

Summary of Consultation Feedback

1. Survey of Mid Sussex members of the County Council

All Mid Sussex members (12) were sent a short questionnaire, as set out below. Nine responses were received (N.B. all respondents did not answer all the questions), as summarised below.

Question	Response
<p>1. If you were a county councillor prior to May 2017, please comment on what you think the impact has been of a reduction from 3 to 2 CLCs in Mid Sussex?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two commented that the impact was negative, with one adding that meetings are longer and another that they are not able to have meetings in as many locations across the CLC area. • Another responded that all the concerns raised prior to the decision to combine SMS and CMS CLCs have happened: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large agendas resulting in very long meetings sometimes passed 10 pm. - Meetings dominated by the two towns at the expense of the villages. - Most items are of little interest to 50% of the committee and in some instances, such as local issues with a TRO, only the local member is concerned. This is a waste of our time. - People are reluctant to come to meetings too far away from their local area.
<p>2. If you were not a county councillor prior to May 2017, do you have any comments on how the CLCs work? <i>(e.g. length of agendas, timing of meetings, use of informal approaches/pre-events etc.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More of an informal approach rather than the very formal committee with only a very small window for the public to engage. • Should be more engaging and welcoming, i.e. tea and coffee available on arrival. • Should be mandatory that there is a Chair AND Vice-Chairman with the chairmanship mandatorily rotating each year so that there is an opportunity for all CLC members take their turn and gain experience from doing so. • There have been some very lengthy meetings – multiple TROs, a large number of CIF applications, plus local issues such as Woodlands Meed - with 8 councillors wanting to have their say. • It is difficult to concentrate for so long, and it means later agenda items are rushed and enough attention isn't paid to some issues.
<p>3. From May 2017, the number of CLC meetings per year reduced from 4 to 3. How do you think CLCs can best manage their</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two commented than another, fourth meeting is required and another that there is too long between meetings to make decisions and report back to residents and officers. • One member suggested that that three meetings per year would be fine if there were three CLCs. • Three members felt that three meetings per year is enough, with one commenting it is not a problem and another that this is a good number as gives time between CLCs for progress to be made. Another felt that whilst

Question	Response
<p>business within the constraints of 3 formal meetings per year?</p>	<p>their CLC is not too busy and that three meetings is probably OK, as there is quite a long gap between meetings some kind of interim meeting to 'touch base' might be helpful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a suggestion to limit meetings to Talk with Us, progress-to-date reports and decision items, with other items which are just for information e.g. Growth Plans, 6th form college, Woodlands Meed College to be done at a different time without the need for Democratic Service officers being present.
<p>4. Would you welcome informal pre-CLC events from 6 to 7 pm for specific issues?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – 5 (with comments including: we are the front line of WSCC and as we are 50 miles away it is important for residents and cllrs; yes, but overall I think the CLC needs to become more relaxed and informal; on a case-by-case basis). • No – 2 (with one commenting that this just makes the meetings longer and also makes it difficult for people who work to attend). • An additional comment: I don't think these affect whether the CLC should be joint or separate. They provide extra information (e.g. Spacehive) but don't replace the workload for CLC in any way.
<p>5. What different ways of working, outside of formal CLC meetings could be developed? – and how might we take these forward? <i>(e.g. informal meetings of members in the community to discuss issues not requiring formal decisions, possibly without requiring Democratic Services officers present)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal meetings, in the community, with or without officers as necessary. • Happy to explore this • Most discussions require formal decisions (TROs, CIF) and so require Democratic Services to be present. Those that don't require formal decisions are so important (e.g. Woodlands Meed) that the formality of CLC is really helping to move things forward in a way that I don't think informal meetings would. • We are arranging a three tier public meeting in East Grinstead in October which the public are aware of and are invited to come along to ask questions and gain information. There will be no officers present. Maybe something along these lines every six months in between CLCs using a multi-tiered approach could work. • Meet with individual officers and residents as needed. • Leave local councillors to arrange own meetings using the facilities of the local Town Council for admin support and also through regular surgeries.
<p>6. Which CLC(s) do you think the Lindfield & High Weald division should be in? <i>(N.B. Prior to</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two commented that this should be for the member for this division to answer. One member said it should be in a Central Mid Sussex CLC and one that it should be in North Mid Sussex CLC. Other comments: • Lindfield is virtually part of Haywards Heath; East Grinstead is too far away. The High Weald is better

Question	Response
<p><i>May 2017 this division was split between the Central Mid Sussex CLC and the North Mid Sussex CLC. It is now split between the North Mid Sussex CLC and the Central & South Mid Sussex CLC)</i></p>	<p>served with access to the North CLC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should remain split between North and Central (if we revert to 3 areas) or North and South & Central (if we stay with 2). Lindfield is the largest population centre in the division and is in the Haywards Heath sphere of influence for roads, rail, shops, schools, libraries etc. Lindfield issues should not be part of the East Grinstead focussed CLC – Haywards Heath councillors are much better placed to understand those issues than East Grinstead councillors. It’s an unfortunate side effect of larger more rural divisions, but residents shouldn’t be penalised for this. • I don’t think the Lindfield member should have to attend two CLCs and ultimately I think the Central Mid Sussex CLC should be reinstated to resolve this issue. However, if this is not going to be the case I think the Lindfield member’s residents are best served in the Central & South Mid Sussex CLC rather than the North Mid Sussex CLC.
<p>7. Do you have any other comments you wish the Governance Committee Working Group to take into account?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the move away from direct funding for projects, I believe we should consider the purpose and cost of the CLC’s. • I feel differently to my colleagues and am happy with the current arrangements.

2. Summary of Feedback from the two Mid Sussex CLC Chairmen, Vice-Chairman for Central & South Mid Sussex CLC and the member for Lindfield & High Weald

<p>Chairman, Central & South Mid Sussex CLC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes made to CLCs in Mid Sussex have been unsatisfactory, leading to overlong meetings (often finishing after 10 pm) and truncated or rushed discussion of important issues in order to accommodate all the necessary business. People interested in one particular item often have to sit through some hours of other business before their item of interest. • The geography of Mid Sussex is unlike other CLC areas with three sizeable towns and a number of large and small villages. The current configuration of CLCs does not adequately reflect or represent the communities affected, with a reduction in the time available to discuss matters relating to the smaller villages. The reduction from eight to three meetings a year means the CLC is not able to have meetings in all the rural areas. • There is significant growth and development planned for the area covered by the Committee in the future, and members are concerned that there will not be capacity for the CLC to have the appropriate input into these. • The costs associated with reverting to 3 CLCs would be minimal
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	<p>and the relatively small extra workload associated with three additional meetings could be accommodated by Democratic Services within existing resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central & South Mid Sussex CLC should revert to being two separate CLCs.
Vice-Chairman, Central & South Mid Sussex CLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Central & South Mid Sussex CLC has had a number of long and difficult meetings with lots of issues. • The merged Committee is too big and widespread so residents and members have to sit through issues that are of no interest to them. There is a loss of connection with the local community. • Burgess Hill growth is going to result in more residents and issues for that area. • The public need time to attend and engage in CLCs. • The potential for giving members direct budgets for CIF should be considered.
Chairman, North Mid Sussex CLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Mid Sussex CLC does have capacity and would welcome the whole of Lindfield & High Weald division being in North Mid Sussex. If that were to happen, the current Chairman would ensure one CLC meeting per year would be held in Lindfield. • The importance of managing agendas and using pre-meetings effectively to deal with capacity issues was highlighted.
Member for Lindfield & High Weald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Central & South Mid Sussex CLC is far too big in size and geography and almost double the size of North Mid Sussex. • A strong case could be made for moving Lindfield to North Mid Sussex CLC, given that it has more in common with East Grinstead than Hassocks. • Sitting on two CLCs means that there can be a perception of conflict of interest. • Requests that this division be wholly in the North Mid Sussex CLC. • CLCs are good vehicles for local issues.

