

Outside Bodies – Reports from Councillors

The following updates have been received from Councillors since the last meeting in relation to the outside bodies to which they have been appointed by Full Council.

	Outside Body	Councillors	Update
1	Team East Sussex (TES)	James MacCleary (Cllr Nicholson attended as sub)	<p>Date of meeting: 25 January 2021</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption and delays resulting from leaving the EU. • Towns Fund updates. • Flexible working. • TES sub-groups. • SELEP update. • Impact of lockdown on equalities and minority groups. <p>Decisions made: Chair to investigate equalities issues, everyone to continue updating on Brexit impacts.</p>
2	Aspiration Homes	James MacCleary and Zoe Nicholson	<p>Date of meeting: 11 December 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on new flexibilities for Aspiration Homes as a housing provider to us capital receipts more flexibly. • Annual Report/Financial accounts and reports received and signed off. <p>Decisions made: Signed off accounts.</p>
3	LHICL (Lewes Homes Investment Company Ltd)	James MacCleary and Zoe Nicholson	<p>Date of meeting: 11 December 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of last meeting. • Dormant Accounts. <p>Decisions made: Agreed dormant accounts.</p>
4	Greater Brighton Economic Board	Zoe Nicholson	<p>Date of meeting 26 January 2021</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Public Space annual report • Investment programme proposal • University of Brighton Innovation Programme • Hydrogen Hub update • Sustainable Recovery Plan update <p>Decisions made: investment desk creation subject to no other funding being available.</p>

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5	Health and Wellbeing Board	Zoe Nicholson	<p>Date of meeting: 8 December 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid19 Outbreak management plan update. • Response to Govt consultation on Integrated Care System reform. • Safeguarding Annual Report. • Integration Update report. • Joint Needs Assessment. • Winter Planning.
6	East Sussex Strategic Planning Group	Emily O'Brien	<p>Date of meeting: 21 September 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to discuss reinstating group after long absence– duty to cooperate proposed for abolition under govt reform but joint working considered important regardless. • Great concern over govt planning reforms including from National Park. <p>Decisions made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reinstating group but with representation only from East Sussex Authorities (not wider). <p>Date of meeting: 22 January 2021</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lewes were hosts/chair (rotating). • Progress updates on local plans – many have similar timescales, concern over PINs capacity to get them through inspection before the end of Dec 2023 deadline. • Continuing concern over unrealistic govt housing targets. • Concern over Class E changes - all were putting strong objection into the consultation. <p>Decisions made: Rother to host next meeting.</p>
7	South East England Councils	Emily O'Brien	<p>Date of meeting: 29 January 2021</p> <p># Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGM plus Meeting with Government Deputy Chief planner to hear from SE council representatives. • Shared concerns over planning reform and unrealistic govt housing targets,

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			<p>including knock on from London (London Plan agreed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I challenged over the way Govt have approached planning reform and the unacceptable impact on LDC, as reported in Municipal Journal and Local Government Chronicle <p>Decisions made: n/a</p>
8	Seaford to Brighton Steering Group	Emily O'Brien	<p>Date of meeting: 23 September 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community activity to enhance now stations back on track Discussion on ensuring Covid safe train travel <p>Decisions made: n/a</p> <p>Date of meeting: 2 December 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports on activity to enhance Seaford, Bishopstone Newhaven and Lewes stations Tide Mills footbridge construction due to start Sep 21 (plans on SDNP website). <p>Decisions made: n/a</p>
9	West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board	Emily O'Brien	<p>Date of meeting: 9 October 2020</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much Concern over govt planning reforms including white paper Update on joint planning issues going forward including jointly commissioned evidence – need to this to include climate change issues. <p>Decisions made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint submissions focussed on cross-border strategic issues – responses to both consultations sent on behalf of group.
10	Impact Seaford	Christine Brett	<p>Date of meeting: 18 January 2021</p> <p>New Town Clerk Adam Chugg welcomed the Forum and Youth Forum Members.</p> <p>Business discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Economic pan reviewed V 10 and additions suggested. Changes to local demographics.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martello toilets and Entertainment areas- funding being sought. • Walking and Cycling projects in light of ESCC current strategy. • YF has introduced a business support scheme the Use it or Lose it card. • YF explained about a proposed Pedestrianisation project/ markets for Place Lane and publicising TIC which they not aware of. • Climate change initiatives. STC to get report on 28th. Will be circulated after <p>Decisions made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Final review of Economic plan to be done at April meeting. b) SDNP Rep to be invited to the board. c) Request to Tourism team re. TIC for more publicity. d) Explore establishing regular business briefing. e) Martello Tower Toilet Facilities and Entertainment Area – Review project proposals and source alternative funding streams. Proposals to be discussed at April Board meeting for ratification in final Economic Plan. f) Walking and Cycling Projects – Review ESCC strategy and submit possible project proposals for incorporation in final Economic Plan. g) Business Survey on demand for Hotel Accommodation – To be undertaken Autumn 2021. Item to be retained as ongoing action. h) Ongoing Safeguarding Policy to be submitted to Impact Seaford Board by CoC and ESCC. i) Next meeting 19 April 2021.
11	Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) East Sussex County Council	Stephen Gauntlett	<p>Date of meeting: 10 December 2020.</p> <p>Business Discussed and decisions made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Debate and resolution concerning closure of walk in medical centre on Eastbourne Station. (Will close in due course). 2. Progress reports from Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Group and East Sussex Hospitals Trust on Covid-19 vaccination roll-out and hospital capacity.

