



West Sussex ALC Ltd.
Minutes of the Virtual Board Meeting of West Sussex ALC Ltd. held on
Friday 29th April 2022 at 2:30pm by Zoom

Attendance

Clr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, Chairman, Mid Sussex District Association
Clr Alison Cooper, Arun District Association
Clr Charles Britton, Chichester District Association
Clr Malcolm Eastwood, Horsham District Association
Clr Donald Mahon, Horsham District Association
Mark Mulberry, Company Secretary
Trevor Leggo, CEO WSALC Ltd.
Julie Holden, Clerk's Representative, Society of Local Council Clerks (Sussex Branch)
Sarah Norman, Clerk's Representative, Society of Local Council Clerks (Sussex Branch)
Anna Beams, Secretary to the Board

1. Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from Cllrs Tim Russell, Martin Beaton and Jonathan Millbanks.

2. To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st January 2022

The Minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting held on 21st January 2022.

3. CEO Update

The CEO updated the Board in the following matters:

- a. Shared Prosperity Fund: The CEO referred to his report regarding the Fund (*appendix A*) and highlighted the need for transparency by the District Councils in the selection process.
- b. NALC
 - i. NALC have been asked if there is a power for councils without the general power of competence to give out mugs or other gifts such as bookmarks to residents in celebration of the Queen's Jubilee. Their view is that s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 would be available if such a scheme were available to the community at large and, subject to the council reasonably concluding that the expenditure would be appropriate, there would be direct benefit to the community and that the benefit would be commensurate.
 - ii. NALC will be holding their annual conference face to face on Monday 7th November, further details will be circulated when available.

- iii. The SLCC and NALC continue to work on an updated Contract of Employment and are both heavily engaged with the Civility and Respect Project

- c. Policing: The CEO referred to his report (*appendix B*). He added that NALC are encouraging WSALC and ESALC to submit an entry into the County Association Project of the Year category of the Star Council Awards 2022. The entry would outline how the associations engage with the Police and the combined paper should be submitted to NALC by 27th May 2022.

The Board unanimously **AGREED** that the CEO should submit a project paper.

4. Financial update

Mark Mulberry referred to the Statutory Accounts and Report (*appendix C*) and added that he had not received any questions prior to the meeting.

He highlighted the following:

- The year ended with a surplus of £19,671 which included a final sum of £7,122 from the closure of SSALC Ltd.
- Reserves as at 31st March 2022 were c.£56,000
- All subscription invoices have been issued with payments received as expected and no anticipated delays.

The CEO added that, since 1st April 2021 when seven parish councils cancelled their membership of WSALC, 4 have re-joined and he is hopeful that the remaining 3 will also re-join.

Mark presented the statutory accounts to the Board.

The board agreed the form and content of the statutory accounts and **RESOLVED** to have two members sign the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022 and instruct the company secretary to file the accounts with Companies House.

5. Services update

Anna Beams reported the following:

Training:

- A full analysis of the training during 2021-22 will be produced shortly and a copy circulated to the Board before the next Board meeting.
- As a guide, during 2021-22, there were 418 individual bookings in total from West Sussex members.
 - 189 Councillors training;
 - 46 Clerks training;
 - 48 Communications training;
 - 14 Finance training;
 - 121 Planning training;
 - And seven bespoke, on demand training sessions were delivered.

- We are seeing an increase in requests for bespoke, on demand training. Six requests have been received from WSALC member councils since 1st April.
- We will continue to offer a core online training programme and have had requests for cemetery compliance and allotment training which we hope to be able to deliver.
- A training survey will be drafted to assess demand for topics, conferences, networking days and face to face training.

Specific work for WSALC:

- A members details form is currently being drafted for circulation shortly, with a view to clerks completing and returning the form following the annual meeting of the council. It includes basic contact information, names and contact of the Council Chairman, WSALC voting representatives and District Association representatives. The form will also request information such as the precept and whether the Council had a contested election in 2019.
- The website is being updated to include Board members photos and contact email addresses; Anna would be grateful if they could be sent to her if not yet provided.
- Information is currently circulated to member councils by email as it is received, Anna is working on an updated newsletter to pull all the information together and circulate as one document.
- We continue to respond to queries as promptly as possible; the query is passed to the most appropriate person if the recipient is unable to advise.
- Anna speaks regularly to the CEO and weekly meetings have been established.

