

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report JULY 2021.

Caravan sites - Fit and Proper Persons policy.

It is proposed to adopt a policy that managers of caravan sites must be fit and proper persons to be running such sites and that a register of such persons be established. The Council believes a fit and proper person assessment and/or checks will take between 120 and 150 minutes to complete. On that basis the initial application fee would be set at £70. To cover the additional cost of monitoring the scheme, an additional annual fee for registration would be set at £0.50 per unit, to a maximum of £50. No fee would be charged for smaller sites. Charges would commence on 1 April 2022.

Potential Planning Appeals costs.

It is proposed to set aside £300,000 from earmarked reserves to cover potential appeal costs in respect of applications:

- 1/ RR/2020/1822/P Strand Meadow, Burwash and
- 2/ RR/2020/151/P Pett Level Road, Fairlight Cove.

Both applications were refused by the Planning Committee against officer recommendations.

These costs do not include our legal services costs.

If the appellants win their appeals no New Homes Bonus will be received. It is estimated that grants of £200,520 (Burwash) and £287,412 (Fairlight) would be lost.

Protecting Discretionary Services.

These are:

Parks and Open Spaces, Public Conveniences, Museum Buildings, Bus Shelters, Christmas Special Lighting, off-street public parking spaces, currently free to use.

The first objective is to protect these Services. The second objective is to reduce the Council's net spend on discretionary services which account for about £1.4m yearly, mainly in maintaining the asset in a reasonable and usable condition.

A small team has been established to look into transferring some/all of these assets to organisations that can raise sufficient funding to ensure continued public access to these services such as:

Parish & Town Councils and Charitable Organisations.

Disposal of land at Pages Gap, South Cliff, Bexhill.

Pages Gap consists of a sloped pathway leading down to the splash deck fronting the beach. The owners of the adjoining property, 43 South Cliff, have offered to buy the verge to the west of the path, about 7 metres in width, which has no special ecological significance. The offer is subject to no objections being made to the Public Notice advertisement which is a requirement under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

This sale would give a capital receipt and a small saving on maintenance.

By-election 6 May 2021.

The Returning Officer reports that Ms. Lizzie Hacking (Conservative) won the Rother District Council - Eastern Rother - seat vacated by Councillor Mrs. S. Hart who was elected MP for Hastings and Rye.

Private Sector Leasing Scheme.

RDC has over 100 households in temporary accommodation for an average of 66 days at a cost of £2,500 each.

This scheme would provide the Council access to properties for a fixed period and property owners would be guaranteed a fixed monthly payment. Properties would need to meet or exceed defined national standards and the property owner would retain full responsibility for the management, maintenance and repair of the external fabric of the building. At the end of the lease period, the property would be returned to the owner in the same condition as at commencement of the lease (except for an allowance on reasonable wear and tear).

Councillors Martin Mooney and Tony Ganly.