

Town and Parish Council Briefing

September 2022

This briefing is sent to all clerks of town and parish councils in Lewes district. We encourage you to share this with your councillors. If there are any questions arising from the briefing, please let us know.

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Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II

Statement from Chair of Lewes District Council, Councillor Adrian Ross:

The councillors and officers of Lewes District Council are deeply saddened at the news of the death of Her Majesty The Queen, Elizabeth II.

Our thoughts are with the Royal Family at this time.

Flag Flying

The Union Flag is being flown at half-mast at Southover House until the day following the funeral.

Book of Condolence

A Book of Condolence has been opened at Southover House reception in Lewes and Town Hall reception in Eastbourne and will remain open until the day after the funeral.

The Royal website have opened an online book of condolence which can be accessed at www.royal.uk/.

Flowers

There is a designated area where flowers can be laid. This is outside Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes, on the front terrace.

Further updates will be posted to www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/her-majesty-the-queen/

Bank holiday waste collection changes for Monday 19 September

Following the announcement of a Bank Holiday on Monday 19 September to mark the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, we will be suspending all waste collections for the day.

We will collect refuse, food waste, recycling, and garden waste collections one day later than usual with collections running from 20 September through to 24 September.

Clinical sharps collections will be collected as normal on Wednesday 21 September.

For further information, please visit our Bank Holiday bin collection page: www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/bank-holiday-bin-collections/

Lewes District Council elects new leader

Councillor James MacCleary is the new leader of Lewes District Council after being elected at a meeting of Full Council on 18 July 2022.

A Co-operative Alliance has controlled Lewes District Council since 2019 and rotates the leadership on an annual basis. The outgoing leader was Councillor Zoe Nicholson who was elected in 2021.

Liberal Democrats, the Green Party, Labour, and Independents make up the Co-operative Alliance, with leaders coming from the two largest parties.

The council recently delivered information to every home in the district with money saving advice, ways to reduce energy use and where to get extra help when it is most needed.

For more information about the council's capital programme please visit www.makingadifferenceinlewesdistrict.com

New Chair at Lewes District Council vows to tackle 'cost-of-living, climate and ecological crises'

Councillor Adrian Ross was elected Chair of Lewes District Council for 2022/23 marking his second term in the role.

The Green Party councillor for Lewes Bridge ward served as Chair in 2020/21 and was Vice-Chair last year.

Councillor Graham Amy, Liberal Democrat councillor for Newhaven South, was elected as Vice-Chair.

Cllr Ross added his thanks to the outgoing Chair, Councillor Brett.

During her period of office, she donated to an array of local projects including Common Cause (Lewes House Garden project), Havens Community Hub (Slow Cookers initiative), The Peverells Community Garden, Landport Community Café, Friends of Sutton Downs (Edible hedgerow project).

She is also in the process of making donations to the seven food banks in Lewes District and made a donation to the East Sussex Women of the Year Fund.

Council Declares Cost of Living Emergency

Lewes District Council declared a cost-of-living emergency at a meeting of Full Council on July 18 2022.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Robert Banks, who described current price rises and inflation as a 'perfect storm' for local residents. Councillor Imogen Makepeace seconded the motion.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor James MacCleary, has written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ask for a reduction in the rate of VAT to 17.5% from 20% (saving the average family £600), an immediate return of the £20 Universal Credit supplement and the reversal of cuts to Working Tax Credit.

Councillor Banks is also calling on an extension of free school meals, a £25 billion fund to enable the insulation of homes and more support for alternative energy sources, such as air source heat pumps.

Anyone seeking further help and guidance on the rising cost of living can visit our dedicated web page at: www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/community/help-with-the-rising-costs-of-living-including-home-energy/

Council announces a further £250,000 to combat cost of living crisis

Lewes District Council is providing an extra £250,000 for people on low incomes who are struggling to make ends meet as energy and food costs soar, bringing council funding to combat the cost-of-living crisis to £750,000.

Earlier this year, the council set aside £500,000 to support help local people and families as costs began to rise, with £150,000 of this money ring fenced for council tenants.

Cabinet councillors additionally agreed a new £250,000 Cost of Living Crisis Fund, with the first £50,000 immediately being awarded to foodbanks to help meet the unprecedentedly high levels of need in the district now. The remaining £200,000 will be distributed through a grants programme in the autumn and fund the creation of a dedicated officer to coordinate the funding.

The council has ensured the council tax energy rebate of £150 per household has been paid very quickly with more than £3million paid to over 20,000 households so far.

Locally, the council is administering a £220,000 fund from East Sussex County Council which forms part of the government's household support fund enabling eligible people to apply for vouchers of £50 per adult, £30 per child and a £100 energy voucher.

The council has also ensured the council tax energy rebate of £150 per household has been paid very quickly with more than £3million paid to over 20,000 households so far.

Another measure already taken is a new council tax reduction scheme that means local people of working age and in greatest hardship do not have to pay anything.

Time is running out for older residents to claim vital help with the cost-of-living crisis

Lewes District Council is encouraging residents of pensionable age to claim for a Household Support Grant and Energy Rebate before the September 30 cut-off date.

