

District Councillors Report

November 2022

1 I have copied you in below on a possible strike scenario with the council's refuse workers.

"We want to let you know that the GMB union has announced that our refuse workers will be balloted over their pay. We have been told that the ballot opens on Tuesday 8 November and closes on Tuesday 29 November.

The GMB union has issued a media release today regarding this, which has led to a number of media enquiries. We wanted to provide you with a copy of our response in case you are approached by residents with questions on this matter. This is what we have said:

"We are extremely disappointed that our refuse workers are being balloted for strike action. We hugely value our waste and recycling staff. Our rates of pay are comparable with other local authorities, and we offer excellent terms and conditions. We have recently provided all staff with a pay rise, which has been negotiated with the national unions, including GMB. For the waste and recycling crews this amounts to an increase of between 7.9% and 10% on basic pay, depending on their grade. We will also be providing them with an additional annual leave day from April 2023, and so we hope that strike action can be avoided. We are committed to continuing talks with the unions and hope for an early resolution to this matter.

“We also want to assure our residents that we will do everything we can to minimise disruption should industrial action take place. We will keep our residents well informed of the situation and would encourage people to sign up to our email newsletter: www.chichester.gov.uk/newalerts; follow our social media channels; and visit our website www.chichester.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling”

We will be meeting with the GMB representatives again in the next few days and will continue to keep you well informed on this matter as the situation develops”.

2 The Council has launched a brand-new service aimed at supporting the health and wellbeing of young people aged 13-19. The Chichester Youth Connections service has been set up in direct response to the negative impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had on young people. It supports young people who live or go to school in the district and who are looking for help with loneliness and isolation; improving self-confidence; and making connections with other people. The team can also help young people find their next steps in education and employment.

3 The Council should hear about the outcome of the UK Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Fund bids in November.

4. For the month of September 2022, the Business Contact Programme has

provided support to 127 businesses across the district, helping to protect 70 local jobs, seeing 14 new jobs created, and assisting with funding for 91 district businesses. Sadly Mud Food is moving from Midhurst to Chichester as part of an expansion plan but I have tabled question on the acquisition and refurbishment of the existing premises in the Weglen Estate.

5. Virtual High Street Platform update

In total 221 businesses have now registered across the district: 77 in Chichester; 39 in East Wittering; 26 in Petworth; 30 in Midhurst; and, 49 in Selsey. Selsey launched at the end of September. The Midhurst and Petworth launch is planned for 25 November.

6. WSCC Electric Vehicle Charge Points Concession Contract

At the October Cabinet, the council resolved to join WSCC's 15-year concession contract for the planning, deployment, service and maintenance of electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs) across West Sussex. WSCC is working with a private provider Connected Kerb (CK) who will deliver most of the project. Our council has committed a number of assets to the contract for CK to consider. These include most of our existing EVCPs; the majority of our car parks; and, two pieces of land. We will be working with CK as they come forward with proposals as to where they would like to install EVCPs. In any case the intended emphasis of the contract is to provide EVCPs close to residential

dwellings which do not have access to off-street parking, WSCC has committed most of its highway land to that end. This will enable such households to join the EV revolution. The contract already proposes 15 locations in Chichester District which it will consult on through Traffic Regulation Order consultations in the near future.

7. You may not be aware that the Council is responsible for much of the beach from the Witterings to Pagham, here is this year's Foreshore Service report.

The Foreshore Service operates April to September and manages the beach from East Wittering to Pagham Harbour.

Easter was quite warm this year, and with the heat wave in July and sunny August meant that the council's beaches were once again very busy.

West Wittering Estates introduced a pre-booking system during Covid, they continued this which meant that visitor numbers to CDC-managed beaches were frequently higher than normal.

The foreshore service inevitably had to respond to an increased number of first aid incidents (44 this year compared to an average of 25). Incidents included a suspected stroke casualty; a heat stroke casualty; an elderly person who tripped over kitesurf lines and suffered a fracture; and, an elderly person who fell down the shingle bank and suffered significant flesh injuries to their arm. The remaining incidents involved minor cuts and bruises or weever fish stings.

The service performed nine rescues / assistances. These included two boats with engine failure; one sinking boat; a sinking jet ski; two people having to be

pulled out of the sea due to waves; a was he up boat; a boat that had come off its trailer; and, a member of the public locked in the public toilets due to a broken lock.

This year we offered 546 safety / byelaw advisories, ranging from tide information to speeding jet skis. This included advising 41 people against tombstoning / jumping off the groynes, 250 advisories were given regarding dogs on the beach. The Bomb Disposal Squad were called out 3 times to deal with incidents.