



Downland Villages Ward : MSDC

Geoff Zeidler : Councillor's Report – 7th January 2025

MSDC Update

The next MSDC Council meeting is 26th February. There was little of significance decided at the last Council meeting and since the last report the focus has been on Councillor consultation on the 2025 Budget and Business Plan.

There have also been 3 working group meetings on the Sustainable Economy Strategy which is being focused down to fewer, clearer Objectives. I am seeking to get my Carbon Literacy proposals for a residents capture tool incorporated and have identified a number of possibilities with the assistance of some residents.

Planning

All the Action Items raised by the Inspector were responded to before Christmas, but MSDC still awaits the Inspector's report on Stage 1 and how to progress. On 12th December the Government brought out a revised version of the NPPF with a new standard method and affordability calculation. Under this, the housing target for Mid Sussex is mandatory, not advisory, and would rise from the current target of 1039 dwellings per year to 1356. A requirement to have a 5 year land supply is re-introduced. Outside of the National Park and AoNB categories of land MSDC has no Green Belt so the removal of these protections will not affect numbers.

Under transition arrangements, if our current plan is approved by the Inspector then it will be valid for 5 years and MSDC will not be required to hit the higher targets until the next review.

However, the Government has also proposed devolution which will have a significant impact when implemented. MSDC and WSCC are likely to be merged with other Councils to create a unitary authority run by a Mayor with greater powers including planning. This is likely to involve all areas in Sussex including WSCC; ESCC and Brighton. Depending on how this is finally configured there is clearly a higher risk of the Downland Villages area being required to take housing for Brighton.

My discussion with the AD Planning & Sustainable Environment around Planning Conditions; Enforcement and how to ensure the impact of development on local residents can be limited has been scheduled for 24th January. I would still welcome any relevant examples.

Services

No changes to report.

Infrastructure

I have started to track local Planned Road closures which are already notified to Parish Clerks. If anyone would like to have a wider view of the District you can log onto the [Causeway one.network](#) site as there are some significant closures pending.

WSCC

The Council will decide whether or not to apply to the Government to be in the first round of devolution by 10th January, and will discover whether any application is successful by the end of January. The County Council elections in May will depend on the Government's decision.

Parish Issues for DC Support

The planning for a new campsite at Springs Smokery in Edburton was not shared to affected Mid Sussex Parishes and I ensured awareness and an extension of time to respond as it risks significant increases in traffic on Poynings Road at peak season.



There is a new team to assist the management of s106 money which may make funds available more visible.

Albourne (*Next meeting – 4th February*)

A number of residents were not properly informed about changes in waste collection over Xmas and a bundle of fliers was found in the hedge. We seek a response from Serco.

I provided contact information for the H&S leads at Hurst College to support a TRO at the school.

Fulking (*16th January*)

Clappers Lane TRO has been implemented. Concerns about the Campsite at Springs required a response by 3rd January. Still awaiting the Inspector's decision in relation to permission at Small Acres which was submitted on 11th December.

Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common (*27th January*)

Awaiting a follow-up with Glendale in relation to co-ordination of MSDC works on Berrylands Pond with local residents. Seeking clarity about plans for a consultation on Parking in villages ahead of the budget.

He question was raised as to the definition of “temporary” in relation to planning, with the tent at Hurst College cited as a “permanent” example.

Newtimber (TBC)

No recent meeting.

Poynings (*8th January*)

Still trying to secure assistance in relation to parking and security issues at the Rec Ground.

Pyecombe (*11th March*)

There is a meeting with MSDC relating to the Wyshe on 9th January at which we will seek better alignment between the two councils and clarify a path to a shared vision of the playground. WSCC have taken responsibility for the highway by the BP station and will hopefully progress steps to manage the flooding which is a significant highways risk.

Twineham (*13th January*)

Challenges continue around plans for energy facilities based around the Bolney sub-station; and more recently the application at Twineham Court Farm for an events business which would further increase traffic on rural roads.

The need for a signpost for a brown “Tourist sign” for the Twineham Rec which requires a license from WSCC; approval from MSDC and £500 funding from TPC remains under consideration.