

THE PURPOSE OF THE BUSINESS PLAN

The 5 Year Business Plan sets out the areas additional to day to day operations, on which the Council proposes to focus. It will be subject to regular review and monitoring.

The plan focusses on six key areas:

- Our Neighbourhood Plan and Priorities Statement
- Engaging with the Community
- A Great Environment
- A Parish for all
- Connecting our Village
- Our Staff and Councillors

The Business Plan informs the work of the Parish Council which is funded by the Precept via the Council Tax, plus other revenues generated through the hiring out of sport facilities in Adastra Park, Burial Ground fees and Allotment rental. Also through Section 106 contributions from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, as a result of a new development taking place.

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND PRIORITIES STATEMENT

AIM: To ensure we can sustain a vibrant Parish within a countryside setting and to keep the Neighbourhood Plan up to date in line with statutory requirements, now that it has been adopted by Mid Sussex District Council.

Objectives:

- Continue to engage with the residents to keep the plan relevant.
- Preserve and enhance the rural character and biodiversity of the Parish and its historic buildings, maintaining gaps to neighbouring towns and villages with emphasis on the proximity of the Parish to the South Downs National Park and its biodiversity.
- Stress with developers the need for appropriately sized, affordable and sustainable housing, developed in sympathy with the village and its surroundings, built to very high standards of design, construction and energy and water efficiency and flood resilience.
- Seek opportunities to develop the centre of the village to form a distinctive social hub.
- Strive to maintain the visual gaps between Hassocks, Burgess Hill, Ditchling and Hurstpierpoint and improve recreational and wild spaces within the village.
- Continue to oppose any development from encroaching within the South Downs National Park other than in connection with agriculture or tourism in line with SDNP policies.
- Obtain funding from Community Infrastructure Levies and press for appropriate Section 106* agreements with developers.
- Seek major road upgrades in the wider Parish as part of any large development.
- Explore opportunities for acquisition of community assets and land for recreational spaces or allotments where demand exists for the latter.

ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

AIM: To develop a culture of delivering services in partnership with community groups and volunteers and to engage with all sections of the community through a variety of appropriate and effective channels of communication.

Objectives:

- Become more active and supportive of local initiatives and projects.
- Ensure Hassocks, Keymer and Clayton residents and businesses are kept informed and updated on a regular basis about initiatives being undertaken by the Parish Council and its partners.
- Explore a broader range of communication options with all sections of the community.
- Review our branding and website and maximise its use as a communications tool.
- Research the needs of the community and encourage feed-back and participation.
- Improve accessibility of Parish Councillors through engagement with the community.
- Seek grant funding to provide seed money for new projects to assist wellbeing organisations to provide services directly to Hassocks residents.

A GREAT ENVIRONMENT

AIM: To invest in maintaining, improving and developing facilities and assets to ensure that Hassocks continues to be a great place to live, work and enjoy

Objectives:

- Strengthen awareness and knowledge of flood risk and mitigation amongst councillors and community.
- Continue developing and funding an improvement plan for Adastral Park and ensure that current and future needs of all residents are met.
- Ensure the efficient maintenance of Adastral Park and Adastral Pavilion and maximise their appropriate use.
- Continue to work with outside organisations to develop greener solutions for the assets that the council manages and to collaborate with organisations that promote environmental initiatives within the community.
- We will continue to invest in our tree planting scheme, floral and plant displays throughout the village.
- Lobby West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council to maintain local infrastructure.
- Improve all weather access to the countryside.

A PARISH FOR ALL

AIM: To ensure the needs of all sections of the community are considered when the Parish Council allocates financial resources.

Objectives:

- Continue to review the provision of services for younger residents.
- Research the needs of older residents ensuring we include their needs within our services.
- Ensure all residents with any disability are able to access our services and facilities.
- Support projects which promote the local economy and tourism.
- Work with Mid Sussex District Council to support the growth of the wider economy.

CONNECTING OUR VILLAGE

AIM: To promote sustainable transport links by advocacy/lobbying the responsible authorities ensuring the village is accessible for all residents and visitors.

Objectives:

- Support improvements to transport links between villages by requesting updates and contributing to the West Sussex Transport Plan.
- Engage with bus companies and community providers for improved services both inter-village and to Brighton, Haywards Heath and the hospitals.
- Work with partners to lobby for improvements to Hassocks Station and for the provision of appropriate train services.
- Lobby WSCC and the police for appropriate traffic calming measures, and to consider contributing to the costs of improvements.
- Promote an increase in walking and cycling, through improvements in the environments for these modes of transport, in partnership with WSCC.
- Work with partners to create safe cycling routes between Hassocks, Clayton and Hurstpierpoint.
- Support provision of a safe cycle way to the east of the railway between Hassocks and Burgess Hill.
- Seek to develop an interchange Hub at Hassocks Station with partners through the provision of off-street parking and an improved east west bus service linking nearby villages.