Other:

Anna advised that Andy Beams is now employed by Mulberry & Co on a full-time basis as a Local Government Consultant. His primary roles are as internal auditor, trainer and locum clerk and RFO and he can offer support where necessary with practical finance queries and other queries. Andy is a very experienced clerk, RFO and internal auditor.

6. Health & Wellbeing

The CEO referred to the attached report (*appendix D*).

The report has been shared with Emily King, Assistant Director, Communities at West Sussex County Council. Emily has an objective to alleviate pockets of deprivation and poverty across West Sussex and is initiating a 3-tiered approach across Local Government to share local knowledge.

Cllr Eastwood offered to share the case study produced by Henfield Parish Council.

The CEO added that he intends to establish a strong link with the County Council, with parish and town councils being a point of contact within the community and will discuss with Emily how she intends to approach her objective when he next meets with her.

7. Ukraine

The CEO informed the Board that, in a recent newspaper article, Chichester had been reported as the local authority with the greatest number of Ukrainian refugees by District in England. West Sussex County Council have published a webpage containing detailed information which is

updated regularly and the biggest challenge face by the County has been identifying school places to accommodate the refugee children.

Julie Holden added that twenty-two households in East Grinstead have taken in refugees and that a drop in café for refugees is being run by a community group on a fortnightly basis which is being financially supported by East Grinstead Town Council. Over fifty refugees attended the first drop in café. She added that she is meeting with CAB to discuss the possibility of language improvement classes being run in the East Grinstead area. She further added that, while initiatives are in progress, she would encourage local parishes to consider what they can offer.

8. Resilience Planning

The CEO reminded the Board that during storms earlier in the year, some local parishes were cut off for lengthy periods of time. He added that he would encourage all local parishes to produce a robust resilience plan and proposed that WSALC could facilitate the opportunity for small parishes to develop a plan by signposting them to a person with relevant knowledge and experience. The CEO recommended Dee Thornton as being a consultant with considerable experience in Risk Assessments, project management and water supply. Dee has also worked closely with many local parishes, including Southbourne Parish Council.

The CEO added that some parishes already have strong resilience plans in place that could be used as templates, he named Singleton & Charlton Parish Council as being a good example.

It was **AGREED** that the CEO would invite Dee Thornton to attend a future Board meeting to present her approach.

9. Housing Issues

The CEO advised that housing matters are a significant issue within Arun and that the district has been placed into special measures due to housing numbers not being met. A letter was sent to Andrew Griffith MP by the chairman of Aldingbourne Parish Council however the CEO is unsure whether a response has been received.

Cllr Cooper commented that the Arun District is restricted by statute and regulation.

Cllr Eastwood added that water neutrality is a big issue in Horsham. He further advised that Henfield Parish Council have been working with the group Campaign for the Protection of Rural Henfield and Horsham District Council to repel development and that the Group have a meeting with Andrew Griffith on 20th May. Two matters for consideration are due to be raised at the meeting; to extend the review period for Neighbourhood Plans from 2 years to 5 years; and where an application has been refused, gone to the Inspector and further been refused, that similar planning applications should be prohibited for a minimum of 5 years.

The CEO reported that he and the Chairman will be attending a meeting with Andrew Griffith on 10th June and will report outcomes to the Board.

Cllr Eastwood also confirmed that he would report back following any meetings held with Andrew Griffith and 'Big Conversation' meetings due to be held by the Leader of Horsham District to which all parish and town councillors within Horsham have been invited.

3:27 Sarah Norman left the meeting

10. Neighbourhood Plan Survey

The Chairman reminded the Board that a Neighbourhood Plan survey has been circulated to member councils twice and that the response has been minimal on both occasions. He proposed that a further, simplified version could be drafted and circulated in the hope of a higher response.

During a full and open discussion, it was suggested that the information being sought in the survey is historical and, in many cases, both the staff and/or Members of the town or parish council have undergone change since the Neighbourhood Plan was published and any responses may therefore not be of value. It was also suggested that the planning reforms later in the year may address the future of Neighbourhood Plans.

