

Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
Community Governance Review
Consultation 1 Responses

Local Residents Submissions

**Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council:
Community Governance Review Consultation 1
Local Residents – General Submissions**

With the new housing developments in Sayers Common, a new parish council would be appropriate.

The much enlarged community will need its own health centre and school.

An effective council can bring this need to fruition.

Increasingly Sayers Common has become a discreet community, whereas it was formerly a small settlement on the busy A23. The population continues to expand as more houses are built.

The residents are committed to enhancing their community and this commitment is evidenced by the flourishing community shop.

The main settlement between Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common is Albourne, and that has its own Parish Council. It does not seem logical for Sayers Common not to be treated similarly.

I support the creation of a separate Sayers Common Parish Council.

I support the idea of Sayers Common forming a new Parish Council by separating from the current Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common PC.

The two communities are quite different and the fact that they are divided by the A23 is significant. The threat of a 'Mayfield New Town' is by far a greater issue for Sayers Common than it is for Hurstpierpoint, the latter being more concerned re the prospect of Burgess Hill encroaching further into the Parish in the north east (south of Gatehouse Lane).

Thus a separate Sayers Common PC would assist that community to have a greater say against a 'Mayfield' and give its residents better peace of mind that their interests are being more comprehensively aired.

The outcome:

- enhanced community engagement
- much better community cohesion
- improved local democracy, and
- the prospect of more effective delivery of local government.

Local services such as health and education should not be adversely affected though a structure would need to be put in place to ensure that becomes reality.

To reiterate, I support the concept of a separate PC for Sayers Common particularly as that would better reflect the identity and interests of both SC and Hurstpierpoint.

I disagree with a new parish and parish council being created for Sayers Common as, in my opinion, this will incur additional unnecessary costs.

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I strongly object to the notion of separating Sayers Common from Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common (H&SC) Parish Council.

In my view the idea has been driven by a very small number of residents without serious consideration given to the advantages and disadvantages.

At the moment Sayers Common benefits from the economies of scale associated with being part of a larger parish council. Fragmenting local governance will undoubtedly increase costs to the local tax payers by generating the need to duplicate staffing, functions and overheads.

I believe residents of Sayers Common are best served by strong representation of Sayers Common parish councillors on Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council.

Despite the volume of new houses to be built in Sayers Common, the village remains a very small unit in terms of population, public amenities and shops. To set up a separate Parish Council would considerably increase the costs to ratepayers with little, if any benefit.

Geographically, it is a small adjunct to Hurstpierpoint and whilst both villages have, and will, increase in population due to the current drive for new houses, I feel that Sayers Common has no sense of being separate - it is almost a dormitory area.

Whilst I can see that a separate Parish Council might achieve better local democracy, I cannot see how community cohesion, engagement or delivery of services would be improved. The first two are down to the efforts of the people who live there, the latter is delivered quite adequately by the current arrangement and I cannot see that the additional cost is justified.

I do think, however, that, when all the additional houses have been built, it might be worth reviewing the number of Sayers Common representatives on the Hurst council

Given the growing size of Sayers Common and the different aspects of that community I would support a new parish council for that area

Seems that Sayers Common has always been tagged onto Hurst PC and a very marginal attachment. Has grown considerably and must feel subservient to Hurst Council decisions especially concerning threatened large scale development. Has become more identifiable since it is no longer on the A23 so seems logical for it to manage own decisions. It is not physically linked to Hurst by settlements, indeed, it is severed by the " new" A23 making the settlement very identifiable.

The local folk would be more keen to support a more manageable area and their input should be more likely to their own council.

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Dear Clerk to the Parish Council

Community Governance Review relating to Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

We received two letters from MSDC yesterday (14th Feb 2022) concerning the above review. The process is so cumbersome and complex that we shall not be making a formal submission.

Parish Councils do not appear to carry the weight we may wish for these days particularly with government driven applications for large scale housing leading to overdevelopment of our precious countryside with its inadequate infrastructure.

To consider splitting up this parish council reducing its influence at this time is sheer madness. Sayers Common does have a growing vocal population but such a small new parish council's wishes will not be heard in today's world of council politics.

We consider this process a waste of local government resources particularly at a time of high inflation with the rapidly rising cost of living affecting a large proportion of local electors who have more pressing problems to consider like the price of food, energy and council tax soon to go up yet again!

There are more important issues requiring your council's attention such as cajoling WSCC Highways to resolve the appalling dangerous traffic conditions in Hurstpierpoint High Street that are killing this once pleasant village.

I feel that at the moment Sayers Common is not fairly represented in the Parish Council.

As both Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint are both increasing in size at the moment and possibly further more in the near future, one combined Council cannot accommodate both areas.

Decision making should now become independent to each Parish.

Sayers Common should have its own Parish Council to enable the residents to have more say on how the Village is managed.

Our own Parish Council will enable residents to take part in the decisions made for its future and its upkeep. This will also install pride within the resident of the Village.

I feel that with the ever increasing number of combined residents within the Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council that it is now time for Sayers Common to take more control of its affairs and the running of the Village.

The Villagers have a better knowledge of the day to day requirements required by its residents to enable a more enhanced community.

Having our own Council will bring together the residents in decision making. This in turn will benefit the Village, ensuring the residents have a vested interest in maintaining a high standard of care for our Village and its surrounding areas.

Having an input on upcoming developments will ensure that decisions that are proposed will enhance the Village and ensure happy and proud residents.

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In response to the petition, I do not agree that my households interests are no longer best served by the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council.

The separation of Sayers Common into its own parish does not in my opinion provide improved community engagement. I believe that the parish is best served with inclusion of all local villages. Enhanced community cohesion will only come when all villages work together, addressing issues as a wider community.

I do not believe that the separation of Sayers Common to its own parish will bring better local democracy. Whilst democratic region will be smaller its power to influence programs that cross the borders of multiple parish regions will be limited. Effective enhancements to local services will be better served considering both Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common were working closely together.

I believe my opinion reflects the interests of the wider community, as a parent of primary age school children, it is important that we consider children growing up in all villages with council projects to improve the safety of children going to and from school as well as local amenities that meets the needs of these new generations. A more localised view will only impede projects that help safe travel of children to and from school.

Whilst there may be other benefits to a localised approach this is not clear from the public notice.

I think Sayers Common should have its own independent Parish Council because it would be more democratic in looking after our village and be more interested in local services.

It is needed much more now that we have the extra housing in the village and it would be more interested in improving our community services.

Sayers Common has a great village community and the parish council would be a great asset in promoting local needs.

Yours faithfully

1) I am concerned that although the proposal states the new Sayers Common Parish Council comprises the Sayers Common Ward, that residents to the East of the A23 are unaware that they will be included in the new Council. The proposed new Sayers Common Parish should be better defined in this document.

2) With the current revision of the draft MSDC plan, there will be a significant increase of developments in Sayers Common and an effective physical joining of Albourne and Sayers Common. A more logical geographic Parish would include all houses to the west of the A23 and including Albourne and Sayers Common combined into one new Parish Council. The reconstituted Hurstpierpoint PC would then retail all residents to the east of the A23. Surely a decision on a new Parish Council split from Hurstpierpoint should await the adoption of the new MSDC plan through to 2038.

3) On what basis is the actual split of existing monies and responsibilities held by Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common PC carried out in the event that Sayers Common PC is formed? Is there an established procedure for this process? Surely that should be advised to residents before asking for comments.

Many thanks for the letter , it is a shame these had the incorrect website address to respond to , no doubt this will be rectified.

Sayers Common should have its own parish Council as this will improve local democracy given it is to greatly increase in size .

It can then have its own local plan to mange future growth for the benefit of the people in the village .

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I think separating Hurstpierpoint from Sayers Common for the Parish Council would be a mistake. In the same way that Scotland or Northern Ireland leaving the UK would be bad. Firstly it gives each part less overall clout. Secondly it reduces the amount of money available for projects in one, the other or both. Thirdly it could see each Parish choose diametrically opposed positions on things that would produce mutual benefits if a united voice could be found.

Others may argue separation gives better representation however the cultural objectives of two communities based in the South of England less than one mile apart are not going to be that different. So to me this would be a case of divide and rule or divide and weaken.

One of the biggest issues is this insane figure of 3,800 new houses to be built before 2038 in the parish. We probably only have 2000 houses now. If the approach by one parish does not work for both parishes if they were split could lead to massive tensions between Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common. This would not be good for either community.

Local democracy being diluted weakens us in this case.

In the case "Small Is Not Beautiful" as an economic philosophy or an environmental policy.

Other opinions may differ. I cannot see how separation benefits either community. I am though open to listen.

Also how and who decides this? Do we in this Parish all get a vote?

I can see an economic case for getting rid of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales as far more money is spent per person in these smaller countries. The same economic argument does not apply to splitting Hurstpierpoint from Sayers Common. Also what happens to Albourne? Are they in our parish or not?

We strongly support the proposal to constitute a separate parish council for Sayers Common.

The villages are distanced from each other geographically. Both are growing rapidly with increased housing and more businesses established.

The representation of residents of Sayers Common on the existing Parish Council has been poor, usually only one or two members in a council of about 15.

The community of Sayers Common will be better served by having its own council, concentrating on their specific circumstances and needs.

I believe the creation of a separate Parish Council for Sayers Common would benefit both Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint.

Past history suggests that ideas mooted by Hurst residents can be rejected by Sayers residents and vice versa because of self-interest. The Neighbourhood plan that was finally accepted was seriously flawed; not least because Sayers residents voted for development plans that didn't affect them and vice versa.

