



District Report for Milland Annual Parish Meeting 9th April 2025

As a Conservative Councillor at Chichester District Council, I am part of a small minority group. There is often little we can do to sway the course of decisions made by the Administration at CDC over this past year, but we raise our voices where possible. I recently petitioned and compelled the Administration to write a letter to the Secretary of State criticising the Farmers' Tax; I am pleased that CDC was able to lend its voice and add pressure on this issue.

Planning

The Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039 was submitted to the Secretary of State and is now undergoing final tweaks at the behest of the Inspector: progress and prospects are good.

The new Government has set us a breathtaking housing target to build 1305 new houses per year – more than double the previous target of 575.

Parking

Rural residents in the District now pay to park on Sundays and all parking charges have increased.

Environmental Projects

The administration at CDC agreed to spend £180,000 from reserves to pay for 2 employees of the Western Sussex Rivers Trust to work on and improve awareness of the Ems, Hambrook and the Lavant chalk streams.

Promotional material spreading environmental awareness, (postcards and bags etc), has been placed in children's schoolbags.

Other Projects

The administration at CDC decided to spend £120,000 on appointing a Regeneration Manager who will lead the regeneration of the Southern Gateway.

CDC decided to upgrade 6 playgrounds in Chichester, at a projected cost of £800k-£900k.

CDC is spending £70k on a new pump track near Petworth!

Finances and Taxes

Following the Budget, CDC will now have to pay an extra £540k in Employers' National Insurance. Despite this increased cost to the Council (and tax payers), the current administration blocked a motion criticising this tax rise.

Reserves have been reduced by some £3m to £4m this year. Council taxes will rise by 2.99% in 2025 after a rise of 4.99% in 2024.

Devolution

A Sussex Mayoral Election will take place in 2026 and Councillor Elections for the 3 new Unitary Authorities (West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove) will take place in 2027. Katie Bourne will not remain Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner after her re-election last year.

The reorganisation of local government will undoubtedly mean Milland will experience less access to people like me and there will be a need to shout ever louder to be heard.

Milland is fortunate to have an active and very present local MP; Andrew Griffith is always keen to listen and help.

With thanks and best wishes,
Brett Burkhart