While the Household Support Grant scheme has closed to those of working age, older residents can still claim a grant of up to £250 by the end of this month. Additionally, many older residents are yet to claim their £150 Energy Rebate.

Details of who is eligible to claim and how to apply are available, along with information about other forms of support, at www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/cost-of-living

Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Deputy Leader of Lewes District Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets, said: *"It's a sad fact that our older people are the least likely to claim the support they are entitled to, despite being among the most in need of help.*

"The cost of everything is increasing and I appeal to older residents to come forward and get the support they deserve during these difficult times.

"For anyone who has family, friends or neighbours in this age group, please encourage them to

check what they can claim by visiting the council website and applying before the end of September.”

Additionally, many eligible residents are yet to have claimed Pension Credit, worth up to thousands of pounds a year in top-up support to their pension payments. To apply for Pension Credit visit www.gov.uk/pension-credit

For people of working age, a fresh round of the Household Support Fund opens in October.

The council declared a cost-of-living emergency in July and has set aside £750,000 this year to help local people who are struggling to make ends meet as energy, food and other costs soar.

The Leader of the Council has also written to the Chancellor requesting a range of additional support measures be urgently put in place amid the cost-of-living crisis.

Cabinet agrees ‘massive step forward’ in achieving carbon net zero

Cabinet councillors at Lewes District Council have put the seal on plans that will lead to a new fleet of ultra-low emission refuse and recycling vehicles by 2030.

The meeting held in June, heard how council officers will be conducting trials of vehicles that will include electric refuse trucks, ones fuelled by hydrogen and others that utilise renewable diesel.

Subject to these tests and council approval, the first new electric vehicles will hit the road in 2023 collecting food waste from homes in the district.

In advance of the 2030 milestone, analysis has shown a clear carbon benefit of re-using and upgrading the current fleet to extend its life, with 5 to 8% of a new truck’s whole life carbon emissions attributed to its production.

Additionally, the plan is to use renewable diesel in the interim period if readily available and financially viable. Manufactured from 100% renewable and sustainable waste products, renewable diesel can be used as a replacement for conventional diesel. It is made using waste fats and oils and reduce tailpipe emissions considerably.

Councillors meet UNESCO ambassador

Cabinet councillors from Lewes District Council met with Laura Davies, Permanent Ambassador for the UK to UNESCO, this week as part of her visit to the Living Coast Biosphere.

The Living Coast is a UNESCO World Biosphere Region. It embraces a biodiverse stretch of the chalky South Downs and Sussex coast between the River Adur at Shoreham-by-Sea and the River Ouse at Newhaven.

Councillor Matthew Bird, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Councillor Julie Carr, Cabinet Member for Recycling, Waste and Open Spaces were part of a delegation that discussed the work going on across the Brighton & Lewes Downs UNESCO Biosphere.

The Living Coast Biosphere partnership is made up of a range of more than 40 voluntary, conservation, education, local government and private sector bodies and aims to be a thriving environment for all.

Cockshut stream partnership will create new wetland in Lewes

Cabinet councillors from Lewes District Council were out in the field in Lewes this week, to see how plans for the realignment of a local stream and the creation of a new wetland habitat are progressing.

The project is a partnership between the council, Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, Lewes Railway Land Wildlife Trust and South Downs National Park Authority and will bring huge biodiversity benefits and reduce flood risk in the area.

Adjacent to the Lewes Brooks, the Cockshut is a chalk stream that is currently clogged up by a non-native invasive plant called parrot's feather.

By realigning the stream, the old channel can be filled in, eradicating the problem plant, and the stream will flow into a newly created wetland.

Planning permission for the project was recently secured and council officers are now working with partners finalising the funding requirements and working through the planning conditions.

The truth about food waste

We often get asked what happens to food waste after we collect it, so we've made a short video explaining the process.

For those signed up to the free scheme, we collect food waste weekly alongside refuse collections.

Sometimes people get the impression food waste and refuse all goes in together but don't worry - we keep it all separate.

Food waste goes in a pod on the side of the lorry and refuse goes in the back.

Our crews sometimes use the same wheelie bin when picking up refuse and food waste along a row of homes, but we can assure you that this all gets separated back at the lorry.

The video which we'll link in the chat, shows this in action, plus what happens next to convert your food waste into compost for local farmers and gardeners.

The service is free, and we give you everything you need to get started, we'll also out a link in the chat for those that want to sign up.

To watch our food waste collection video, visit this page:

www.facebook.com/lewesdistrictcouncil/videos/809888303309614/

Community projects given the green light by Cabinet

In July, cabinet councillors approved the latest round of funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy with many chosen projects bringing benefits for people's health and wellbeing.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that local authorities can make on developments to raise funds for infrastructure projects, as a result of local development and growth. The CIL is payable upon commencement of a development and since 2015 the council has collected more than £13.09 million.

Projects endorsed by the council include CIL contributions of £56,000 for the cycle rack and meander path on the unmade road leading to the seafront beside Cliff Gardens and Pump Field; £40,000 for improvements to the pathway in Centenary Park, Peacehaven; £35,000 for enhancements to Ouse Valley Way; £26,000 for pathway resurfacing at the Iford Estate; £19,000 for a community garden adjacent to Denton Primary School; and £11,196 for Seaford Salts Walkway improvements.

