



Clerk's Report for Parish Council Meeting 24th January 2012

19/12 – ESCC circulated information on new 'Support with Confidence' scheme to be supervised by Trading Standards and Adult Social Care. Aimed at providers of support services, social care, social engagement and leisure activities. Registration indicates to users that they can have confidence in providers on grounds of quality, safety and training. Scheme members are vetted and trained before they can join.

LDC Strategic Housing Review. This was included in Clerk's Report for Meeting held on 8/11/11 and full documents can be viewed at <http://www.lewes.gov.uk/council/19581.asp>

PC response deadline by 15/1/12. RS prepared response to questionnaire submitted by Clerk which agreed with findings and aims of review and strategy.

Summary of main points

LDC identified 3 overarching areas:

1. Meeting Housing Need – in the past 5 years the number on the housing register has risen by 44%. Half of these require a one-bedroom property. Traditional, smaller properties have been identified as too expensive to buy for this group. There are no affordable one-bedroom homes in 12 of the District's rural parishes. LDC has predicted a rise of 913 in the number of households in the area in the next 5 years. In the past 3 years the number of new homes built in the area has dropped from 416 to 175.

Aim – meet housing need through cross-tenure solution

2. Supporting communities to be sustainable – 'A sustainable community must also have a mix of different age groups who live and support the neighbourhood'. Identified for a community to be sustainable it must provide residents with appropriate local services such as shops, schools and leisure facilities.

There has been a small increase in the average energy ratings of private sector homes in the past 4 years. Council investment has brought the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard to 99.6%.

Aim – target housing income at making communities sustainable. Promote the development of affordable housing in rural areas. Give communities the chance to decide how they would like investment to be spent to enhance their areas. Provide quality housing to meet the needs of both older and younger people.

3. Maximising the potential of other providers to meet housing and living support needs. Central government initiatives are aiming to replace public sector provision with that of voluntary and charity organisations. AiRS and Homelink are significant providers. The largest group referred for housing support are aged 21-30 years. Over 75% of those receiving support to live independently are aged 60+.

Aim – support partners in providing housing related services and support. Councillors have a key role to play in the strategic approach to housing in their local area.

'therefore highly important that District, Town and Parish Councillors are aware of housing needs and opportunities in the communities they represent. This can be done through a structured approach to disseminating information rather than a reactive approach which makes it harder for local people to get their voice heard'.

Walks4Life sent weblink which includes downloadable maps etc. This has been sent for inclusion to PC website.

SDNPA are to consolidate their planning application process into a single system consistent throughout the National Park area. The consultation period for these proposals will run from 16/1/12 to 19/3/12 and the documents and response from can be found at:

<http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning>

Any queries can be directed to:

planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk 0300 3031053

LDC have advised of changes in the Consultation and Notification for Tree Work Applications. From 1/2/12 Parish Councils will e-mail notification providing a link to the LDC website where there will be a copy of the application and details of the works proposed. The Tree Officer's comments and recommendations will be included in the Decision Notice and e-mailed to the parish Council at the end of a two week period. Details of current and past tree work applications can be viewed at:

<http://www.lewes.gov.uk/planning/1139.asp>

If a Parish Council wishes to comment on tree works it must do so within two weeks of receiving the e-mail alert.

If expert advice is needed from a Tree Warden to determine the application, the Tree Council runs a tree warden scheme:

<http://treecouncil.org.uk/tree-wardens>

Also LDC Tree Officer may be able to provide informal training. Contact Daniel Wynn at LDC. Where applications are likely to be controversial or attract public attention LDC will continue to place site notices and may expand the consultation process.