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			(All information subsequently released into public domain).
12	Wave Leisure Trust	Laurence O'Connor	<p>Date of meeting: 8th February 2021</p> <p>Business discussed: Grant applications, operational changes due to lockdown three, plans for Newhaven Fort, three year recovery plan.</p> <p>Decisions made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms & conditions for the acceptance of LDC's £500,000 loan agreed. • Applications for various funding applications noted and agreed. • Plans for Newhaven Fort re-opening agreed . • Three year financial plans updated and agreed. Restart, Rebuild & Recover noted and agreed. <p>Additional information on current projects and finances set out at Appendix 1.</p>
13	Joint Action Group	Sean Macleod	<p>Date of meeting: 4/11/2021 (unable to attend due to paternity leave but received update by email).</p> <p>Key matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sussex Police concerns regarding suicides in the Lewes District. Received update via email and the report been shared with specific officers for discussion and I have requested that the report is discussed at the next Joint Action Group meeting. The report contains sensitive information so will not be being shared publicly unless the police decide to do it themselves. • Concerns raised regarding drug supply also in the area and several drug supply routes have been targeted especially in Seahaven area and Ringmer.
14	Mental Health Champion	Sean Macleod	<p>Date of meeting: NA</p> <p>Update on work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the last update myself and our staff champion have not met, the officer is very busy regarding covid19 and our internal work has been hindered by the covid19 restrictions.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have attended a number of online conferences regarding mental health and local authority and when the world allows will be holding meetings with relevant officers going forward. • The Council continues to share important contact information regarding mental health and is installing Samaritans' signs in the relevant areas as some are in the SDNP its complicated by the need for planning permission. • I would hope when time allows, we can look back at the plans myself and the staff champion originally looked which was an internal review of staff and moral which was focussing on the change off council and become a combined authority, an internal review might be more important as we come out of the covid19 crisis and see as a council if we can do more but this is a discussion to have with the staff champion when time allows, and to work with the local bus company to promote mental health services on their buses that serve our coastline.
15	Citizens Advice Bureau	Imogen Makepeace	<p>Note - A meeting between myself and an Officer for me to better understand the financial assessment process is in the pipeline. I will be able to report on that at a later date.</p> <p>Date of Trustees Board – 11 February 2021</p> <p>Key Issues –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The excellent service from Lewes CAB continues. • New volunteers have been recruited, new telephone systems and computers installed. • In spite of the difficulties of the past year with the need to change working practices to accommodate COVID safety measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 822 people have been helped, giving back more than £300,000 of benefits to the community in the last quarter alone (Oct/Nov/Dec). ○ 64% of clients seeking benefits advice since the start of the