The Chairman proposed that alternatively, WSALC will not proceed with an updated survey until the White Paper is published and any changes to the system are known.

As the information being requested is historic and of little value at this current time, it was **RESOLVED** to revisit the matter after the white paper is published.

11. Parish Online

The CEO explained that in 2021 WSALC negotiated a reduction for the cost of a Parish Online group license to member councils for the forthcoming year. The reduction was dependent on all member councils taking a license through WSALC, with WSALC being invoiced directly by Geosphere for the full sum of £8,200. Approximately 50% of member councils took advantage of the arrangement resulting in a shortfall of the full sum being recovered by the association.

The CEO established that Geosphere has also negotiated a deal with BHIB whereby any parish council taking out an insurance policy through BHIB receive a Parish Online license free of charge.

The CEO recommended that the association do not continue with the arrangement.

It was **AGREED** to discontinue with the arrangement and that member councils would be contacted by the CEO to explain the situation.

15:47 Mark Mulberry left the meeting

12. Reports by District Associations

a) Adur:

The CEO advised that there is no representative present at the meeting from the Adur district. He added that there is no District Association in Adur as the district has two parish councils, Lancing Parish Council and Sompting Parish Council, and that the parish councils themselves appoint a representative to the WSALC Board. The CEO will keep the Board informed of any further updates.

b) Arun:

Cllr Cooper reported that Cllr Michael Tu has been elected as chairman of ADALC and that the district association is moving in a positive direction.

Matters discussed at a meeting held in February included the Queens's Green Canopy and Jubilee celebrations and the electric charge point initiative by West Sussex County Council.

The association formed a small Management Committee to work with the Chairman between meetings on taking initiatives forward.

Trevor Leggo stated that he had attended a recent Management Committee meeting which focussed on formulating a list of topics to take to a meeting with Arun District Council. The meeting date is to be finalised but is expected to take place on 23rd June, the district council will be given advanced notice of topics to be raised and the CEO added that it is a priority for the association to form a good relationship with the district council.

c) **Chichester:**

Cllr Charles Britton read a message from Cllr Tim Russell sending his apologies and stating his concern that attendance at CDALC meetings is mainly from councils local to the Chichester area of the county.

Cllr Britton reported that at the last CDALC meeting on 4th April, it was reported that the South Downs National Park Authority have had a good look at the Glover Report, noted Governments response and have responded themselves noting concern that the authority is likely to be eroded.

The CEO advised that in the past, CDALC had two sub-districts, Petworth Sub-District and Midhurst Sub-District. He suggested that they could be revived with meetings held peripatetically which may attract a higher turnout across the county.

The Chairman added that he is open to CDALC making changes and has in the past suggested merging Adur with Horsham to allow an extra representative from Chichester to serve on the WSALC Board.

d) **Horsham:**

Cllr Eastwood reported that the last meeting of HALC was held on 16th March when the following business was conducted:

- The AGM was moved from March to July.
- The updated Constitution was agreed in principle to go to a vote at the AGM.
- The association is now in a stable position following the transfer of signatories on the bank mandates.

Cllr Eastwood added that the new Leader of Horsham District Council, Cllr Jonathan Chowen along with Head of Place, Barbara Childs and the Principal Planning Officer, Catherine Howe gave a presentation at the meeting on the impact of water neutrality on planning. They followed the presentation with a Q and A session.

Cllr Chowen is now the lead for all councils affected by the water neutrality issue for both Chichester and other districts.

HDC are now able to quantify the impact of additional housing and what it will mean for water consumption and arrive at a point where they have reached an agreement with Natural England and all other relevant parties.

HDC are also focussing on the development of a Water Mitigation Strategy and have agreed to work with parishes to lobby Government when the time is right.

e) **Mid Sussex:**

The Chairman reported that, at the last meeting of MSALC, nine out of a possible twenty-four parishes were in attendance.

The CEO gave a full presentation at the meeting on all relevant matters, and it was agreed to invite Flo Churchill, planning advisor to WSALC, to deliver a presentation at a future meeting.

