

Council Reports – January Council Meeting 2025

District Council Report – Cllr Martin Lury

Whilst being fully supportive of devolution of powers per se from Whitehall to Local Government, any reorganisation of current governance should follow a period of proper consultation with residents, businesses, elected representatives and stakeholders. This is in fact the very opposite to what the Government is doing, advancing change at seemingly breakneck speed, a pace of delivery which many of us deem inappropriate. How many people are fully au fait with the prospect of their district and borough councils being abolished by either 2027 or 2028? This reality is testament to the lack of any consultation with residents, the very people at the cutting edge of all local council services. Reorganisation was not explicit in The Labour Party's manifesto, so we have to question what mandate they have for its imposition, a radical change which could have unforeseen consequences for both residents and businesses alike. There is also the inherent danger that locally connected representation will be lost, thus creating a democratic deficit!

The cost of the proposed reorganisation has not been set out, but just realigning different IT systems as councils amalgamate in a unitary authority will take years and any savings will be a long time coming! There seems to be a clear disconnect between Central Government and Local Government and one has to fear for the sense of identity that could be diminished in any transition to unitaries where Councillors will have more residents to look after in their area.

As for postponing County Council elections this May, we wish to reiterate that this is not a prerequisite for inclusion on the priority programme for the formation of a strategic authority across Sussex. People elect councillors for a set term, so extending this by one to maybe three years completely disenfranchises the electorate, so West Sussex County elections should proceed unfettered in May.

Cllr Alyson Van Koolbergen

7th Jan - attended planning committee meeting

14th Jan - attended full council

14th Jan - approved F&GP agenda

14th Jan - attended personnel meeting

Along with meeting and/or corresponding with residents of Babsham & Elbridge ref issues including RSL vehicles driving on verges, upkeep of local area and litter picking.

Clerk/RFO's Report, December-January

Finance:

Various invoices paid & BACS to schools for families.

Enquiry for additional linked bank account-(further research required)

Income & expenditure reports

Petty Cash & Bank Reconciliations & transfers

Finance meeting preparation

Corresponded with Internal auditor to request pre year end apt & QB changes wef 01/04/25.

Personnel

Salaries/ variation forms submitted.

Strain costs-ill health policy application submitted with Hymans Robertson PLC.

Change of hours-Contract/timesheets/annual leave entitlement updates for all.

Scheduled staff internal training arrangements.

Council:

Handbook updated- protocol

Reserve review

Budget review

I.T review

Chairmans Reception scheduled for Friday, 7pm, 4/4/25.

General:

Issued newsletter to publishers

COMMUNITY CLERK REPORT - December 2024

Meetings Attended

- Community Action.
- Full Council.

Community Action

- Shopping for T&C in December.
- Liaising with designer for Welcome Pack.
- Designing a new T&C flyer for 2025.
- Arranging guest speakers for T&C 2025.

Hall Hire

- Responding to email enquiries and taking bookings.
- Sending out relevant hall hire documents.
- Chasing for Hall Hire documents and booking deposits when necessary.

Quick Books

- Adding payments made and received and updating spreadsheet.
- Producing Invoices for December payment.

Other

- Notice Boards updated.
- Regular and Casual Hire Agreements revised and updated ready for 1st April 2025.