

**REPORT FROM CLLR JOHN BARNES, Rother District Council
NOVEMBER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AT BRIGHTLING**

- Rother is heading for a deficit of £2.8 million (up by just over £500k) to be met from reserves. We have benefited from skilful handling of our finances to the tune of generating a £1m more in income than anticipated. Nevertheless, since the Financial Stability Programme (largely devolution of services) has not delivered, a serious efficiency savings programme has been introduced which should by 2025 deliver near balance. The senior officers are committed to this as top of their agenda.
- Fortunately we had undertaken the purchase of properties to handle what is called temporary homelessness (30 out of 50 so far bought) so we have not been badly caught out by the current increase. Our forecast of this part of the outgoings was £500k light and total spend on homeless 9% of budget (at Hastings it is up to a third and many other Districts are in more serious trouble).
- Capital budget has been halted for review. Blackfriars is having to be rethought and will probably have to be 100% market housing. However, Eleanor backed by me suggested another option for examination at Monday's Cabinet and I have suggested converting the redundant offices at Bexhill Town Hall into housing. Both options to be looked at. This will be reported on further at the January meeting.
- Park Pale at Mountfield is on the Planning Committee agenda for 16th November.