Young people are set to benefit with £50,000 for a skate park in Newick; £58,250 to refurbish a playpark in Malthouse Way, Cooksbridge; £27,000 for a playground replacement in Hamsey; and up to £5,000 to create a shelter for forest school at Chatsworth Park.

Community facilities also in line for CIL funding include £30,364 for final works to Wivelsfield Village Hall; £24,415 for refurbishment of changing facilities at Hillcrest Boxing Club in Newhaven; £5,000 for Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club's changing and disabled access facilities; and £4,167 for the resurfacing and remarking of badminton court at Newick Village Hall.

Update on Local Plan

Progress on the local plan since the last newsletter includes:

Evidence Studies to support Local Plan preparation

Several Studies are underway and are being prepared by commissioned consultants. These studies will help inform the preparation of the local plan policies and spatial strategy. We will be looking to engage with key stakeholders on the emerging results of these studies. This will allow both us and our stakeholders the opportunity to understand the

information, but also to comment on the underlying data supporting the evidence studies. Further details of when we will do, will be provided in the next newsletter.

Issues and Options consultation.

We released the full set of comments that we received to the Issues & Options consultation in Microsoft Excel format, as well as a companion summary document. Both of these are available from our Planning policy webpages.

Progress, now, continues to be made on reviewing and summarising the over 42,000 comments that we received. We anticipate completing this task during this quarter.

Conservation drop-in sessions

Come and meet the conservation officers to discuss any queries you may have involving your listed building or building in a conservation area.

If we feel that the questions asked would benefit from more in-depth advice, we will direct you to our pre-application service where we can discuss complex proposals in more depth.

All advice given at the drop ins will be verbal. There will be no written follow up.

Sessions will take place from 1-3pm at Lewes Town Hall on the following dates:

- 20 September
- 18 October
- 15 November
- 13 December

To book a session please email Tanya.Szendeffy@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk with your query and as much information as possible, and you will be allocated a time slot to discuss your query. Please add Conservation Drop-in into the Subject heading. If capacity is reached for your preferred session, we will email you to invite you to the next available session.

Please provide as much information as you can to help us give the most detailed feedback. This may include the age of construction, age of architectural features, plans, historic maps, building materials, etc. Photos will greatly aid the discussion and should show relevant details such as close ups of window glazing bars or frames if discussing windows.

Council approaches landmark target on new homes turning around ‘many years of underspend’

A Cabinet councillor has praised the council’s ‘fantastic progress’ on delivering new affordable homes across Lewes district over the last three years since the Co-operative Alliance was launched.

There are currently 189 affordable housing projects in the pipeline – a combination of completed homes, schemes in construction, projects at the pre-build stage and developments being advanced – nearing a target figure of 200.

However, Councillor William Meyer, Cabinet Member for Housing, said there is much more work to be done to alleviate the huge demands on the Housing Waiting List and has called on the government to provide extra funding support.

“From the outset, this administration made new homes a top priority and I am incredibly proud of the fantastic progress made by council officers to deliver these in such a short space of time, turning around many years of underspend on housing in Lewes district,” he said.

“But this is not the end of the story. We are frustrated by government not giving us the proper financial tools to build more homes and offer locally affordable rents.

“Meanwhile, the council’s social housing stock continues to reduce as a result of the government Right to Buy (RTB) scheme and the money we receive through this scheme does not cover anywhere near the whole cost of replacing those that have been bought. Councils cannot do this alone – we need the government’s support.”

All homes are made as sustainable as possible, within budget constraints, with modern methods of construction favoured such as modular, using new renewable technologies, and a focus on insulation, heating and cooling.

They are being created across the entire district including villages and rural areas – with new homes in Plumpton and Chailey, for example, becoming the first new council properties in these areas for decades.

Councillor Meyer added: *“While we continue to focus our efforts on increasing the supply of affordable home in Lewes district to meet the needs of residents, it is important to note our limitations due to the unprecedented challenges facing the construction industry and the need for government funding.”*

Cabinet also endorsed the formation of a new Affordable Homes Design Standard to consolidate sustainable development practices for all future council homes.

Additional Information

Recent LDC press releases can be viewed in full here:

www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/news-room

Useful websites:

- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/her-majesty-the-queen/
- www.makingadifferenceinlewesdistrict.com
- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/district-news/
- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/lewes-district-council-news/fraudster-sentenced-over-right-to-buy-false-claims/
- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/community/help-with-the-rising-costs-of-living-including-home-energy/
- www.gov.uk/pension-credit

- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/lewes-district-council-news/cockshut-stream-partnership-will-create-new-wetland-in-lewes/
- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/benefits-and-grants/household-support-grants/
- [Food waste video](#)
- padocs.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/my-requests/document-viewer?DocNo=22464353
- www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/bank-holiday-bin-collections/

If you have any queries on the issues raised in this briefing, please email:

customerfirst@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk