

DEVOLVEMENT OF HIGHWAY POWERS FROM WSCC – EXPLORATORY MEETING

We have had a very exploratory meeting, together with representatives of the Parish Councils of Bramber and Upper Beeding, with Councillor Lionel Barnard, who is the Deputy Leader of West Sussex County Council, plus officers from the County Council. To consider whether or not it would be possible for the four local Parishes to take over some minor highway functions from County level.

This is a new initiative and we would be the forerunners of any local Parishes that might wish to take advantage of the County's aim for "localism" and which they call "active local communities – highway initiatives".

Examples of the sort of things we could take over would be more grass cutting, gulley clearing, ditch clearance and vegetation cutting and other minor functions. At this stage we are not seeking to take over highway works themselves, but this could possibly follow at a second stage, if the first stage was successful.

The first step is that County will write to us setting out the sort of budget they spend locally, together with much more detail on how these functions are performed, and how regularly. We can then evaluate this in much more depth, before making any sort of response or taking the proposal to Highways Committee of the Parish Council.

It must be stressed that at the moment this is purely an exploratory initiative and that absolutely nothing has been decided.

David Barling
Chairman Steyning Parish Council