Sayers residents may well be forgiven for failing to show any interest in Hurst matters but may well be discouraged from engaging in discussions that affect them because they know it will be decided by the majority: i.e. Hurst residents!

Furthermore, why should Sayers have any say in what happens to Hurst when it simply does not affect them directly?

Democracy: rule of the people, by the people, for the people!! Ultimately, separating into 2 Parish Councils will benefit all residents by providing a more democratic method of permitting Local people to decide local affairs and not have a neighbouring Parish dictate to them.

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I am in support of the suggestion that a new parish and a new parish council should be established for Sayers Common.

When I first moved to Hurstpierpoint some six and a half years ago, I could not understand why we were linked with Sayers Common. Hurst and Sayers Common are two distinctly different areas and deserve separate administrative councils, which will improve community engagement and lead to better local democracy. The interests of each community will therefore be better served as I fear that at the moment Sayers Common is overshadowed by the larger Hurstpierpoint.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am against setting up a separate parish council for Sayers Common. I am not aware that Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council has been particularly neglectful of Sayers Common, and if it has, it should be reminded not to.

Although I am always grateful to those willing to serve on parish councils, the last thing this world needs is more politicians, even local ones.

Yours faithfully

I fully support the proposal to create separate Parish Councils for Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common. The 2 communities are separated by the A23 and don't have much in common

I understand the views of those living in Sayers Common which is a separate community from Hurstpierpoint. As far as I know Sayers Common residents have never had the benefit of a regular bus service between the two communities. If ever there was such a service, apart from the school run, no public bus service exists now.

Easy access to a Parish Council Office and Meetings should be there for all. A separate Parish Council would work solely with residents in order to address issues affecting only Sayers Common.

Over many years the populations of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common have increased. It is not surprising that those living in Sayers Common feel that are no longer best served by the existing Parish Council.

I support the petition of the local government electors of Sayers Common.

Whilst I can see pockets of benefits to this proposal, overall I believe there is insufficient benefit to merit changes to the governance structure.

Clearly Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint, as developed housing areas are quite distinct, and I acknowledge residents in either village may feel they are separate to the other, but the parish council serves both communities and the agricultural community that links them. I feel that separating them at representation level will weaken community cohesion, definitely not in any way strengthen it.

As a Hurstpierpoint resident I have never felt that residents here have a louder voice in the local community. In terms of local services it is perhaps inevitable that more may be within Hurstpierpoint; that is the community with an identifiable High St where shops, restaurants, a Post Office, Chemist etc are located, and these are sort of local facilities that increase community cohesion, not changes to a local government structure. It would be better for such facilities to be attracted to Sayers Common, and if that were to be successful then a change to local government would probably be warranted

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I welcome the splitting of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common parish council into two. The parishes are each growing and their interests developing in different directions.

Not sure how it would affect my local services at Hurstpierpoint. However I see that Sayers Common has grown with construction of new areas and would be supportive of a dedicated parish.

Perhaps that would lead to better family infrastructure with access to a local school and road links. It may also have benefits to support further expansion at the village of Sayers Common.

Dear Mr Stanley

I am writing to say I am in support of the local electors petition to create a new parish and parish council for Sayers Common.

I have lived in Hurstpierpoint since 2004 and regularly drive through Sayers Common to the A23 and have become more aware of the new building projects which have been completed in recent times. I also have had the opportunity to get more of a feel for the village whilst I attend a weekly yoga class in the village hall and I support the local village shop whilst I'm there picking up some groceries.

My impression is that the village would be best served by having its own parish and parish council as this will enable residents to receive more targeted and specific information about developments/initiatives/projects/community events with which they can become more involved.

A lot of the villages in Mid Sussex have had extensive new home building projects and this has changed the dynamics of all of our communities, which in my view, requires a new more focused approach to the communication and delivery of local services and local government.

The influx of new residents mean all of our villages need to embrace new faces and new places and in turn we all need to find a new way of making the most of our communities.

Community initiatives will need speak to the new and existing socio-demographic of individual villages and in turn respond appropriately when it comes to looking at the provisions for educational, health, transport, road and traffic management, planning etc.

All of these aspects of local governance can only effectively service their communities by ensuring that each village has the capacity to put in place local infrastructure to support the evolving communities needs. All this will be successfully achieved by communicating with and engaging the residents of Sayers Common in a way whereby they feel they have a say in how their village develops and embraces future plans for its infrastructure and its community.

Kind regards

I appreciate that creating a new Parish Council would give Sayers Common residents a better say in how their part of the Parish is governed, but my difficulty in supporting this is that the issue of increased costs to MSDC is not addressed.

The effect of increased costs incurred with the creation of another Parish Council needs to be published before a sound and sensible decision can be made. Increased costs to MSDC will reflect in the income from general rates from all MSDC residents.

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Sayers Common has been well served by Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council for many years and I see no reason to change this.

We have Ward Parish Councillors drawn from Sayers Common and I think we are well represented. There really is no need for additional and unnecessary bureaucracy.

It seems that this is an ill considered waste of money. Given the current pressures on both Local Government and household incomes that an increase in expenditure for both is absolutely not necessary.

The local parish council copes OK at the moment so if it is not broken don't fix it!

I would prefer that Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council should remain intact. My concern is that the proposed Sayers Common PC would not be able to raise enough precept to be able to afford the upkeep of the areas currently looked after: recreation areas, Christmas lights, hedges trimmed etc. let alone the extra maintenance that will, inevitably, be needed to keep the newly developed areas to a decent standard.

I'm dead against the idea, two councils means more expense, at a time when we should be doing everything we can to lower taxes this proposal would increase them.

In the short term it would mean creating more council accommodation, new letter heads for both 'new' councils etc., in the longer term we would end up with extra councillors.

It appears to me that though Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common are separate built communities their social needs are closely aligned and interdependent. My friends in Sayers Common and Albourne walk to Hurstpierpoint for shops. I walk to Sayers Common when my car is repaired there, and to Albourne for social events in the village hall.

The current parish council area is compact enough to be served with local services from one centre whichever community that is located in.

In a system of representative democracy we all have to recognise that our individual desires cannot always take centre stage.

Splitting the representative local democracies into smaller units will tend to competition rather than to co-operation. It will reduce the funds available for larger projects and will make coordination more complex.

What next- east of Hurstpierpoint High Street and west of Hurstpierpoint High Street parish councils?

But if this Review, as I hope, does not grant Sayers Common a new parish council, perhaps it should be recognised that some people in the smaller communities have a feeling of their voice being not sufficiently heard. This could be noted and addressed by the existing parish council.

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Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint are relatively separate areas, in my opinion, and would be well-served by distinct parish councils. Sayers Common is small, and though there is some sense of community, I feel it is lessened as we are not a distinct parish. We are grouped with Hurstpierpoint, yet I do not think residents of Hurstpierpoint nor Sayers Common view themselves as truly part of the same community. I think Sayers Common would do well to have a separate parish council, as we have many passionate members in the community who would serve the interests of Sayers Common specifically and encourage a stronger sense of community in the area, as well as providing better support for the residents, who often feel overlooked in Hurstpierpoint's shadow.

Thank you.

Dear Sirs,

Further to your letters to both my wife and I on 14th February regarding the setting up of a new parish council for Sayers Common, we are both of the opinion that this would be entirely unnecessary and a further waste of tax payers' money. The present parish council which serves both Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common should continue as it does at present.

We therefore object to the proposed change.

Improved community engagement - Yes

Enhanced community cohesion - Yes

Better local democracy - Not clear why this will change ?

More effective delivery of services - Unlikely, as weaker bargaining powers in becoming a smaller PC

Interests of community - Our concern, as with any PC, lies with it's representatives. Can Sayers Common be capable of producing strong councillors without Hurstpierpoint year in year out? I'm not convinced.

Dear Sirs,

I write in support of Sayers Common having its own Parish Council. I am a resident there living at REDACTED.

My reasons for that support are:

1. In my view the representation of Sayers Common on the Council is unfair in the number allocated to Sayers Common and the Hurst Councillors are dominant
2. Hurstpierpoint is far larger and should have its own Council that can relate just to it's own affairs- the population there has been getting larger over the last few years
3. Sayers Common is growing - three new developments are in hand - and deserves to regulate its own affairs.
4. The areas of the two areas are quite different and do not share any recreational facilities.
5. It's always seems that Hurstpierpoint gets a larger proportion of facilities regardless as to whether or not that is in fact the case. Separate representation will remove that.
6. The two communities are geographically separate and there is so far as I am aware little that both do together. Each has its social meeting places eg village halls and my belief is that Sayers Common residents do not go shopping in Hurstpierpoint but are more likely to use Burgess Hill.
7. A separate Council would lead to a better sense of community and cohesion and encourage an increased interest in making the place a better one in which to live.

Yours faithfully,

I would like to support a new parish/parish council for Sayers Common.

The current situation is totally unsatisfactory and corrupt.

Sayers Common is totally neglected and needs its own leadership, management and governance.

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1. What do you consider to be your community identity?

My family's community identity is Hurstpierpoint. I strongly object to my property being moved into a new Sayer Common parish – my house, Knowles Tooth, is part of Hurstpierpoint and has been so for at least four centuries.

2. How should the civil parishes in your area be defined in future?

If a separate parish council is formed, it should be confined to Sayers Common itself
As the A23 forms a tangible physical division it would make sense for Sayers Common to become a parish using the A23 as the boundary to the west and as is proposed to north, south and east. The land to the west of the A23 should remain part of the historical Hurstpierpoint parish and community.

3. Considering your proposal(s), what would be the advantages and disadvantages of these?

To split the precept and diminish the size of Hurstpierpoint's parish in any way would have a significant and detrimental effect on the existing integrated parish's budget, the work that the parish council does and the sustainability of the parish.