Access to the bank accounts is in the process of being resolved and the CEO has dropped the bank mandates to the MSALC Chairman, Cllr Tony Steer, for signing.

The chairman summarised by offering his support and help to the District Associations with their objectives.

13. Matter arising not on the agenda

The CEO read a statement received from Jonathan Owen, CEO of NALC, focussing on a meeting held by the National Assembly who considered Governments response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards. Jonathan reported that to date, 13 MPs have signed have signed the early day motion on the conduct of councillors which calls for stronger sanctions regarding poor behaviour. Jonathan urges councils to consider writing to their MP using template letters they have produced in conjunction with the Society of Local Council Clerks.

14. Dates of future meetings

Friday 15th July 2022 @ 2.30pm
Friday 14th October 2022 @ 2.30pm
Friday 28th October 2022 @ 2.30pm (AGM)

Forums:

Chairs; Monday 11th July @ 7.00pm
Clerk: Thursday 14th July 2022 @ 10.30am

A discussion took place regarding holding the AGM face to face, possibly in the middle of the county. Anna Beams will research venues and report back. The possibility if a suitable sponsor was also discussed.

15.50 Meeting closed

Signed (Chairman) _____

Dated _____

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Directors may be aware of Government's announcement on 13th April to establish the Shared Prosperity Fund as part of its Levelling Up agenda. A total of £2.6bn has been set aside for the next 3 years with £400m allocated to 2022/23.

The fund will be administered at District Council level and Govt. expects those with fund management responsibilities to commence conversations with local stakeholders to determine priorities and desired outcomes. I am trying to establish from the LGA and NALC that principal authorities have been instructed to regard local councils as stakeholders and hope to receive a response by the time of the Board meetings. In its guidance notes Govt. suggests the following priorities in phase 1 of the scheme and these could match with local council objectives:

- Community infrastructure, improved green spaces and community led projects [unspecified]
- Build resilient and safe neighbourhoods, improvements to the built environment and an innovative approach to crime prevention
- Restoration of a sense of community

Phase 2 focusses on support for local business and Phase 3 looks at the development of people and skills. The Board will no doubt wish to encourage member councils to understand the potential of this funding and ensure that their District Council is open and transparent in the way it considers bids. It is therefore **recommended** that an appropriate item be placed on each DALC agenda with an invitation to the DC to attend and explain how it will make local councils aware and its selection process. It looks like the window for submission of bids is from 30th June to 1st August which means that we really only have May to ensure understanding of the requirements; if DALCs have nothing scheduled in May, the Chairman may consider a special meeting may be necessary.

Trevor Leggo

21st April 2022

APPENDIX B

Report of CEO to ESALC & WSALC Boards

Police matters

By way of update on matters involving Sussex Police, the PCC, ESALC & WSALC, the following is a summary :

[a] Big Data presentation – On 25th February, the Chief Constable, Jo Shiner gave a presentation to local councils via zoom in which she explained how ‘big data’ was being used to target police manpower and resources. This sophisticated intelligence led approach enables the police to predict trends, monitor serial offenders, crime hotspots and devote more time to victims. Success depends on the public reporting crime or concerns in a given area, without such reporting the picture is incomplete and can lead to a police presence not being applied to that community.

[b] Focus Groups – Organised by Mandy Jameson, the PCC’s Senior Communications Manager and me; these take place every 6 months and invite communities to indicate whether policing in their area has improved or deteriorated in the preceding 6 months. The District Commander [Chief Inspector] or local Inspector are in attendance with the outcome of discussions fed back to the Chief Constable and the PCC. Dates and areas for the next round are as follows :

May 16 th	Wealden south am, Wealden north pm
May 17 th	Horsham north am, Horsham south pm
May 18 th	Chichester south pm
May 20 th	Lewes north am, Lewes south pm
May 23 rd	Rother south am, Rother north pm
May 24 th	Arun am, Adur pm
May 26 th	Mid Sussex north am, Mid Sussex south pm
May 27 th	Chichester north, am

Councils previously involved are aware of the dates, times and venues; those not previously involved but have expressed interest are also invited with Clerks notified. We plan to revert to face to face sessions for these meetings with the fall back of video if the situation requires it.