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			<p>pandemic have never needed support before.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 115% increase in residents of Lewes District claiming Universal Credit since the start of the pandemic. ○ The most vulnerable are falling off the radar due to lack of face 2 face contact. ○ Warning that the future holds more challenges as many people receiving support from various govt schemes, such as furlough and restriction on evictions etc. when that melts away the impact will be severe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These issues have impacted on staff and volunteers, as clients present with multiple, complex and sometimes harrowing needs. The WellBeing service is welcome, less formal meetings, as well as informal “check-in”s help to reduce stress. • There is a possibility that the DWP will not continue to fund the Help to Claim Service beyond 2022 <p><u>The Voluntary Sector Support Policy Review</u> has caused considerable concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive bidding for funding every three years will have the following consequences: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget plans for the possibility of zero funding will need to be drawn up. 2. Plans for the transfer of assets, equipment, personnel etc will need to be made. 3. In a time when advice is needed more than ever, management time and attention to the above will be diverted from responding to the needs of the community. • It was noted that the time frame between submission of bid and decision is very short- resulting in too little time for appropriate handover, winding-down, dispersal of assets etc. • The lack of security in funding affects the organisation in the following ways:

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			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contracts from suppliers, for instance telephone providers give better deals for 2 – 3 year contracts than for one. The Newhaven and Lewes telephone contract is up for renewal this year and short term contract will have to be negotiated. 2. Employed staff are anxious and upset. They have lost job security. The best may leave. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With reference to the tendering process, these suggestions are offered: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that the scheduling of the process is reconsidered to allow a longer time frame, giving more notice. 2. that well trained, and well-supported volunteers add value and cost nothing. 3. that Citizens Advice has Advice Quality Standard accreditation which is the “Michelin Star” of the advisory sector. • An observation was made that the work of the CAB supports all vulnerable residents in the District, and that many people in the worst circumstances are in private rented accommodation.
16	South Downs National Park (Planning Meetings)	William Meyer	<p>Date of meetings: Monthly to January 2021</p> <p>Business discussed: Planning applications from across the whole area of the SDNPA Park Authority as referred to the Planning Committee by Director of Planning / Park Officers.</p> <p>Decisions made regarding each application and any other business dealt with by the Planning Committee is easily accessed from the individually recorded sessions available on the SDNPA Website, this includes full policy discussions by the Committee also all held online since May 2020 and all recorded.</p>

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17	South Downs National Park Authority Meetings	William Meyer	<p>Date of meeting: December 2020</p> <p>Business discussed: As with the above the full record (including agenda and outcomes) is held on the public on SDNPA website.</p> <p>General Summary of SDNPA Membership 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Membership of the Park Authority during 2020 has proved challenging for many Members as the Park has adjusted to new ways of remote working. With the main offices in Midhurst predominately closed since March 2020, it has been harder to build and maintain close personal relations between Members and Senior Staff. Personal relations acquired during the pre-Covid period (June 2019 to March 2020) have been key to sustaining my current excellent personal relationships. However, despite my best efforts via Zoom, Members WhatsApp groups and other online meeting platforms it has been hard to compensate for the informal contacts that were so key to building day to day trust and knowledge between all Members and key individuals in former times. Much has been lost as a result of moving activities online and whilst no different in process from the situation at LDC or other areas of local and national government, the nature of the Park's Membership has made matters especially challenging. Park Members are drawn from across 17 diverse Districts; three County Councils including Hampshire, West and East Sussex; 6 are representatives from the numerous Parish Councils from across the Park and several are new Secretary of State appointments. In addition, personal contact, even in normal times, was limited due to 100 miles of the Park's East / West geography. It has been ever more necessary therefore to have confidence in those Members of the Authority who form the key Members group (there is no Cabinet) and this includes not only the Chairman and his Deputy but other Committee

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			<p>heads including Policy and Planning. This group is responsible for overseeing and working with Senior Officers with regard to the day to day business of the Authority. I believe all Members have full confidence in the new Chairman and Deputy Chairman and the Senior Management Team. All Member have continued to focus on their areas of responsibility be it Planning, Policy or some other activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From January 2021, I have agreed to relinquish my Planning Committee responsibilities in favour of taking up a new role (with two other Authority Members including the Deputy Chairman Vanessa Rowlands) as a Director of the new wholly owned trading company, South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd. It is the intention of the Authority that this company will, during the course of 2021, take charge of the iconic Seven Sisters County Park. This major landholding is currently being transferred from East Sussex County Council to the SDNPA and these arrangements will be completed later this year. I remain closely in touch with Planning Officers but in addition I am now attending the Policy and Resources Committee of the SDNPA. My local replacement on the Planning Committee is to be Councillor Richard Waring. (who is a serving Lewes Town Councillor and a Parish Member of the SDNPA) and who for many years has been an active volunteer Park Ranger. This timely change represents an opportunity for an elected representative of Lewes Town Council - the largest Town of any National Park - to have a representative on the SDNPA Planning Committee. I believe that this will be particularly helpful when matters as significant as Old Malling Farm, NSQ and other Lewes planning matters are considered in 2021.