It would make the delivery of local services across the area difficult due to loss of economies of scale.

The majority of the community assets that must be maintained are situated within Hurstpierpoint. Making that parish smaller will have a direct financial impact on the ability to maintain these assets – toilets, recreation ground, Hurst meadow, village centre, community hub at Court Bushes etc.

If the majority of the current parish was retained as is, with the exception of the village of Sayers Common, then it might be possible to maintain existing structures, assets and services without having to raise the precept in Hurstpierpoint.

4. If a separate civil parish council is not formed as proposed in the petition calling for this Community Governance Review, what do you think the impact might be?

If a separate parish council is not formed I do not believe there will be any impact outside of the village of Sayers Common in terms of local communities and local democracy.

Before many any response to this review, I took the trouble to consult with several people in Sayers Common to seek their opinion and discuss the changes so as I could make an informed comment.

Given the changes and pressures from development and therefore, services, I am in full support of the Parish becoming independent of what is now Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council. Having lived in Hurstpierpoint all of my life, I am saddened to learn that many in Sayers Common do not feel fully supported by it's larger neighbour which is why I am of the opinion that it should now have its own Parish Council.

Thank you for taking the time to read my response.

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1. I believe that the current community identity comprises the settlements of Hurstpierpoint, Sayers Common, Goddards Green and those properties that lie within the current boundary of the Parish. The settlements are mutually supporting with many looking to Hurstpierpoint for additional services such as medical, dental, school, nursery, community facilities and shops; as recognised in the settlement hierarchy contained within the extant District Plan.

2. The boundaries of the existing Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council have changed over time as adjacent settlements have developed. If Sayers Common Village were to similarly develop and expand from a dormitory village to a fully self sustaining settlement then a standalone Parish Council would be appropriate. However, there are modern geographical features in the landscape that would better define parish council boundaries today. For Hurstpierpoint they would be the A23/A2300/Jane Murray Way. The area to the west of the A23 including Sayers Common could be merged with Albourne/Twineham PCs, whilst that to the north of the A2300 would in part sit with Ansty PC and Burgess Hill Town Council as part of the Northern Arc development.

3. If the above changes were made there would be over time a better focus for the developing communities within the resulting Parish Council areas. For that to work, given the costs of providing and supporting Parish Council services, the defined community area to the west of the A23 will need to become more self sustaining. It will also require a scale that will support the numbers of Councillors needed via election, and the number of properties to generate the required Council Tax to support the services that the community will expect.

4. If no change is made, then the current economies of scale and efficiencies will prevail where the existing Parish Council is able to offer services and support on the same basis across the entire Parish, regardless of income generated from the respective areas. Also, Council Tax will not need to rise disproportionately to fund duplicated services as a separate Parish Council is formed, or existing staff let go to keep within budget. As an example, the significant extension to the Community Shop in Sayers Common was funded by the Parish Council, initially via a loan of £35k from the Public Works Loan Board, which was then paid back via income from the Precept. From the perspective of representing the community, as has happened in the past, if there are no volunteers to stand for a vacancy in the LAB Ward, it can be filled with someone who lives in the LAA Ward and vice versa. Scale better offers that flexibility and ability to represent and support the community. Not many have the time and commitment required to be a councillor.

Dear sir/madam

I would like to register my support for this proposal. Sayers Common has grown (and continues to grow) immensely over the past few years and I believe should have the mechanism to decide what is best for it, rather than having to defer to Hurstpierpoint parish council. This was highlighted recently at a meeting of Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Commons parish council, when a Hurstpierpoint councillor said, when discussing this proposal: "Sayers Common is somewhere that you drive through, not to." I can think of no more compelling argument for Sayers Commons having its own parish council.

Yours faithfully

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A new parish council should be created for Sayers Common, so that Sayers Common residents will feel more involved with decisions being made by the council. Currently it is felt that most decisions affect Hurstpierpoint, as the much larger village, and so Sayers Common residents do not engage with it.

Community cohesion will be improved as there will be a shared interest for residents to discuss, plan and decide on issues that directly affect the village. This will create a better sense of community within Sayers Common.

There will be better local democracy, as people will feel more incentive to vote if the issues directly affect the village rather than Hurstpierpoint. Also Sayers Common will have more control over how its funds are spent, as currently the Sayers Common councillors are outvoted due to there being far more councillors from Hurstpierpoint, which means that most resources are currently spent on Hurstpierpoint facilities.

If there is a Sayers Common council, it will be easier to communicate, discuss, vote on and directly deliver local services and local government, because it will not be necessary to discuss issues with Hurstpierpoint Council, who are less interested in what happens in Sayers Common.

Regretfully at this time I would have to vote against the idea of a separate Sayers Common Parish Council. The village is about to fight a massive battle against over 2300 new houses that the District Council wants to force upon it in their Draft District Plan 2021-2038 in order to meet their housing targets. To do that we need the combined strength with Hurstpierpoint, re finance, expertise and connections to stand up to the District Council and the Planning Inspectorate. We need to be united and do not need the distraction of trying to set up a new untried council in the process. That would also mean that the Sayers Common Village Society would also be able to oppose the new houses separately without any conflict of interests.

I am against the proposal to separate Sayers Common from the Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council.

My reasons are as follows:

- The council would cover too few people and have too little ability to fight effectively against the proposal for significant housing in Sayers Common (and on land which would become Sayers Common if the draft district plan is approved)
- I am unconvinced that enough people would come forwards to sit on the Parish Council & that effectively there may never be an election for it
- The parts of the civil parish east of the A23 have few links to the rest of the parish and more to Hurstpierpoint - i.e.:
 - Goddards Green
 - The area around the A2300 - the western arc from Burgess Hill has no relationship with Sayers Common, but would be covered by this proposed council
- I am concerned by the timing of this request, shortly before the need to fight overwhelming development in the district plan which would increase the village many times in size

Whilst I oppose this proposal, it is clear that some reworking of parish boundaries & councils will be needed if the development proposed in the district plan goes ahead, as the parish boundary of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common will no longer match the natural grouping of dwellings into villages and towns. Part of Sayers Common, as a natural village would be covered by Albourne Council and part of Burgess Hill would be covered by Hurstpierpoint Council.

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Dear Sir/Madam

I am a resident of Sayers Common and I write regarding review of Sayers Common having their own Parish Council for the following reasons:

To be able to decide as a single Parish how revenue is allocated. Currently i do not feel we get our fair share of this allocation.

Much smaller villages have their own PC, ie Albourne, Twineham, therefore there is no real reason why Sayers Common shouldn't have their own particularly as our Parish is substantially growing taking into consideration the housing developments planned for the future (2,000).

When Sayers Common was aligned with Hurstpierpoint, the village was nothing more than a coaching inn and a few houses, indeed Sayers Common was somewhere you drove through en route to Brighton.

However Sayers Common has expanded greatly over the last 12 years, we are a thriving community wholly different from Hurstpierpoint but with areas of commonality

Yours faithfully

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Improved Community Engagement

Presumably if the residents of Sayers Common feel that they are not part of the Hurstpierpoint Community then having a separate PC should improve their community engagement. A smaller parish for Hurstpierpoint should make reaching out to the community easier for the Hurstpierpoint Parish Council as they will have less electors to attempt to contact and less area to cover.

Enhanced Community Cohesion

Breaking up a community and splitting the Parish in half cannot improve cohesion although if the residents of Sayers Common wish to separate themselves from Hurstpierpoint presumably their community will be more cohesive. The information tells us that 348 people signed the petition but the Parish has over 5000 people. This does not seem to be a strong majority who feel they are not clearly represented by being part of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish. The information does not seem to say how many of the 5000+ live in the Sayers Common ward. It would be interesting to see the percentage of people living in Sayers Common who signed the petition. It seems incredibly unfair if the majority of people do not wish to change their Parish boundary and that only a few who shout the loudest cause this to take place. Enhanced Community cohesion will not be achieved if the majority of Sayer Common residents are against this change.

Better local democracy

Presumably if the people of Sayers Common want to have their own Parish Council they will use it to get better local representation. However as the need for 2 ward Councillors to be elected for Sayers Common has proven problematic over the last 20 years it does beg the question will they be able to elect a full Council?

More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government

This relies on a number of different factors including better representation but also better access to finances to achieve what the local population would like. Presumably if the people of Sayers Common elect their own Parish Council they will consider it is easier and more convenient for them to request what they want but will the new Council have sufficient funding to function efficiently? And will Hurstpierpoint be able to continue with all they do now? With a division of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common each new parish will have a proportion of the current precept, Sayers Common being significantly less well populated may find they cannot achieve everything they would like. Are all the residents aware of the financial implications of this split?

There is no doctor's surgery nor dentist in Sayers Common so the residents will still need to access Hurstpierpoint to use these services. There is only a small local shop run by volunteers so to shop residents will still have to access Hurstpierpoint. I would question whether the number of residents and the local services are sufficient to sustain a new Parish Council.

Identities and Interests of the Community

For me I cannot see how people who live in Langton Lane can be placed some in Hurst and some in Sayers Common. If I lived here I would definitely associate myself with Hurstpierpoint not Sayers Common. I think the residents of Langton Lane, possibly Mill Lane, Pookbourne Lane and High Hatch Lane should have a say as to whether they wish to associate themselves with Hurstpierpoint or Sayers Common. If this parish is divided then the people who are being displaced need their views to have the strongest weighting / to have the most say. I would have thought that the A23 corridor and the A2300 corridor would make a more sensible and logical boundary should the split of this Parish be considered necessary.

