 2021."

I do wonder at times.

4 CDC has introduced Chatbots onto the waste and recycling pages on the website: <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/wastecollectioncalendar> This is part of a trial to see if this function helps people to access the information that they need. They are also hoping to trial live chat in the months ahead.

5 The latest vacancy rate for shops is:

Chichester 11.7% (latest figure provided by the BID).

East Wittering 0%

Midhurst – 8.3%

Petworth – 4.5%

Selsey 5.4%

6 Latest start-up figures in the District show 71 new businesses started up in July 2021; 42 less than last month and 11 less than July 2020. Chichester Central saw the most start-ups. Chichester North, West, East, Midhurst and Westbourne saw the least.

7 Free online workshops start in September to help West Sussex businesses maximise the impact and accessibility of digital technologies. The Recover and Rise SME Digital Accelerator programme is a four-part series comprising more than 25 online workshops: • Series 1: Getting Online • Series 2: Customers and Marketing • Series 3: Systems and Productivity • Series 4: Growth Expansion and New Products. The aim is to help Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) utilise digital tools and gain expert knowledge and advice on how best to grow their online presence, attract and retain new customers and work more productively. The workshops start on 9 September and will take place at 12pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They will run through to January 2022.

8 The opening of Hicks House in July was warmly welcomed after months of hard work in partnership with Stonepillow. The accommodation - a development on the existing lodge - will add an additional six units of accommodation. There are now 12 units in total. Hicks House will offer self-contained studio flats for rough sleepers with complex needs on the first stage of their journey towards independent living. Hicks House is named in memory Andy Hicks, an ex-client of Stonepillow. He successfully moved through Stonepillow's service to live independently.

9 Applications are currently open for residents, community groups, landowners, schools, parish councils and businesses to apply for bundles of free trees. People can apply for trees to be planted on their own land, or land owned by someone else provided they have landowner permission. For further information, please see <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/treescheme>

10 Unlike several of our neighbouring districts and boroughs, CDC has managed to provide a full kerbside waste collection service including green and trade waste throughout the year. It has been particularly difficult in recent months with constant 'pinging' as well as holidays.

11 The Council's draft Statement of Accounts for 2020-21 is currently on the website until 9 September 2021 for everyone to view:  
<https://www.chichester.gov.uk/statementofaccounts>