OUR STAFF AND COUNCILLORS

AIM: The Council will support and enable staff to work effectively as a team together with Councillors, to maximise the service to the Community.

Objectives:

- Budget to provide the financial resources to enable us to implement the Business Plan.
- Where appropriate, deliver larger projects through external support to enable staff to maintain existing operations.
- Ensure that staffing levels reflect the operational demands of the Council.
- Invest in continuous professional development for the Clerk and the staff. (Incl. CILCA for Clerk and/or Deputy Clerk)
- Encourage development for Councillors and committees in line with the "Good Councillor's Guide".
- Invest in up to date facilities, equipment and premises used for Council business.

Summary of Future Action

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Review Neighbourhood Plan in line with District Plan review	Project to develop centre of village incl. property purchase/rental and reuse of utility sites			
Ensure S 106 monies are utilised to identified projects	Ensure S106 monies are utilised			
	Produce a 5 year plan for Adastra Park			
Draw up detailed project plan for implementing drainage in Adastra Park	Deliver Drainage Improvements within Adastra Park by September 2025	Review impact of Drainage Improvements		
Improvements to paths in Garden of Remembrance to aid access	Review the need for additional play equipment	Deliver improved path network in Adastra Park		
Replace /restore centre piece memorial and transfer roll of honour from Royal British Legion to new memorial	Increase funding for street trees to meet extra demand			
Lobby WSCC and MSDC for delivery of flood mitigations for Hassocks and Review outcomes				
Lobby West Sussex for improved footways along Lodge Lane				
Review PROWS to allow upgraded surfaces for winter use	Work with Ditchling PC to improve the surface quality of footpaths and bridleways linking the two villages			
Begin Traffic Calming Project – Incl. 20mph limit	1.Create Working Group to progress Sustainable Transport Links 2.Submit a redesign of part of the Keymer Road pavement /road or other interventions to remove the current pinch point for vehicles and make crossing safer for pedestrians / mobility aid users			

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	Ensure delivery of safe cycle route between Burgess Hill and Ockley Park	Extend Cycle Route Network from Friars Oak to Belmont Lane.	Work with Hurst PC to extend Cycle Route Network to College Lane	
	Change highway signage into and out of Hassocks			
Increase allotments / growing spaces, purchasing new sites if necessary				
Elicit support from Mid Sussex DC to create a country park on previous golf course land				
Identify needs of older residents	Develop and implement project to provide for needs of older residents			
	Purchase open space to encourage / enhance wildlife			
	Organise a business and traders Forum			
Replace deteriorating windows of Parish Centre building	Install Hearing Loop or audio enhancement in Parish Chamber	Overhaul the PC website		
Commission energy efficiency and maintenance programme for HPC buildings		Review Parish Centre Notice boards		
Review Staffing structure and plan for succession	Improve induction Process for new councillors			
Recruit to posts				
Provide Research Support of 1 day/week for Councillors Provide additional time resource for CILCA Training (required for extra powers)				
Liaise with BT and MSDC to ensure any sale of Telephone Exchange site provides Community facilities.				

Outcomes from previous Business Plan

App 1

The previous Business Plan ran from April 2018 to March 2023 and achieved the following:

Neighbourhood Plan – Earlier work was *submitted for Inspection*, updated following feedback and *Taken to Referendum*. The Plan was subsequently reviewed to ensure it was in-line with the 2022 District Plan Review

Developer Contributions – Work to ensure all S106 monies were allocated to Hassocks Projects was done continuously over the five year period

Communications

- Work to expand the range of Publication Options to the Community and to improve linkage between items on Website and other outlets.
- Committee agendas to include item requiring regular news items

Operational -Install new Email access for Councillors to improve security & accountability -Enhance remote working options for Parish Staff.

Parish Environment

- Lobby WSCC for introduction of Hassocks Parking Schemes and manage the implementation of the two-stage project
- Off-Street parking review with Mid Sussex District
- Traffic Calming Project – Incl. 20mph limit
- Reconstruction of path network at Burial Ground to improve access
- Adastral Park Deliver new Skate-Park
- Adastral Park Deliver new Children's and Young People's Play areas
- Adastral Park Deliver improved Tennis court area.
- Pavilion updating.
- Review need for additional Play Equipment
- Garden of Remembrance – Program to restore and enhance planting to improve its role as a quiet space for reflection.
- Explore options for improved cycling Routes with WSCC
- Liaise with MSDC & Developers for speedy start on Safe cycle route to Burgess Hill which is due for delivery in 2025
- Review Options for upgrading bridleways to allow safe cycling routes resulting in upgrading of footpaths connecting the developments at the northern edge of the village to provide for future safe cycling access to the village centre and schools.
- New cycling Route - Hurstpierpoint to Downlands agreed for delivery in 23/24
- Part fund WSCC upgrade of bridleway 3K Improvement to boggy section of Footpath 11c.
- Create Program of improvements to local footpaths and Bridleways liaising with Ditchling to improve surface quality on links between our villages
- Funding and support for local youth initiatives