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This Parish has stood like this for a very long time and it is a shame that a few can cause this historic parish to be split.

Dear Mr Stanley

**Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council
Community Governance Review – Response to consultation
Proposed split of Parish into two areas**

I was the Clerk to Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council from 2008 until 2019. During that time I was directly involved during a time of significant change, including the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan (being amongst the first 30 in the Country) and the significant upgrading of services in both villages.

As a resident of the Parish I would object to the proposal. Specifically:

- 1. Community engagement:** The existing structure provides the resources and facilities to communicate effectively with the whole electorate, including in Sayers Common, Goddards Green and the rural households. The distribution of printed material, currently through 'Hurst Life', the well-maintained website, and social media all contribute to a comprehensive flow of information to electors. In-person Council meetings (other than during times of Covid restrictions) are held in both Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint, to give convenient access to all residents. Also, as was experienced during the Neighbourhood Plan process, the Parish Council has shown its willingness to hold extra public meetings when there are issues of particular interest.
- 2. Community cohesion:** Sayers Common is identified as a separate and distinct village and this has always been fully respected by the Parish Council. However, this does not necessarily equate to a separate council administration. If the Sayers Common wards were separated from the existing parish area then there is a risk that the residents of Goddards Green, and others east of the A23, could be disregarded by the Sayers Common-centric council.
- 3. Local Democracy:** The proposed geographical split, being based on the existing ward areas, places a significant area east of the A23 highway. Those households and businesses in this eastern sector would be represented by a council based in Sayers Common and would be forgiven if they felt disenfranchised from that representation. The existing structure provides for two councillors specifically from the Sayers Common wards and, in my eleven years experience of the Council, the benefits to residents of the whole parish were considered at all times. At no time did I consider that Sayers Common was under-represented.
- 4. Delivery of local services and value for money:** The number of households in Sayers Common is approximately 400 and assuming the proposed level of Parish Council Tax (2022/23 Band D) of £88 then the precept income for the separate Sayers Common Parish would be about £35,000. There would be no other significant sources of income. The base costs of operating a separate council, covering the employment of a part-time clerk and financial officer, insurance, maintenance of streetlighting, Reeds Lane public space, auditing, meeting venue and administrative costs, would be of the order of £25,000 to £30,000. This leaves about £5,000 to £10,000 pa to provide services to the community. It is therefore evident that a disproportionate amount of Council Tax would be absorbed by simply maintaining a Council authority. At present the village of Sayers Common

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benefits from a maintenance officer with equipment and van, an estates officer managing the Council's facilities across the Parish, as well as the office team with the resources to identify and implement new initiatives. A separate Sayers Common council would not have the resources to provide these services.

I regret that the proposed separation of the existing Parish Council into two administrative areas has all the signs of a vanity project, possibly primarily promoted by a single individual, without proper regard to the provision of services, value for money and adequate representation of the electorate. The proposal should be dismissed.

REDACTED
16 March 2022

Improved community engagement

Separating the wards is unlikely to improve community engagement based on the current ward boundaries. Sayers Common centre is focussed on the area to the west of the A23. Whilst a separate Parish Council may improve community engagement in this western area the residence based to the east of the A23 have easier access to Hurstpierpoint and the amenities it provides (see below).

Enhanced community cohesion

The ward boundaries for Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint do not reflect the identity of the village. Separating the wards, based on the current boundaries, will diminish community cohesion rather than enhance it - as residence to the east of the A23 are closer and more affiliated with Hurstpierpoint rather than Sayers Common.

Better local democracy

At present Sayers Common is represented by 2 Councillors on Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council (HPP&SC PC) with 12 Councillors for Hurstpierpoint (with one vacancy). As a separate Parish Council, Sayers Common would have to elect at least three more Councillors. Whilst this increase in Councillors may move focus towards Sayers Common - less people gives less scope for community representation.

More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government

My main concerns with the proposal of a new Sayers Common Parish is that at present Sayers Common has very few services and the revision to the Mid Sussex District Council Local Plan will put significant pressure on this area for housing development.

Most Sayers Common residents have to come to Hurstpierpoint for Health and Dental Care, the schools are in Albourne and Hurstpierpoint and local shops mainly in Hurstpierpoint (with parking at the Trinity Road car park). If Sayers Common were to become a separate Parish Council residents will still need to use these services without Hurstpierpoint PC receiving the appropriate funds to run them.

The revision to the Mid-Sussex District Council Local Plan could potentially see 3,400 new houses within the current parish boundary. Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common are stronger together in considering these proposals and it would be more appropriate to consider separating the wards once the outcomes of this process are better understood.

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Reflects the identities and interests of the community

At present, I don't believe that separating the wards reflects the identity and interest of the community. I think that it separates the community when in the near future we will need to stand together to consider the immense amount of development proposed for the parish. At present most of the services are based in Hurstpierpoint not Sayers Common and the current Parish Council needs the per capita funds to run these services for all residents efficiently.

If in the future a separate Parish is considered, I believe that the residence to the east of the A23 should be included in Hurstpierpoint Parish and not Sayers Common.

Dear Sir / Madam

Improved Community Engagement

- In my view, the majority of local residents are fed up with having stacks of housing dumped on us by Hurstpierpoint / Mid Sussex Council. ignoring the democratic wishes of the majority of Sayers Common residents. This is changing the size and nature of Sayers Common but it is not changing its equivalent democratic representation, being the whipping boy for picture postcard Hurstpierpoint, viewing it as the place you just drive through to get to Hurst. The two places have completely contrasting requirements. If a more democratic fairer representation could be achieved, and a much fairer share of Council Services allocated which recognises the increased size of Sayers Common currently - which the Council / Conservative Government has had such a big part in increasing - I am sure that the local community would be much more engaged. This has to be an improvement on just being tagged onto Hurstpierpoint and a fairer outcome.

Enhanced Community Cohesion

- The current situation is creating a "them and us theme" vis a vis Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint. If allocation of more democratic representation actually occurred, recognising the increased size of Sayers Common, which has more than doubled, may be tripled in such a short time in the anti-democratic imposition of housing by both Council and Government, that would be a start. Otherwise there will be increasing tensions between the two communities.

Better Local Democracy

- It is surely undemocratic to increase Sayers Common's size but not alter or increase its democratic representation to reflect that. This can also be argued vis a vis the size of other Council areas in Sussex. I would say it would be increasingly undemocratic not to allow this.

More Effective and Convenient Delivery of Local Services and Local Government

- For the past 15 years we have had to put up with an increasingly overgrown village pond (this land is owned by the Council) and last year the rat population was clearly getting out of control - it had been disturbed by all the building and sewerage work - so we had several sightings each day on and around our properties. Finally after I'd contacted a Councillor, Council workers eventually came in December and we were then able to properly see where the pond was

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again. Scandalous to say, it had been completely overgrown with brambles, other weeds, big trees, young trees and there were no ducks or moorhens on it anymore. It looks much better now but it was not a complete success as many brambles were left to continue to grow on the North side of the pond, the tunnel is partly blocked under the road and the section of ditch alongside London Road outside no 1 Berrylands Farm was not touched whatsoever for some reason. This could be because there was so much bindweed, bramble and other growth, the workers may not have realised the drainage ditch was even there. The efficiency of the drainage ditches are important as some local residents regularly have to place sandbags by front doors in case of flooding. Also a pile of logs was just left by the workers on site before Xmas as they had had to cut down so many trees. I sent a follow-up email to the Councillor about this but did not get a response. In my email I also asked about how regularly maintenance was going to be done. No response. Apart from some grass cutting little else of a regular nature is ever done. Needless to say, absolutely nothing further has happened and we have never so far seen the Council Workers who cleared the area again. Will it be another 15 years before we do? Who knows? This is Council land and is indicative of the way we feel resources are so Hurstpierpoint - centric. Can you honestly see Hurstpierpoint being treated like this? This area is right next to The Metal Village Sign for Sayers Common, it ought to be a main feature of the village and a pleasant amenity - not a Council owned blot on the landscape, an uncared for dump which may well have helped contribute to the rat issue. I have no confidence in the joint Council ever sorting things out, a plague of rats may well follow. But it would never happen in picture postcard Hurstpierpoint, oh no. I am sure of one thing, if we stay with Hurstpierpoint Council, services in Sayers Common will only get even worse....and we will get even more housing dumped on us without a proper, democratic, fair representation to add to our woes. Recently the contractors operating on the nearest housing development appear to have broken a fence around the pond putting their temporary traffic lights in. Needless to say it was left like this after they departed, waiting for some poor toddler to fall in the pond. I no longer have any confidence in the level of Council services to Sayers Common and their lack of democratic accountability continues.

Reflects the Identities and interests of the Community

- It is important that it is recognised that we are a village not another suburb of the enlarged Burgess Hill and not a dump for Hurstpierpoint to use as it suits them. Hurstpierpoint has a proper commercial shopping area, we do not, except for one public house and the Community Shop. The Community Shop surpluses have funded most visible projects in Sayers Common - which means that the residents who use the shop are effectively paying for these improvements. An example was village signs with gates set up. I expect Hurstpierpoint's were funded by the Council. It is important to recognise that Sayers Common is different from Hurstpierpoint and has its own set of needs. It should also, in the interests of social cohesion generally, not be starved of resources. This is especially pertinent with a recession looming.

Kind regards

REDACTED

**Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council:
Community Governance Review Consultation 1
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1. What do you consider to be your community identity?

I strongly object to my property being moved into a new Sayer Common parish – my house, Knowles Tooth, is part of Hurstpierpoint and has been so for at least four centuries.