Wave Leisure Trust Ltd – Additional Information on Outside Body

Build back Better

Funding and the Fort

Build back better is Wave's approach to providing leisure and gym services for local residents during and after the Covid 19 pandemic. Whilst things haven't gone quite as planned due to Lockdowns two and three, rebuilding is well underway.

This has involved looking at funding sources to support the Trust. The first to come forward was Lewes District Council itself with a loan of £500,000. This has now been finalised and trustees have expressed their very great thanks to the Council for this. The support provided continues the long and positive approach that exists between the Council and Wave in their partnership.

Another source of funding has been the Governments Heritage and Culture Recovery Fund Grant of £850,000 to help Newhaven Fort to review and implement social distancing measures. This will also be used to ensure safe routes to view exhibitions and support the Fort's recovery following closure during the pandemic. Exciting plans are being worked on for the re-opening. These include cussing interest upon the "hidden fort". There will be an immersive audio and video experience in the Grand Magazine with large scale projections creating a virtual "room set". This will vividly introduce areas of the fort that have been closed for years or are inaccessible because of the COVID restrictions. This funding together with LDC's pledge to build a replacement bridge at the Fort will be key in revitalising this historic venue. One final point about the Fort is that It is included within Lewes District's "Towns Fund" application which, if successful will see further significant investment which would go some way to dealing with several core restoration challenges.

In all, to date Wave has successfully applied for £962,310 worth of grant funding with a further £519,000 pending decision, a potential total of £1,760,310, all of which being invested in Council assets, Wave Staff or local health focused initiatives.

Operational challenges and an opportunity

Operationally COVID-19 and the lockdowns have challenged Wave to redesign and streamline how it works day-to-day. Coming out of Lockdown three they will be:

- Increasing participation through a safe, enhanced customer experience.
- Driving membership sales and retention.
- Building swim school memberships sales, retention and quality of tuition.
- Engaging with clubs and outside organisations

In the meantime, some low cost, medium impact maintenance and redecoration is taking place using two staff members.

Wave consider that there is an opportunity to build on their previous approach to health improvement and rehabilitation services supporting those in greatest need with physical, emotional, and mental health conditions, many of which have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. As such they are planning provide a range

of new services to ensure that they deliver on their vision; *“to be at heart of the improvement of health and wellbeing in our community”*.

Finance

Difficult decisions had to be made by the Chief Executive, his team and the Wave Board in relation to the furloughing of staff. A small team remains keeping in touch with their furloughed colleagues and maintaining the business until the situation improves.

As part of the “Build back Better” strategy, Wave has produced a three-year financial model illustrating the Trust moving from a position of significant loss in 2020/21 to a small surplus by the end of the 2022/23 financial year based on:

- **2020/21 “Restart” stripped model based on re-opening 25 July 2020.**
- **2021/22 “Rebuild” based on 50% of pre-lockdown non-membership income.**
- **2022/23 “Recover” return to 2020/21 pre lockdown non-membership activity.**

The financial model also includes targets for membership to increase over a period of time, which commenced in July 2020 when Wave re-opened after the first period of lockdown. The good news is that actual growth was in line with the financial model before it went into the third lockdown in January. The model being used is constantly under review to reflect the changing situation.

Summary

I hope that Councillors consider that Wave, its staff and all involved are doing much to ensure that Wave recovers from the impact of the pandemic. It continues to look forward to providing the community with active living, health improvement and rehabilitation services which align to our health and wellbeing needs post Covid.

Cllr Laurence O'Connor

East Saltdean & Telscombe Cliffs (Labour)

February 2021