

## District Councillor's Report

September 2022

The District Council has applied for £13.7m of Levelling Up grants, all of which if granted, would be spent in Chichester...so no surprise there.

The Southern Gateway project continues to make a torturous passage and some alternative ideas (non CDC) have begun to emerge, which might benefit the project.

The Council will soon be launching a new cost of living campaign, called 'Supporting You'. This aims to highlight the range of support that is available to those who may be struggling with the current cost of living, including help with finances; help with saving money on household bills; help with housing; help with health and wellbeing; and help for businesses.

For the months of June and July, the Business Contact Programme has provided support to 181 businesses across the district, helping to protect 16 local jobs, seeing 14 new jobs created, and assisting with funding for 94 district businesses. Responsive planning application support has also been provided to 15 businesses.

There is a new grant scheme for independent retailers. This scheme is available to support independent retailers that have a physical shop presence within one of the district's high streets of Chichester, East Wittering, Midhurst, Petworth or Selsey, enabling them to make improvements to their premises and / or retail operations.

I don't normally cover some of the details but thought you might be interested in the following piece of work.: ... "The Choose Work team continues to support local residents into the workplace through a holistic approach that helps applicants take their next steps towards work or training. The pandemic and economic turbulence has had a huge effect on the job market by not only

increasing the number of available jobs but also increasing the number of job seekers looking to re-evaluate their lifestyle choices. This has created a different challenge for our applicants as the competition is more diverse. However, we remain committed to working with our clients in helping them build confidence, resilience, and life skills. Recently, we were able to help an applicant who was made redundant at the beginning of the pandemic. His issue was not in finding posts to apply for but his struggles with social isolation and the adoption of online interviews. We tailored a support package for this applicant, which included online training courses, mock job interviews via MS Teams and Zoom, and help to stay focussed and positive despite relentless job application rejections. After twelve tough months, our client has finally been offered a job – and it is his dream job. When we last spoke to him, he said: “I felt that I was getting further away from my goal of finding work and my confidence was non-existent. But Choose Work wouldn’t give up on me and taught me that it is how I respond to my circumstances that empowered me to finding my dream job.” To contact the Choose Work team, email at [choosework@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:choosework@chichester.gov.uk) or call us on 01243 534889.”

#### Amendment to smoke and carbon monoxide alarm regulations

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 will come into force on 1 October 2022. From that date, all relevant landlords must:

- Ensure at least one smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of their homes where there is a room used as living accommodation. This has been a legal requirement in the private rented sector since 2015.
- Ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers).
- Ensure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are repaired or replaced once informed and found that they are faulty.
- Ensure alarms are tested, in good working order and fully compliant at the start of each new tenancy.

The requirements are enforced by the council who can impose a fine of up to £5,000 where a landlord fails to comply with a remedial notice.

In March this year, CDC and Hyde entered into a new Partnership Working Agreement. The overarching principle of this Agreement is that by working together collaboratively they will achieve a far greater outcome for people that

live, work and visit the district, by facilitating:

- Delivery of housing on brown field land, including garage sites, under used amenity land and redevelopment of outdated stock.
- Investment in existing stock to meet climate change requirements and modern standards.
- Creating greater tenant mobility, by making the most effective use of stock by ensuring the right people are in the right homes by using flexible tenancies for all new lets in line with the council's adopted Tenancy Strategy.
- Place making, including the creation of great places to live and reducing the stigma attached to social housing.

Work continues on paying households their Council Tax Energy Rebate. To date, CDC has paid out £4,718,100 to 31,454 households, representing 92% of all eligible households in the district. The remaining households (2,617) who have not directly requested this rebate will instead have their £150 rebate credited to their Council Tax account in early September. Those customers who will have their energy rebate credited to their council tax account will receive an amended council tax bill to inform them of their reduced instalments.