[c] Police Engagement Group – established under the Chairmanship of Chief Inspector Shane Baker [District Commander, Mid Sussex and Crawley] designed to ensure, inter alia, that all communities are served by a named PCSO. To achieve this each PCSO completes a Patrol Plan signed off by their Sergeant that includes the frequency and arrangements for liaising with towns and parishes on their ‘patch’. The PEG meets monthly and I have a seat on the Group. Where we become aware of a breakdown in the system and PCSOs are not making contact in the way intended, an email from me to the local Inspector can put things right.

[d] Rural Crime Team – Established in July 2020 to combat the rise in theft and threats to those in rural areas, the Team has had considerable success and publishes a very useful monthly update, which is shared with all Clerks. At its first Conference on 13th April attended by the PCC, Chief Constable, NFU, CLA and representatives of parish councils, I was able to publicly thank Inspector Ollie Fisher and the Team for their support to local councils and rural communities. The Team has grown from one Sergeant in the period up to July 2020 to over 20 specialist and dedicated officers today.

[e] Roads policing. The previous Chief Inspector responsible for this area of work, Habs Rahman, has returned to Hampshire Police and has been replaced by Chief Inspector Kendal Wells on promotion. We have an established working relationship with Kendal as the local Inspector for Wealden District and when I met with him on 8th April, he was happy to confirm a willingness to attend Board Meetings or Forums to answer questions on traffic, speeding and related matters.

[f] Contact Improvement Group Established by Sussex Police as the SPCIG designed to ensure that anyone contacting the police has the same experience, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities or the method used. Managed by Supt. Rosie Ross - Head of the Force Contact, Control and Communications Dept., I occupy the role of Independent Chair with ESALC and WSALC represented by Keith Stevens and Martin Beaton respectively. Other attendees represent young people, older people, the Education Sector, LGBTQ+, faith groups and those with disabilities. The Group is currently reviewing a shortly to be published ‘ Make the Right Contact’ information leaflet that will be widely distributed across Sussex.

It is fair to say SALC has developed an effective long standing relationship with Sussex Police and the PCC that is unmatched elsewhere in England; our member councils benefit from the mutual trust and personal contact that exists.

Trevor Leggo
CEO, ESALC and WSALC
19th April 2022

WSALC Limited – Management Accounts Reporting for the quarter to 31st March 2022.

Income

Subscription income is £79,493 of which £93.56 remains unpaid as at the management accounts date. The original budget was for £84,618; however, eight member councils decided not to renew their subscription. We remain hopeful that they will be persuaded to re-join in time to come

Total income for the year was £116,193 compared to a budget of £116,991

Expenditure

The costs incurred to date are £96,522 against a total year end budget of £108,093. The reduction in costs being due to no planned expenditure on training, combined with a reduction in NALC costs due to a reduced membership.

All costs are listed within this pack.

Net Position.

The association finished the year with a surplus of £19,671

Bank & Cash Balances

At the 31st March 2022 there was £57,948 in the current account and £22 in the deposit

account. A copy of the bank statement is provided with this pack.

Reserves

The association carries forward into the 2022/23 year £56,119 having started the year with £36,449. This equates to roughly 50% of income – being the same suggested amount to member councils.



West Sussex ALC Health & Wellbeing Survey Results – Spring 2022

65 out of 130 responses were received which equates to 50% of Member Councils within West Sussex (over double the number of responses received in comparison to the initial WSALC H&W survey conducted in 2019).