3. Summary of Feedback from Other Councils

All parish councils in the Lindfield & High Weald division (Lindfield Rural, Lindfield, West Hoathly and Horsted Keynes) as well as Haywards Heath Town Council were invited to provide feedback relating to which CLC this division should sit in. A summary of feedback received is set out below.

Lindfield Rural Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be a mistake to move Lindfield Rural into the North Mid Sussex CLC. To ally us with a town some distance away would be detrimental to our residents. The preferred option would be that the Central Mid Sussex CLC should be reintroduced, but if that is not possible, we would ask that WSCC include Lindfield Rural in the same CLC area as Haywards Heath.
Lindfield Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We understand the reasons why the proposals have been suggested, however we have concerns with moving Lindfield into the North Mid Sussex CLC. Although Lindfield has always striven to maintain its separate identity from the neighbouring town of Haywards Heath, for the purposes of the work of the CLCs there are advantages to viewing Haywards Heath and Lindfield holistically, particularly in road and traffic matters. • Lindfield and Haywards Heath should be in the same CLC. We

	<p>are close neighbours with social, community and commercial links and our residents have many shared interests and concerns. We are very aware of the opportunities that the CLCs afford to find out about matters that may be of concern for our Parish, or initiatives that we would wish to be involved in and to share information of mutual interest and benefit. If Haywards Heath and Lindfield are to be served by different CLCs such opportunities may be missed and we have concerns that one or other CLC might make a decision in respect of either the town or parish without the benefit of local knowledge about its neighbour which may be adversely affected by the decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Council has carefully considered the proposals, and as it did in 2016, considers that Lindfield should be in the same CLC area as Haywards Heath. The Parish Council Chairman believes the best solution for Lindfield and its surrounding towns and villages would be for the reintroduction of the Central Mid Sussex CLC. Ideally, we consider that the three-CLC arrangement in Mid Sussex worked best and that the Central Mid Sussex CLC should be reintroduced, but if that is not possible, we urge WSCC to include Lindfield in the same CLC area as Haywards Heath.
West Hoathly Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Hoathly and Sharpthorne have always been in the North Mid Sussex CLC. Reading the proposal the recommendation would not appear to affect the parish of West Hoathly however the next Parish Council on 29 October will be asked for their comments. N.B. No further comments have been received to date.
Haywards Heath Town Council (HHTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Sussex should not really have been split into two CLCs from three in the first place, it just doesn't work with three major towns and a large number of villages in the District. However, it is accepted that this issue is not for debate and the cost savings were necessary. • Whichever way round the parish are placed it will not work for the Parishes of Lindfield and Lindfield Rural. If they move to North they need to be with Haywards Heath but if they are left to the South the balance of CLCs is skewed. Both Lindfield and Lindfield Rural have worked closely with Haywards Heath Town Council in the past and we hope to in the future. Overriding all of the above it is felt, by HHTC, that the wishes of Lindfield Parish Councils and residents should be paramount.

4. Feedback from the member for Bourne Division

- There is inevitably some extra workload associated with sitting on two CLCs; splitting a division in this way is difficult – particularly where there is a difference within the division in terms of population density (so there may be an imbalance in terms of the level of support needed for the different sections of the division); CIF applications inevitably come to both CLCs so there is a need to balance the funding appropriately.
- The North Chichester CLC area is very large, and the meetings are rotated around the whole area – so this can mean quite long journeys. However, overall this is not a significant problem: the fact that there are only three

meetings per year helps with this. If there were more meetings, the workload would be much more difficult.

- It is difficult to identify any other ways of working within the current system that would be better. It is difficult to see where else you would draw the line and it is better for the member to go the community than to expect residents to go to meetings in areas they don't identify with.
- The member's CIF allocation is split between the two CLCs according to the population balance of the two 'halves' of the division. This works well and there are no real problems with this.