

## **Council September 2022**

### **Item 10 Warm Spaces/Warm Banks**

With cost of living increases and concerns about fuel ('heating or eating') etc, some public bodies are currently looking at setting up Warm Spaces/Warm Banks along the lines of food banks.

The Clerk has been in touch with Wealden who have responded "*At the moment we are awaiting further guidance from Central Government as to what initiatives are being put forward to help with Cost of Living and Warm Spaces etc. I will be in touch as soon as we have some more information.*"

On 8 September the Prime Minister announced a new price cap guarantee for 2 years equating to £2,500 per year for a typical household. By comparison last winter this was £1,277.

Council is asked to consider whether it would support a Warm Spaces initiative. This could perhaps be either the use of the parish office during it's opening times; or providing subsidy to allow the use of village halls/available publicly accessible buildings in the parish as Warm Banks. To follow are some example proposals

#### **Proposal 1 – use of parish office**

- Proposal: Main meeting room available during times when staff are present and heating is already on
- Either meeting room kept as it is, or made more comfortable with borrowed/ freecycled chairs and sofas. If latter, WPC meetings to be held in Groombridge Village Hall
- Cost – Additional costs of tea, coffee, milk etc. Keeping meeting room as is would be no cost, being made into a comfortable space would incur costs of GVH hire for meetings
- Pros – least costly option as utilises WPCs existing resource at times it is already occupied. Least risk option as we don't know what take up would be.
- Cons of option 1 – people from parts of the parish that are not in Groombridge would need transport. Availability would be daytime so not suitable for those who work/go to school

#### **Proposal 2 – use of village halls/available publicly accessible buildings**

- Proposal: WPC to subsidise village halls at times they do not have existing bookings
- Cost – More workload than option 1 in identifying availability of halls, calculating costs of hires etc. When running, ongoing cost of any hall hires
- Pros – Warm banks could potentially be provided in each settlement so people in other parts of the parish have somewhere closer by to go to. Availability could potentially be evening as well as day time
- Cons – Halls aren't a 'comfy' space, i.e. tends to be tables and chairs rather than sofas/easy chairs. Cost of hires higher than option 1. Don't know what take up would be

#### **Proposal 3 – Hybrid of Options 1 and 2**

- Proposal: daytime use of parish office + evening and/or daytime use of halls (and/or perhaps the Long Room?)
- Cost – hybrid of the above costs
- Pros – availability better in terms of times open and geographically
- Cons – Costs of hall hires. Don't know what take up would be

***Council is asked to consider whether it would like to offer Warm Banks, and if so...***

- ***Its preferred option (from the above proposals or a different option?)***
- ***What funds could be made available and whether these would be delegated to the Clerk to progress, or any actions/costs brought back to Council for decision***