

## District Wide

### Work continues on the Wealden Local Plan.

The Local Plan Team is drawing up the details that will go in the new Draft Local Plan document for an 8 week consultation period starting in the next month or two. It had been expected to start the consultation early in the New Year, but it is likely to be somewhat delayed now because of the uncertainty over announcements from The Secretary of State Michael Gove MP and the issue of a planning White Paper in the near future.

You may have read that The Leader of the WDC and the Planning Policy portfolio holder have had a meeting with Mr Gove and been assured that things will change.

However the difficulty for the Council is that if things do change, particularly with regard to housing numbers, then the WDC could be “caught short” with numbers in a plan that don’t make sense in the changed circumstances.

The Council is supporting the “Street Learning” free education courses for any resident over 19 at Eastbourne and Hailsham centres.

This is being run in conjunction with the Adult College for Rural East Sussex (ACRES) organisation.

[www.wealden.gov.uk/streetlearning](http://www.wealden.gov.uk/streetlearning)

The Cabinet has agreed a funding package for Community Grants to be given out across Wealden to a total of £300,000.

These will go to groups such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Clued-Up Info, Cuckmere Community Bus and many other local Community organisations.

## Covid Related matters

The Government Grants for Hospitality and Leisure business are still available through the Council until the end of February.

The Test & Trace Support Payment scheme for a one-off £500 grant will continue until 31<sup>st</sup> March. About 370 people have received this grant in Wealden.

The Household Support Fund for help with food and energy bills for families on certain benefits has helped about 540 families in Wealden, but the funding has now all been spent, unless there is to be another round.

All the details of these schemes can be found on the WDC website, just follow the Covid links on front page.

## **Withyham Parish Planning issues;**

The application for 3 Houses at Cooks Corner has been refused at the last Planning Committee North (PCN), when your Chair of Planning and our new Hartfield District Councillor put the case for refusal very strongly.

I have requested a Call In to Committee for the application for a 4 bed dwelling on land adjacent to No1 Tanyard Cottages,  
Both this and the application for Land South of Back Lane may come to the PCN in March, but they may be delayed even further because there is quite a back-log of cases at the moment.

There are still a number of cases that the enforcement team are looking into in the Parish, but I don't have much new information.

## **Queen's Baton Relay**

Wealden residents are being asked if they would like to be baton bearers to carry the Queen's Baton ahead of the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham this Summer.

You can nominate someone on their website;

<https://www.birmingham2022.com/queens-baton-relay/batonbearer-nominations>

## **Heads-Up on a possible Bin Lorry Dispute**

Following the Bin Lorry disputes in Brighton and Eastbourne it is quite possible that the GMB Union may get into a disagreement with Biffa, the Wealden Waste contractor and this could lead to a strike of Lorry Drivers, which would cause similar disruptions to waste collection as has been seen elsewhere in Sussex.

If there is anything specific you wish me to follow up, I will do my best to do so. You can email or phone on the contacts below.

Cllr Keith Obbard,  
Wealden District Member for Withyham Ward.

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