My family's community identity is that of belonging to the village of Hurstpierpoint. Our children go to school in the village, we shop in the village, we use village amenities such as Hurst Meadows and we attend Hurstpierpoint village events such as Santa Sunday and the Hurst Festival.

I note that local residents to the west of the A23 within this proposed new parish boundary have not been asked whether they would like to 'leave' Hurstpierpoint and be moved to a different parish. The risk in imposing such a move, therefore, is the alienation of residents and a corresponding adverse impact on the local democratic process.

2. How should the civil parishes in your area be defined in future?

- If a separate parish council is formed, it should be confined to Sayers Common itself
- As the A23 forms a tangible physical division it would make sense for Sayers Common to become a parish using the A23 as the boundary to the west and as is proposed to north, south and east.
- The land to the west of the A23 should remain part of the historical Hurstpierpoint parish and community.

There is no historical / common / community / facilities connection between Sayers Common and the area to the west of the A23. Sayers Common itself has no community identity outside its direct village centre. It has only one shop and no other facilities.

3. Considering your proposal(s), what would be the advantages and disadvantages of these?

To split the precept and diminish the size of Hurstpierpoint's parish would have a significant and detrimental effect on the existing integrated parish's budget, the work that the parish council does and the sustainability of the parish.

- It would make the delivery of local services across the area difficult due to loss of economies of scale.
- The majority of the community assets that must be maintained are situated within Hurstpierpoint. Making that parish smaller will have a direct financial impact on the ability to maintain these assets – toilets, recreation ground, Hurst meadow, village centre, community hub at Court Bushes etc.

Creation of the proposed wider area as a Sayers Common parish would be divisive and would risk decreasing local democratic engagement.

- As the petition appears to have come from within Sayers Common village. Therefore it cannot be said to represent the views of communities outside the confines of that village.
- There is no evidence that communities to the west of the A23 would want to be part of Sayers Common. They have not been consulted or given the opportunity to object to this move. Indeed, this consultation does not ask what people actually want – which is contrary to the spirit of the Localism Act. If residents are to be 'moved' from Hurstpierpoint to a new Sayers Common parish then surely they must first be asked?

4. If a separate civil parish council is not formed as proposed in the petition calling for this Community Governance Review, what do you think the impact might be?

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If a separate parish council is not formed I do not believe there will be any impact outside of the village of Sayers Common in terms of local communities and local democracy. To extend a new parish council's remit to the west of the A23 will have a significant, detrimental impact on the existing, strong community spirit and identity of Hurstpierpoint. Residents in this wider area of a proposed new parish have not been asked, nor have they expressed a desire, to be redefined as Sayers Common.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR SAYERS COMMON 2021-22

SUBMISSION UNDER PUBLIC CONSULTATION 1

Personal Declaration.

My name is Seth Jee. I am a Sayers Common Resident, registered LAB ward elector, CGR petition signatory, Sayers Common Village Society member and contributor to its submission and a ward Parish Councillor.

My Submission

My submission is in two parts: The first addresses the subject matters required by the review Terms of Reference, the second is a commentary on the errors in and questionable rationale of most of the Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council's submission.

Part 1.

I fully support and endorse the Village Society's submission, there is nothing that I would wish to alter, add or subtract. In an attempt to reduce the reader's workload I will not recite it here. However, I will append it to this paper in case my previous statement is insufficient or unacceptable. In that event I ask that the attachment be deemed to form an integral element of this submission.

Part 2.

As this part identifies the flaws in and flaky logic of much of the Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council submission please share it with the person responsible for appraising that work.

Background

The SC Village Society, having previously advised Council that it was conducting a survey of villagers' views on petitioning for a CGR, on 25 July 2019 paid the Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council the courtesy of notifying it that a petition had been submitted to the District Council. The period from that time to the date for the "Made order" will have given the Council **more than three years** in which to undertake contingency strategic service continuity planning to counter any impact on it in the event that the petition is granted.

However, the first time that the topic appeared on a Council meeting agenda was on 24 February 2022 when it was resolved that a draft Council submission would be presented to the 24 March meeting for approval. On that latter occasion the draft was not accepted and referred back for further attention and circulation to members for their approval before its issue ahead of the consultation period 15 April end date.

This 11th hour 59th minute haste might explain the submission's failings, it's a car crash.

Issues raised by Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council (H&SCPC)

Taking the shortcomings in order of appearance:

Minute C21/22.126 Community Governance Review is not an accurate reproduction of the Minute published on the Council's website and its credibility is therefore questionable.

Minute C21/22.140 Community Governance Review is an incorrect reference. It is **NOT** a "Minute" but a "Draft Minute" until under the Agenda item of the 28 April meeting :

"Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Council: To receive and adopt the minutes of the 24 March 2022 Council meeting"

the Draft Minute is received, adopted (i.e. approved) and signed by the Chairman.

Unless and until that happens **it has no evidential status.**

Having made that point, I have to here, and will on 28 April, challenge the record stating that the council's support for the petition will be conditional on ward boundaries being amended. This is a post-meeting addition.

The matter of boundary reviews is mentioned no less than three times in the submission, so let us put this into context. It was claimed by a Councillor that **some** SC ward villagers feel more closely aligned to Hurstpierpoint. This was not evidence based, no scientific survey had been undertaken, no information was given concerning numbers nor in which part/s of the ward they reside. It is accepted that there will be SC ward parishioners who wish to be associated with Hurstpierpoint but their electoral ward having its own PC will not change their continuing ability to look to the larger village for its facilities, without boundary changes.

My experience in the pre-petition survey process was that a very small number of parishioners with Hurstpierpoint postal addresses were concerned that it might be changed to Sayers Common with a resultant reduction in the sale value of their properties! Having explained that the two matters were unrelated, their concerns were ameliorated.

This experience was not repeated with petitioners having Twineham, Ansty or Goddards Green addresses.

H&SCPC states that boundary changes are permitted under the Review. This is referred under Chapter 1 of the 2007 Act and is well removed from Chapter 3 which makes no such allowance, the only two circumstances that can affect consideration of the petition are quoted under 83 (3) and repeated under 84 (3). Furthermore, the MSDC CGR ToR do no call for any comment on possible boundary changes.

The redefined wards boundaries proposal map is ill-conceived and ill-timed, a Putinesque attempted land grab. It is not supported by any proof that it is a response to demands from

residents in the affected parts of the SC ward. As the H&SCPC submission expresses that, in the event of degrouping, “there is ... the potential for Hurstpierpoint Parish Council not being able to support and deliver the current community facilities for which it is liable.” how can it propose taking on greater liabilities? (further comments follow).

Matters of this nature are best considered post-petition between PCs to avoid further delay. District is arguably already in breach of statute – Chapter 3 93 (8) as amended by the 2015 Order.

A23 and A2300

The reference to the A23 and Dumbrells Farm Way (later to become the A2300) is an irrelevance as both roads existed when the boundaries were last redrawn. The A23 has since been realigned to the east and greatly upgraded but the **only** boundaries significance of this is that the last two properties at the south eastern end of Sayers Common, York Cottage and Coombe Hill Cottage, that are in LAA ward because they **were** to the east of the A23, **are now** to the west.

Amenities

Lack of Public Toilets – If this is important enough to be raised as a reason for our petition being refused why has H&SCPC not installed them ages ago?

I can personally vouch for the fact that anyone *in extremis* who enquires at the Community Shop will be allowed to use the Village Hall toilets which are available during shop opening hours.

Similarly, I have known the Duke of York landlord allow desperate non customers to use the pub’s facilities.

Lack of PC owned Community Venue – Our Village Hall, owned and managed by a community charity, recently celebrated its centenary. It handsomely serves the needs of our community.

Allotments – We do have allotments!

Cemetery – Top of a new SC PC’s “To Do” list would be to discuss provision possibilities with the PCC. In the meantime the Clayton burial ground is available. The Hurstpierpoint cemetery has only 20 plots remaining so it will soon be in a very similar situation.

New SC PC Overheads

In common with other Downland Villages Sayers Common Parish Council would operate on modest overheads. With a part-time Clerk working from home and with meetings held in the Village Hall at a discounted hire rate (already confirmed by the hall management) the new PC will operate at a much lower percentage of Precept than H&SCPC’s 68%.

For confirmation please refer to the published annual returns of neighbouring, like villages’ PCs.

Service Continuity

Most disturbing has to be that degrouping could result in “the potential for Hurstpierpoint Parish Council not being able to support and deliver the current community facilities for which it is liable”. If this is a vacuous threat it does the Council no credit. If it has substance, the same comment applies since surely the reduction in Precept should be offset by a commensurate reduction on Concurrent Functions expenditure – unless there has been cross-ward subsidising in the past and present?

Council Tax Increases

The same comments can be applied to the threat of Council Tax increases.

District Plan Review

The reference to the District Plan 2038 Review is of huge significance but who better to comment on it – a council of seven Sayer Common villagers working with its mutually targeted Downland Village neighbour, or two councillors, a minority of 13.3%, on a council otherwise of Hurstpierpoint ward representatives?

Splitting the Parish

In its District Review the LGBCE In recommending the inclusion of Sayers Common in a newly created “Downland Villages” ward it accepted that:

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common are two distinct villages.

The two villages are different communities.

To place the two villages in separate district wards does not completely divide a single community.

In their submissions to the LGBCE both the district Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties recommended splitting Sayers Common from Hurstpierpoint and its realignment with similarly categorised settlements.

Access to Facilities

Of course, Sayers Common parishioners will need to continue to access the educational, health and social facilities located in Hurstpierpoint **as do residents of neighbouring small communities**. Having their own PC will not alter the situation so why this point has been made escapes me?