A list of the Parish and Town Councils who completed the survey are as follows:

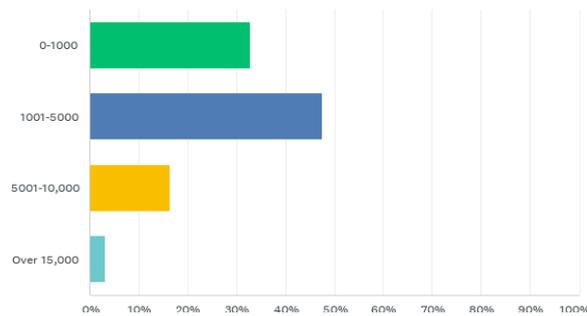
West Wittering	Pulborough	Slaugham
Lancing	Billingshurst	Lavant
Fishbourne	Bersted	Duncton
Albourne	Chidham and Hambrook	Lindfield Rural
Plaistow and Ifold	Warnham	Fittleworth
Southbourne	Aldingbourne	Wisborough Green
Barnham and Eastergate	Ashurst	Slindon
Rustington	East Preston	Heyshott
Hunston	Bramber	Yapton
Westbourne	Pagham	Birdham
Arundel	Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	Colgate
Shipley	Newtimber Parmish Meeting	Haywards Heath
Storrington and Sullington	West Itchenor	West Chiltington
Harting	Bognor Regis	East Lavington
Lindfield	Westhampnett	North Horsham
Patching	Rudgwick	Westbourne
Clapham	Rusper	Amberley
Angmering	Compton	Walberton
Balcombe	Bolney	Upper Beeding
Cuckfield	Nuthurst	Bury
Sompting	Graffham	West Hoathly
Henfield	Forest Row	

Questions 6, 10 and 11 exemplify how much Parish and Town Councils want to engage with their communities, and how events during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to Councils wanting to do more to support the health and wellbeing of their communities.

The majority of the Councils who responded had electorates between 1001-5000. Please see below for the electorate breakdown:

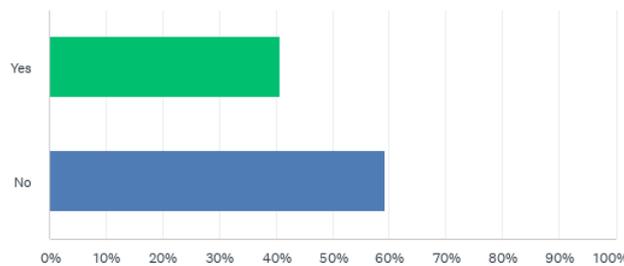
APPENDIX C

Q2 What is your electorate?



Out of all the Councils, just over 41% (27) had the General Power of Competence, giving these Councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation.

Q3 Does your Council have the General Power of Competence?



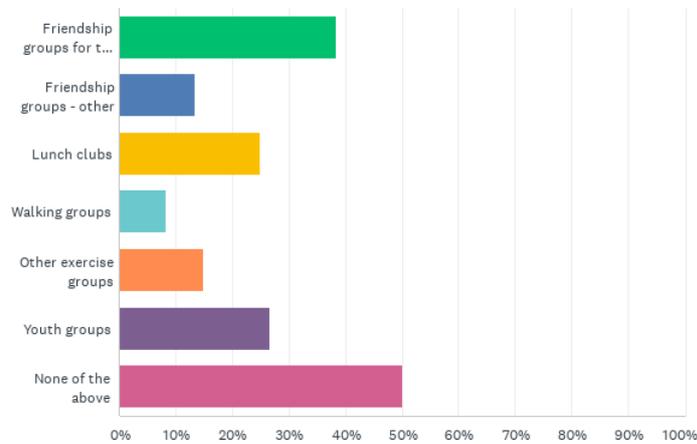
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were asked if their Council had provided funding, or grants for, or helped to facilitate any of the following groups that had an impact on health and wellbeing:

Friendship groups for the elderly	Other friendship groups
Lunch clubs	Walking groups
Other exercise groups	Youth groups
None of the above	

62 of 65 Councils completed this question, with 30 (48%) stating that they did not fund or facilitate any of the above. 38% of Councils contributed to friendship groups for the elderly, 27% supported youth groups, 25% helped with lunch clubs, 15% supported other exercise groups, 13% facilitated alternative friendship groups and 8% were involved with local walking groups.

APPENDIX C

Q4 Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, did your Council provide funding or grants for, or help facilitate any of the following groups that have an impact on health and wellbeing? Please tick as many options that apply.



