



## **District Council Report**

**9th July 2020**

### **Finance.**

As reported last month there has been a downturn in MSDC income and a rise in costs which are currently giving an expected of £2.9M which will lead to a close examination of potential “in year” savings that may effect current services and what support can be given from current reserves. The Government has announced there will be additional grants to councils, as yet unspecified, so an interim budget position will be calculated over the summer.

Capital projects planned for this year will still go ahead.

There is much speculation in the press about some councils declaring a section 114 (bankrupt position). Fortunately, with the very astute financial planning of this administration, Mid Sussex is nowhere near that position.

### **Parks and Playgrounds.**

You will be aware that the Government announced that it would be possible for play areas and outdoor gyms to reopen to the public from Saturday (4 July). This does not include outdoor water play such as splash pads or paddling pools.

There are 123 play areas across the District which need to be assessed for use.. We have prioritised the most used and it is hoped that Cuckfield Rec will be amongst the first to reopen on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July. It will not include the splash pool just yet; unfortunately.

### **Business support.**

So far £25M of Business Support Grant has been distributed which has saved many businesses. Retail shops in Cuckfield have benefited from grants, which has been vital in getting our High Street reopened and trading.

### **Individual support.**

All families in the district who are on the Council Tax Support Scheme will receive a £200 grant for each family. Individual families in receipt in Cuckfield is not available due confidentiality.

### **Other challenges.**

Development has slowed, which has a knock on effect on the delivery of affordable homes. This has been particularly disappointing when viewed against our ambition to house the homeless; in particular those rough sleepers who had been in hotel accommodation during the lockdown. The demand for temporary accommodation is therefore very high and MSDC is looking at alternative ways to get people into permanent accommodation. Some ‘temporary’ placements are running at over 6 months which we don’t believe is acceptable as families need more certainty than this gives. Some properties have been purchased and rentals are also being pursued.

### Burgess Hill

Whilst not immediately affecting Cuckfield, many residents use the B/H facilities. The demolition of the Martletts is complete and now that WSCC have vacated the old library and moved into the new expanded facility, the old building will be demolished. Both sites will then be prepared as a sound "pavement" surface so that they can be utilised for pedestrians, overspill parking etc until the site development starts.

Robert Salisbury and Peter Bradbury. District Councillors. Cuckfield Ward.