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2021-22

SUBMISSION UNDER PUBLIC CONSULTATION 1

BY

SAYERS COMMON VILLAGE SOCIETY

Key Facts.

- The petition was submitted by parishioners of the Sayers Common ward (LAB) register of electors under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 as revised by The Legislative Reform (Community Governance Reviews) Order 2014 and 2015.
- It was formally accepted by the Electoral Services Department of Mid Sussex District Council on 7 August 2019.
- There are 348 petition signatories from an electoral register of 871 (at the time). This compares with a minimum requirement of 187 and the just over 200 electors that voted at the polling station at the 2019 local elections.
- Petitioners are located in all parts of the village including the most outlying borders of the ward, (please refer to **The Petition Process** for further information).
- Submissions in response to the LGBCE's Mid Sussex District Council Review draft recommendations consultation made by both the district Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties involved the separation of Sayers Common from Hurstpierpoint and alignment with neighbouring similarly categorised settlements.
- In recommending the inclusion of Sayers Common in a newly created "Downland Villages" ward the LGBCE accepted that:
Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common are two distinct villages.
The two villages are different communities.
To place the two villages in separate district wards does not completely divide a single community.
- If the above Final Recommendation is approved, under present circumstances Sayers Common will be the only village ward member **not represented by its own Parish Council but by only two councillors, members of a Council located in another district ward.**
- Smaller neighbouring villages, e.g. Twineham and Albourne, have their own parish councils that have governed successfully over many decades.
- With its own parish council Sayers Common electoral ward parishioners will have the benefit of the intellects and energy of seven councillors to safeguard and enhance their interests, as opposed to the two of 15 under the current structure.
- **By the time that the Review Order is made the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council will have had more than three years in which to formulate a contingency business continuity strategy to ensure the maintenance/improvement of its services to Hurstpierpoint parishioners.**

Background

When the village was grouped with Hurstpierpoint for local governance it was little more than a hamlet populated by brick works and agricultural workers. It had the church and an inn that are still present, two shops and a village school.

It has not been possible to determine why the village was grouped with Hurstpierpoint. Why not with similar neighbouring villages, Twineham and/or Albourne, both were granted their separate parishes, the latter of which separates Sayers Common from Hurstpierpoint, with both of which it had more in common than with the much larger settlement?

The first relevantly significant growth of the village occurred at the end of the last century with the Berrylands Farm development of 96 units. Overall, the past 30 years, when current consents are built out, will see the number of residential units in the village centre more than treble (331%). Regrettably, the only infrastructure improvements, apart from the Community Shop, founded and run by villagers, have been the opening of the LVS specialist school for children on the autism spectrum and an eye hospital. The village school was closed in the mid 1970s.

The Localism Movement

Rumours abound concerning the timing of the earliest rumblings of dissatisfaction with the local governance of Sayers Common by **Hurstpierpoint Parish Council** but it was not until the late 1990s that concrete evidence of that emerges. The Berrylands Farm development brought a large number of young families with fresh vision into the village community and it is believed that they were influential in the emerging demand for greater recognition of the village's identity by the Parish Council. That led to a ward councillor being persuaded to propose, successfully, a change of name to **Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council**.

The localism movement in the context of local governance was recognised in the macro by central government and supported by the passing of the Act of 2007. This set out the provisions by which local communities could petition for independent parish governance.

The succeeding central administration further encouraged the movement by passing amending orders that reduced the qualifying petitioning percentage of the electorate (2014) and speeded up the review process (2015).

Until 2018 the Sayers Common Village Society existed as a medium for the promulgation of village news. However, reacting to a justified groundswell conviction within the community that the parish governance structure was no longer serving its best interests the Society was energised into becoming a unifying voice for villagers. Through surveys it determined the essential and desirable improvements to the village and to village life that the community wished to achieve and was given a mandate to pursue those objectives.

We are told that the Society's early successes further encouraged the belief that parishioners would be better served by independent, community-centred local governance and that there is the capability within the village of managing that. The 2007 Act was brought to the Society's attention.

The Petition Process

- A well-attended meeting of villagers on 19 January 2019 discussed the perceived benefits and threats derived from having its own parish council. It unanimously minus one mandated the Society to provide the information presented to all villagers and thereafter to proceed to petitioning.
- It is believed that all households in the ward were contacted by email, cold calling or leaflet drops.
- The petitioning was conducted in the main by doorstep conversations but there were forms in the Community Shop for LAB registered supporters to sign.
- Support for the petition came not only from the residents of the village centre but also from those of the outlying areas of the ward, for example Twineham Lane (Twineham), Langton Lane (Hurstpierpoint), Cuckfield Road north of the Goddards Green roundabout (Ansty), Bishopstone Lane (Goddards Green/Ansty), Gatehouse Lane (Goddards Green/Burgess Hill), etc.
- The results were reported to a meeting of villagers on 23 June and it voted unanimously minus one for the petition to be submitted to MSDC.
- This was done in July and the Society was notified of validation and acceptance within a month

The Benefits of Degrouping.

There is much in our Village that brings its residents together and an interest in local governance by the community for the community is one of them. The attempts of the two ward parish councillors to have the existing Parish Council address villagers' dissatisfaction has had minimal effect and they struggle to overcome the continuing, general sentiment that Sayers Common will always come off second-best under the current structure. No matter how the fact that the representation on council is proportionally based on population is explained it only serves to exacerbate the despair that the more numerous, complex and more highly leveraged demands of the larger community with a 13 to 2 voting majority will always prevail.

However, when democracy comes to Sayers Common in the shape of the PC meeting held annually in the village there is always a large attendance, larger than ever seen at Hurstpierpoint based meetings other than perhaps the Annual Parish Meeting. Last September villager numbers were such that many were turned away.

With its own parish council of seven local people, ideally drawn from all points of the ward compass, devoting 100% of their local knowledge, governance intellects and energy to benefitting the village and villagers and with all council meetings held in the centre of the village there is no doubt that the latent desire for engagement will rapidly become reality.

As with most communities Sayers Common ward has micro divisions. They range from development additions to the original village, for example, Oakhurst and Berrylands Farm, to the remote outlying ward borders, e.g. Twineham and Goddards Green. Whilst they retain their identities they readily come together to well communicated events such as charity fund raising, village social gatherings, the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, etc.

If successfully encouraged to put up parish councillors to represent them the parishioners resident in these areas will come to see themselves as individual pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that come together to form the picture that is Sayers Common.

It is not surprising that the petitioners, in common with others, regard rule by Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council as rule by big brother and not democracy. Only one visit a year by the Council, the very rare and unannounced visit by a councillor and poor communication, news being distributed solely by the PC website and **Hurst** Life, and none of the dominant social media, adds to the feeling of remoteness from the action.

We do not seek to comment adversely on the existing parish council's delivery of routine services. Where there is a problem, however, is in the time taken to react and respond to new or changed circumstances due to its present structuring and protocols creating unnecessary delivery delays.

Take a hypothetical new project proposal. It will probably start life by being referred to the Community Engagement Committee. As it only meets five times a year in a worst-case scenario the wait could be three months. The CEC would submit a draft proposition to Council. If Council requires amendments it will refer the matter back to committee (despite the fact that there would probably be a CEC quorum present). A delay this time of two months. Then back to Council, then from Council to Finance and Governance Committee which in due course responds to Council, copying CEC. Council resolves to proceed and refers to CEC to implement. But we are now back to a three month wait.

A contributor to this submission compares this to his experience of 21 years past experience as an Albourne parish councillor. Council members had (and probably still have) designated areas of responsibility, e.g. Policy and Strategy, Finance, Planning, etc. and met in council monthly, no multiple committee meetings. It was extremely unlikely for a decision on a new project to take more than two months.

If it mirrored the Albourne model, Sayers Common Parish would be able to deliver with the speed and manoeuvrability of a port tug boat compared with that of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council's super tanker.

Identity.

Sayers Common has all the hallmarks of a village. It is separated from Hurstpierpoint by open countryside, the A23 trunk road and, by road, by Albourne Parish. It relies on its larger near neighbour for many facilities but no more so than other nearby settlements.

Contributing to the LGBCE District Review both the district Liberal Democratic and Conservative parties recognised our village's identity and maturity, recommending that it be degrouped from Hurstpierpoint and regrouped with like categorised settlements. That transpired to be supported by the Commission with the creation of a new "Downland Villages" ward citing the justifications referred in the "Key Facts" above

To address the matter of personal identification we have turned to psychologists for guidance. We are told that it is a very natural instinct for humans to seek to belong, to be identified as belonging and to be respected for belonging. That apparently applies not only to such major groupings as race and religion but also moving down the scale to the likes of football club support, etc.

In Sayers Common how villagers see themselves within the community can perhaps be associated with the communications media that they support. The Village Society is supported by a cross-section of the community who look to it to act to pursue their ambitions for the village and for the exchange of more radical news. The Village Group Facebook page members are mainly the younger generations using it as the means of communicating day-to-day personal news. The most recent group to seek to identify itself is the

incoming owners of homes in Sayers Meadow, the large development in course of construction in the centre of the village, with the Sayers Meadow Community Facebook page.

We contemplate a Sayers Common Parish Council would not only support these groups but also offer a holistic grouping with which the community could meet its need for its identity acceptance as such that it does not see the current governancing arrangement ever offering.

Counter Balance

It is our village's most sincere hope and expectation that the petitioned degrouping would not impact adversely on the parishioners of Hurstpierpoint ward. We would seek a **win-win** outcome. We have considered whether the benefits to Sayers Common parishioners derived from degrouping must inevitably be counter-balanced by an adverse impact on those of Hurstpierpoint. We found no reason to believe that this would be the case.