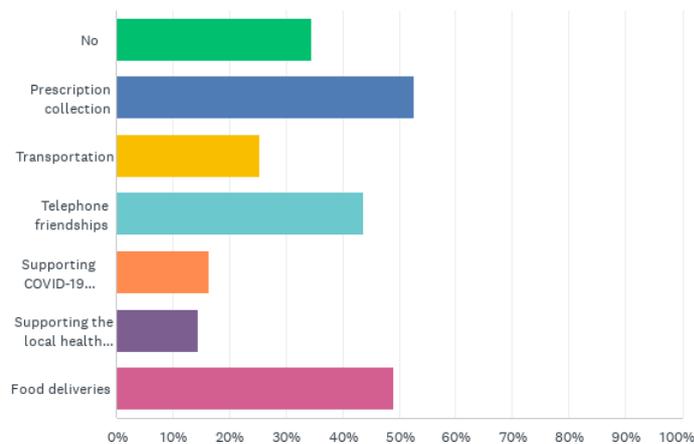
Other ways in which individual Councils had been helping prior to COVID-19 included a Manhood Mobility Voluntary Service, First Responders, 4Sight, Homestart, Community Minibus, funding salaries for Neighbourhood Wardens, coffee mornings, resident group funding, scouts, grant funding for Christmas lunch for vulnerable residents, organizing groups for people with disabilities, transportation grants to assist with hospital appointments, funding for sports centres as well as children's play areas.

A few Councils who did not contribute financially or otherwise prior to the pandemic in relation to health and wellbeing reported that other local organisations provided such provisions, such as the WI, Horticultural Society, local history groups, and coffee mornings and lunches organised by the Church.

75% of respondents stated that COVID-19 had an impact on the provision of these services.

Participants were then asked if COVID-19 had led to their Council doing more for health and wellbeing, despite the adversities that it posed, and if so, in what manner.

Q6 Did COVID-19 lead to the Council doing more for health and wellbeing, despite the adversities it posed? If yes, please tick as many options that apply.



Results show that 35% of Councils reported that the pandemic had not led to their Council providing any additional grants or other such services.

For the remaining 65%, ways in which these Councils helped their communities during the pandemic were categorised as follows:

- 53% facilitated a prescription collection service
- 49% contributed to food delivery service
- 44% supported a telephone friendship service to help those who were vulnerable/lonely
- 25% facilitated transport within the area
- 16% supported COVID-19 vaccinations
- 15% supported the local health centre/GP

Further ways in which individual Councils supported their community included:

- Dog walking services
- Shopping for those unable to go themselves
- Information hub with regards to vaccinations and support groups
- Created a comprehensive database of services and businesses offering support
- Financial grants to the local Food Bank and food hubs
- Organised and delivered food hampers to schools where children in need of support had been identified
- Grant to West Sussex Mind Charity (to support Mental Health Support Services)
- Covid assistance coordinator for shopping/prescriptions etc – linked helper with someone in need
- A mobile phone was purchased to provide support 24 hours a day
- Support WhatsApp groups were created
- Supporting the Community Covid Hub
- Organising taxis
- Working with local volunteer groups

APPENDIX C

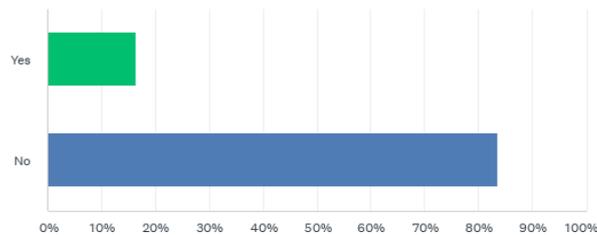
Councils were then asked if they did not facilitate any of the above but local volunteer groups did, to please elaborate. Just over 50% of Councils answered this question, with emphasis being placed on Local Community and Neighbourhood Wardens as well as local resident and volunteer groups, some of which worked in conjunction with Council members/the Council itself. Many Churches offered additional support as well as charities such as Age UK West Sussex and Age Concern, as well as smaller local charities.

When asked if their Council had provided facilities, such as the Village Hall or car park, to support the NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme, 87% responded to say it had not. Some Councils had offered use of their facilities but they were deemed unsuitable (i.e. not large enough). Other Councils reported that they did not have any facilities to offer (i.e. they do not own the Village Hall). Whilst some Councils offered use of their facilities voluntarily, others stated that they did not because they had not been requested to do so.

Of the 13% of Councils who did provide such facilities to support the NHS vaccination programme, the Village Hall and use of the car park were the main ways in which they were able to offer support. For some Councils who were either unable or had unsuitable premises to offer, many offered their time instead. For example, many Councillors assisted with car park duty and inside vaccination centres. At one Council, provision was made for one member of staff to take one day of paid leave each to carry out duties as a volunteer vaccinator for St John Ambulance.

Where Councils were able to offer use of their facilities, they were asked if this was done at full rate, subsidised rate or free of charge for the NHS. 75% of Councils offered their facilities free of charge, with 12.5% charging full rates and 12.5% offering subsidised rates.

Q10 Has your Council supported the NHS or other healthcare providers in new ways since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic?



84% of Councils stated that they had not been supporting the NHS or other healthcare providers in new ways since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, better communication was reported by a few Councils.

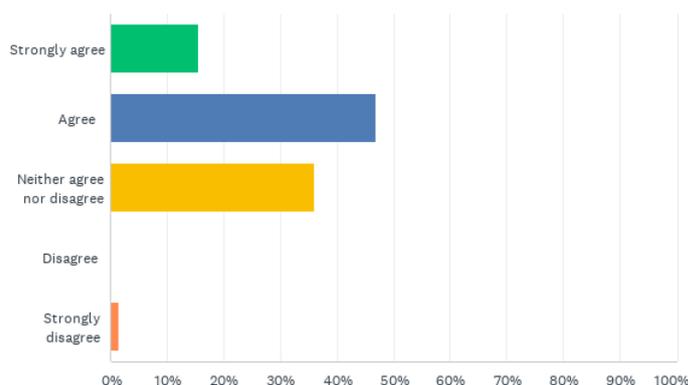
For example, regular meetings with the local GP Practice Manager were taking place in one parish, and a genuine partnership approach had been formed between one Council and the local NHS GP Practice whereby they are now working together to explore new ways to improve the health and wellbeing of their community’s residents.

Other positive feedback from individual Councils included involvement with local Covid Community Hubs, providing space for NHS Child Services to carry out a satellite service following the closure of a Children and Family Services building, and one Council reported that it was about to receive a National Lottery Grant of £176k due to the support programme run by its staff and volunteers during lockdown. This will enable the Council to continue to offer its support and offer rent supported

space for all community groups including the NHS and exercise groups. Another Council noted that it now supported the NHS by advertising their services and raising awareness.

The survey ended with Councils being asked if they agreed with the following statement: the COVID- 19 pandemic has led to the Council wanting to do more to support the health and wellbeing of the community.

Q11 The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the Council wanting to do more to support the health and wellbeing of the community. Do you agree with this statement?



As you can see from the above graph, 63% of Councils either agreed or strongly agreed with this sentiment, with 36% neither agreeing or disagreeing, and only 1% strongly disagreement with the statement.

When asked to elaborate, one Council advised it was in the process of establishing a Working Group to investigate the feasibility of a Community Hub/Café which would provide a dominant place for residents to meet. Another felt that it was already committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of its community. Some of the smaller and more rural parishes commented that with their small precept, there was a limit to what they could do in these circumstances, at least financially.

In summary, it is clear that the majority of responding Councils took an active role during the pandemic and supported their residents in a number of ways, from financial aid (i.e. grants to Food Banks) to offering vital space needed for the NHS to carry out essential services (i.e. Vaccination Centres running from Village Halls) to donating Councillor and Clerk time and supporting their communities in more personal ways. For example, operating 24 hour phone lines to provide support to physically collecting and dropping off prescriptions and essential shopping items.

It seems that the majority of Councils within West Sussex have become more aware of the health and wellbeing needs of their communities since the COVID-19 pandemic, with the majority wanting to do more to support them. A positive link between Councils and the NHS or other healthcare providers was reported by many, which can only be viewed with optimism and it can only be hoped that this overall desire to have health and wellbeing at the forefront of many Councils minds remains for years to come.

APPENDIX D

H&W