We have considered the consequences of the petition being granted on Hurstpierpoint in terms of parishioners' **perceptions** and the **reality** of the changed circumstances.

The logical approach to the determination of perception would be to begin by undertaking a survey of villagers' views but this methodology has not been available to us for fear that it might compromise a key element of District's consultation process. However, we are told by psychologists that the human response to imposed change, as opposed to elected change, scales from concern to fear with resistance increasing as the curve rises. An instinctive, negative response to the consultation process should not, therefore, come as a surprise.

As to the reality of the consequences it is difficult to contemplate any direct adverse impact. Indirect impact is another matter and is dependent on the ability of the new unitary council to manage change. By the time that the District's Order is published the **Council will have had three years in which to formulate a contingency business continuity strategy to ensure the seamless maintenance of the quality of its services going forward.**

The compensation for the reduced precept would be a corresponding reduction in concurrent functions expenditure unless there has been cross ward subsidising. Furthermore, there could/should be a benefit derived from the fact that the new unitary Council would be able to concentrate the totality of its financial and human resources on providing the services required by its single ward parishioners.

Reaction to Rejection.

There is an air of optimism in the community generated by the response to the petition, the amount by which the number of signatories, 348, exceeded the required minimum of 187, and fuelled by the outcome of the LGBCE District Review. Underlying that, however, is the sensing of the responsibility that the village will be assuming if granted the right to independent self-governance and the confidence in its maturity to deliver the community centred service that villagers feel is long overdue.

During the pre-petitioning research process the community has learned much about the respective treatment of the two grouped villages justifying its dissatisfaction with the investment of both financial and human resources in our village. Not surprisingly the situation has improved marginally since the petition was

lodged. However, the Council's ethos has not changed. A member, in Council, recently commented "Sayers Common is somewhere that you drive through, not to." She was not challenged.

If the petition is rejected the disappointment will be palpable. Not surprisingly searching questions will be asked but there will be no raising of barricades other than, perhaps, metaphorically.

Conclusion

We hope that we have faithfully discharged our responsibility to our community by demonstrating the strength of its petition and its maturity into a community deserving and capable of ploughing its own local governance furrow as successfully as nearby similar settlements, e.g. Twineham, Albourne, Poynings and Fulking, have done successfully over so many decades.

Michael Bailey,
Chairman,
Sayers Common Village Society.

4 April 2022

REDACTED

14 April 2022

Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council:
Community Governance Review Consultation 1
Local Residents – Hardcopy Submissions

REDACTED

E.mail: REDACTED

25th February 2022

Electoral Services (CGR),
Mid Sussex District Council,
Oaklands
Haywards Heath,
RH16 1SS.

Dear Sirs,

Re : Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

I have tried to contribute my views via your online form, but it rejects the www.midsussex etc. and since Sussex was mis spelt I tried with using Sussex word, but that was no good either. I wonder if other people have had the same problem, I carefully checked what I had put in.

I like to give my views but the only way I can do so now, is to send you a Letter.

I support a new Parish and Parish Council being created for Sayers Common for all the reasons you state in paragraph 4 of your letter of 14th February. Your ref : REDACTED

Yours faithfully,

REDACTED

REDACTED

PUBLIC NOTICE

Community Governance Review relating to Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

Notice is hereby given that having been validly petitioned to do so, Mid Sussex District Council is conducting a Community Governance Review relating to the existing Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council. The petition wording was as follows:

I/we, the undersigned, each being a local government elector for the ward of Sayers Common, having determined that the interests of our village and villagers are no longer best served by the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council, in pursuance of the rights conferred upon me/us by the above act of parliament hereby petition you to undertake a Community Governance Review and to constitute a Parish Council for Sayers Common ward, such new council to be known as Sayers Common Parish Council.

Public consultation opens 14 February and closes 15 April 2022

Local government electors in the Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council area can contribute their views in the following ways:

The best way is via: www.midsussex.gov.uk/cgr-form.

Or, you may email your submission to: communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk.

Alternatively, a reply envelope is enclosed if you wish to send us a typed letter. If you need paper copies of the Terms of Reference and Guidance for Respondents, please call us to arrange this.

21.3.22

*We have been very pleased with Bin collections, Hort Meadow / coast
Brushes Hub, - Village Centre Memorial Area. The Hub staying open & helping
People work is great - keep it open - I used the idea that all facilities such as Post
Buildings etc were open - like the idea of Environmental Incentive Development
we are happy with the Parish Council, in as far as we are aware
of their responsibilities etc - and what we are aware of.*

REDACTED

PUBLIC NOTICE

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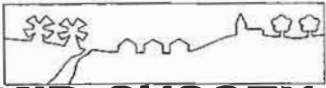
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Alternatively, a reply envelope is enclosed if you wish to send us a typed letter. If you need paper copies of the Terms of Reference and Guidance for Respondents, please call us to arrange this.

A VERY SERIOUS CONTROL FOR FUTURE
HOUSE & DEVELOPMENT. THIS AREA
IS EXPANDING FAR TOO QUICKLY FOR
THE INFRASTRUCTURE. REAL ACTION
IS REQUIRED TO CONTROL DEVELOPMENT
Www 15.2.22



Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS

**MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Switchboard: 01444 458166
DX 300320 Haywards Heath 1

Fax: 01444 477236
www.midsussex.gov.uk

Contact: Democratic Services
E-mail: communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk
Direct Line: 01444 477222

Your ref: REDACTED

Date:
14 February 2022



REDACTED

REDACTED

**Notice of Comm
Parish Council**

14 / feb / 2022

Dear REDACTED

Dear Sir,

In response to a pe
This will consider w

Over the next few years

You are invited to c
governance arrange

I expect Sayers Common to
continue growing; so I see no

Before preparing
Respondents at: w

reason why they should not have
their own Parish Council.

For the review to pr
the following benefit

When the smaller parish of

- Improved con
- Enhanced co
- Better local d
- More effective

Albourne has it's own council
I don't see why Sayers Common
should not look after their own

You should also exp

interests

- Reflects the ic

The best way to
www.midsussex.gov.uk
community govern

REDACTED

REDACTED

We very much hope

Yours sincerely,

Terry Stanley,

Business Unit Lead

Tom Clark

Practice Management Standard
Law Society Accredited

Councillor Submissions

From: eforms
Sent: 05 April 2022 14:20
To: communitygovernancereviews
Subject: Commmmunity Governance review response (Ref: DSCGR-1649164745)
Attachments: Community Governance Review.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

team - team email	communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk
team - team name	the Democratic Services team
Reference number	REDACTED
Your representation	Councillor
Council name	Mid Sussex District Councillor
Your name	Colin Trumble
Contact email address	REDACTED
Confirm email	REDACTED
Phone	REDACTED
Postcode	REDACTED
Address	REDACTED
Which review are you responding to?	Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
Would you like to enter your response below, or upload it?	Write
Your submission to the community governance review	<p>I have represented Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common as a District Councillor for 11 years. Whilst the Parish arrangement has, in the main, led to sound community governance over that time, Sayers Common has seen great changes with housing development over recent years. I have always found that to an extent, Sayers Common people relate to Sayers Common and see Hurstpierpoint as the larger and perhaps more urban settlement on the other side of the A23. This divide may grow when the current housing development finishes with new people moving in and more so, if and when further development occurs. On the other hand, people in Hurstpierpoint relate to Hurstpierpoint only as do residents of Langton Lane, Mill Lane and the Godard's Green area. Indeed, several residents in Langton Lane were surprised, and disappointed, to find they were in Sayers Common. If Parish Councils are meant to reflect and represent the areas they cover, there is a growing sense that Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint should be separate Parish Councils. This is a view supported in the main in my discussions with HPP & SC Parish Councillors. This would probably allow the increasingly distinct communities to be better represented. However, I would suggest that the boundaries are carefully considered with HPP being bounded say by the Downs to the South, Jane Murray Way to the East and A23 to the West. Sayers Common would then be a distinct community to the West of the A23 developing an identity with the</p>

Downland villages from Twineham through to Fulking. Indeed, this would reflect the new District Ward that will be created

From: Bob Sampson <REDACTED>
Sent: 12 April 2022 16:41
To: communitygovernancereviews
Subject: Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council CGR

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I am one of the two Ward Councillors for Sayers Common, and a Hurstpierpoint Councillor for some years before the Ward was introduced and have never had a problem getting things done in the village. Myself and Malcolm Heather, who was the other Ward Councillor at the time, were helped enormously by the Parish Council when we started the Sayers Common Community Shop to meet the needs of our parishioners. I also led a working group to replace Play equipment in the Reeds Lane recreation ground and the Council were prepared to finance the project before a new development in the village provided some S106 the money to do so. The council has paid for a new Bus Shelter on the London Road and maintains the previous one that was provided years ago.

When I suggested to the Council that they might be like to finance some Christmas Street Lights for the village it was approved immediately and unanimously.

There is, and has been for many years, a small group of long time residents who remember when the old Hurstpierpoint Parish Council was a reactive Council and did not do a lot for either Hurstpierpoint or Sayers Common. Since that time the Council has always tried to meet the needs of ALL parishioners including making a large grant towards the Village Hall refurbishment in 2014.

I consider the idea of a separate Parish Council for Sayers Common a retrograde step.

I was most surprised that the group who put this request forward had not made any attempt to make a financial assessment of the project. I did ask about this at a public meeting held in the village and was told "If Albourne can afford it , so can we". I do not consider that the way to go about something like this. It appears to me that no account has been taken of the costs involved in managing a future Parish Council for the village.

I was also surprised that people living in Godard's Green and Langton Lane were not informed of the fact that they were in Sayers Common Ward. None of the people I know in these two areas were aware of this and considered themselves Hurstpierpoint residents.

I believe this is another layer of bureaucracy that Mid Sussex can well do without.

Kind regards
Bob Sampson
Ward Councillor for Sayers Common
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

☎: REDACTED

REDACTED

e-mail: REDACTED

REDACTED

RECEIVED

6 APR 2022

1st April 2022

Re: Community Governance Review – Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

Dear Mr Tom Clark,

- If Sayers Common village residents wish to form a separate Parish Council they should be free to do so.
- Some Sayers Common residents wish the situation to remain as it is.
- The Parish Ward of Sayers Common (LAB) contains both the village of Sayers Common and properties north of Hurstpierpoint.
- Many residents in north of Hurstpierpoint have an affinity with Hurstpierpoint, not Sayers Common. This includes Mill Lane, Cobbs Mill, north part of Langton Lane, Pomper Lane, High Hatch Lane, Gatehouse Lane, North part of Cuckfield Road, Bishopstone Lane.
- Some of these are closer to Ansty and those off Twineham Lane would identify with Twineham.
- The eastern boundary of a new Sayers Common Parish should be the A23 road..
- A small Parish Council, such as the one of Sayers Common, proposed would not have the financial resources to provide the range of expertise and services that the present large Parish Council of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common provides.
- Many residents especially the north eastern part of the Sayers Common Parish Ward look to Hurstpierpoint for shops, health centre, dentist, primary school and community groups.
- In future with further possible housing development between Sayers Common and Albourne, the identities of these two villages may alter so and changes now would be premature.
- Similarly Burgess Hill Town Council wishes to change its boundaries to incorporate most of the Northern Arc.
- I feel that the present arrangement serves the interests of Hurstpierpoint, Goddards Green and Sayers Common.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr. Rodney Jackson

Ward Member Hurstpierpoint
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

Ward Member Hurstpierpoint and Downs
Mid-Sussex District Council.

Parish Council Submission

Cllr Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Leader, Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands, Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS
communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk

8 April 2022

Dear Cllr Ash-Edwards,

Community Governance Review of Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute comments to inform your consideration of whether a new parish council should be created for Sayers Common.

You have asked that for you to properly consider the proposition, we should concisely explain how the proposal might derive the following benefits:

- Improved community engagement
- Enhanced community cohesion
- Better local democracy
- More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government.

We should also explain how your proposition reflects the identities and interests of the community.

Background

The Parish Council considered the MSDC correspondence at its 24 February 2022 meeting, at which it noted the community governance review process and agreed a draft response would be developed for consideration at its 24 March 2022 meeting:

Minute C21/22.126 Community Governance Review:

At the 24 February 2022 meeting, Members of the Parish Council noted that the District Council was required to undertake the review as it had been triggered by a petition submitted in 2019 calling for a separate parish council for Sayers Common based on the Sayers Common electoral ward boundaries (Ref: LAB).

There was concern that the review is running parallel to the District Plan Review and that the District Plan Review should come before the Community Governance Review. There was concern that some residents of the wider Sayers Common electoral ward area, not resident in the village, might not associate their identity with Sayers Common. It was noted that ward boundary changes were permitted under this review and with the new geographical features of the A23, A2300 and Jane Murray Way, these boundaries could be used to help define the two wards.

The Chairman confirmed the new arrangements would be in place by May 2023 but the deadline for the current consultation was 15 April 2022. Members agreed that they wanted the residents of Sayers Common to decide their own identity and how they would be served. If they wanted a separate parish council it would be supported. Consideration would be given to potential new boundaries and a response would be drafted for consideration at the 24 March 2022 Council meeting.

The Parish Council met again on 24 March 2022 and considered a draft response on the community governance review process to submit to MSDC.

Minute C21/22.140 Community Governance Review:

At the 24 March 2022 meeting, Members considered the draft response to the Mid Sussex District Council community governance review and agreed the Parish Council's response would be submitted by 15 April 2022. In summary the Parish Council is not supportive of the proposals unless the residents can justify a separate Parish Council for Sayers Common village. If they do, then the Parish Council will support the proposal, if the electoral ward boundaries are amended. The Chairman suggested the difficulties of recruiting new councillors was emphasised and all the key items were set out as bullet points in the summary box.

Members took a vote on the decision to submit the letter as amended, once the final version was circulated by email, which resulted in 11 votes in favour and one against, and it was:

RESOLVED: That Members AGREED the response to the MSDC Community Governance Review, as amended and signed off by email, to be submitted by 15 April 2022.

It was resolved that the following response be submitted to you.

Our Response

The Parish Council is not making a case for a new Parish Council for Sayers Common. We do not agree that it would provide:

- Improved community engagement
- Enhanced community cohesion
- Better local democracy, or
- More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government.

The Parish Council believes that these objectives are best met through the current arrangements that provide economies of scale, value for money and support in depth. In outline, the very small number of amenities that the Sayers Common Parish Council would manage would be two notice boards, 0.67 hectares of open space with one play area, two bus stops, three sets of village gateways and eight streetlights. In 2021 the Parish Council also arranged for 9 WSCC street lamps to display Christmas motifs. There are no parish council run community venues, cemetery, allotments, or public toilets.

This level of provision may not warrant its own parish council with all the associated overheads of employees, office space, IT and communication technology, twice weekly play area inspection, annual ROPSA play area inspections, subscriptions to NALC and WSALC, the ICO, Employers and Public Liability Insurance, to name but a few of the necessary requirements. Also, in separating out an area from the existing Parish Council, there is the real risk of increasing the Council Tax liability for all residents within both Parish Council areas and the potential for Hurstpierpoint Parish Council not being able to support and deliver the current community facilities for which it is liable.

Furthermore, Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council has been challenged to fill its councillor vacancies. In 2019, the Parish Council struggled to fill a vacancy for the Sayers Common ward which it was able to eventually do so by co-opting a councillor from the Hurstpierpoint ward. We have also been

unable to fill another vacancy, with one co-opted councillor from the Sayers Common ward resigning within a week, stating the work load would be larger than they had envisaged.

The District Plan Review to 2038 will also be a key shaper of future development and housing numbers in the parish and it may well be prudent to await the outcome of the District Plan Review before completing a community governance review. That could then enable a far wider and perhaps timely review of Parish boundaries within the area to take account of the impact of the Northern Arc development and potentially others. Forecasts for the number of people on electoral registers likely to occur in the next five years must be considered and should have been available to us at the start of the review.

The proposal is to split the current parish area in half diagonally across the middle based on the LAA and LAB electoral wards and form separate Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common wards. The LAB ward takes in areas to the north of Hurstpierpoint such as Langton Lane, Mill Lane, High Hatch Lane, Cuckfield Road, Goddards Green and Gatehouse Lane where many residents feel more aligned to Hurstpierpoint village than to Sayers Common village.

The MSDC Settlement Sustainability Review in May 2015 identified Hurstpierpoint as a Category 2 settlement and Sayers Common as a Category 3 settlement. The acknowledged hierarchy reflects that there is a mutually supporting infrastructure in place as the residents of Sayers Common village and Goddards Green look to the larger village of Hurstpierpoint for some of their educational, health and social activities and wider shopping experience.

The Parish Council has worked hard for many years to integrate the two villages under the current Parish Council arrangements, even changing its name in 2000 from Hurstpierpoint Parish Council to Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council to emphasise the combined importance of the two villages. On that basis, the current proposals seem to work against our integrated Parish Council.

However, the Parish Council is agreed that should the residents of Sayers Common village make a convincing case to you, then we would support their wishes.

We would further add however, that the CGR Guidance document clearly permits the opportunity to use a CGR to readdress boundary issues and a CGR offers an opportunity to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features such as motorways for example.

The A23 cuts through the parish in a north / south direction separating all the historic footpaths and bridleways between Albourne, Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint. The new A2300 dual carriageway also cuts off the northern part of the Parish at Goddards Green. With the northern arc development, these man-made constructs may change the behaviour of residents going forward and in turn we recognise that they may influence the boundaries of the parish.

It remains open to MSDC to make a recommendation that is different to the recommendation the petitioners wished the review to make and MSDC shouldn't feel forced to implement the petitioners recommendation.

We therefore ask that if MSDC is mindful to support a new parish council for Sayers Common village, that the opportunity is taken to review the boundaries of LAA and LAB so they better reflect the local geography, identities and interests of the community. We have illustrated revised boundaries in the plan set out in Appendix A, but these require clear, high quality maps to be produced to support the proposals.

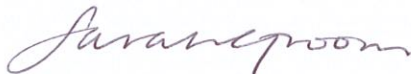
In summary:

- i) Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council does not support the proposal and believes the residents are best served by the larger parish council. It does not make sense to create a separate parish council with the limited public amenities in the vicinity of Sayers Common village.
- ii) Two parish councils may struggle to find willing councillors to stand for the democratically elected positions available, or to even fill vacancies through co-options.
- iii) The timelines of the MSDC District Plan Review and the development of the northern arc are key to shaping the location in the near future and consideration should be given to the timing of this CGR review.
- iv) The proposal for a new parish council for Sayers Common village would only be supported by the Parish Council if the residents demonstrate that it is justified, and that it is not just a request from an active vocal minority;
- v) In the event of a new parish council, we believe the changes in boundaries that we have set out above would provide the most appropriate parish areas which would better reflect the identities and interests of the local communities.

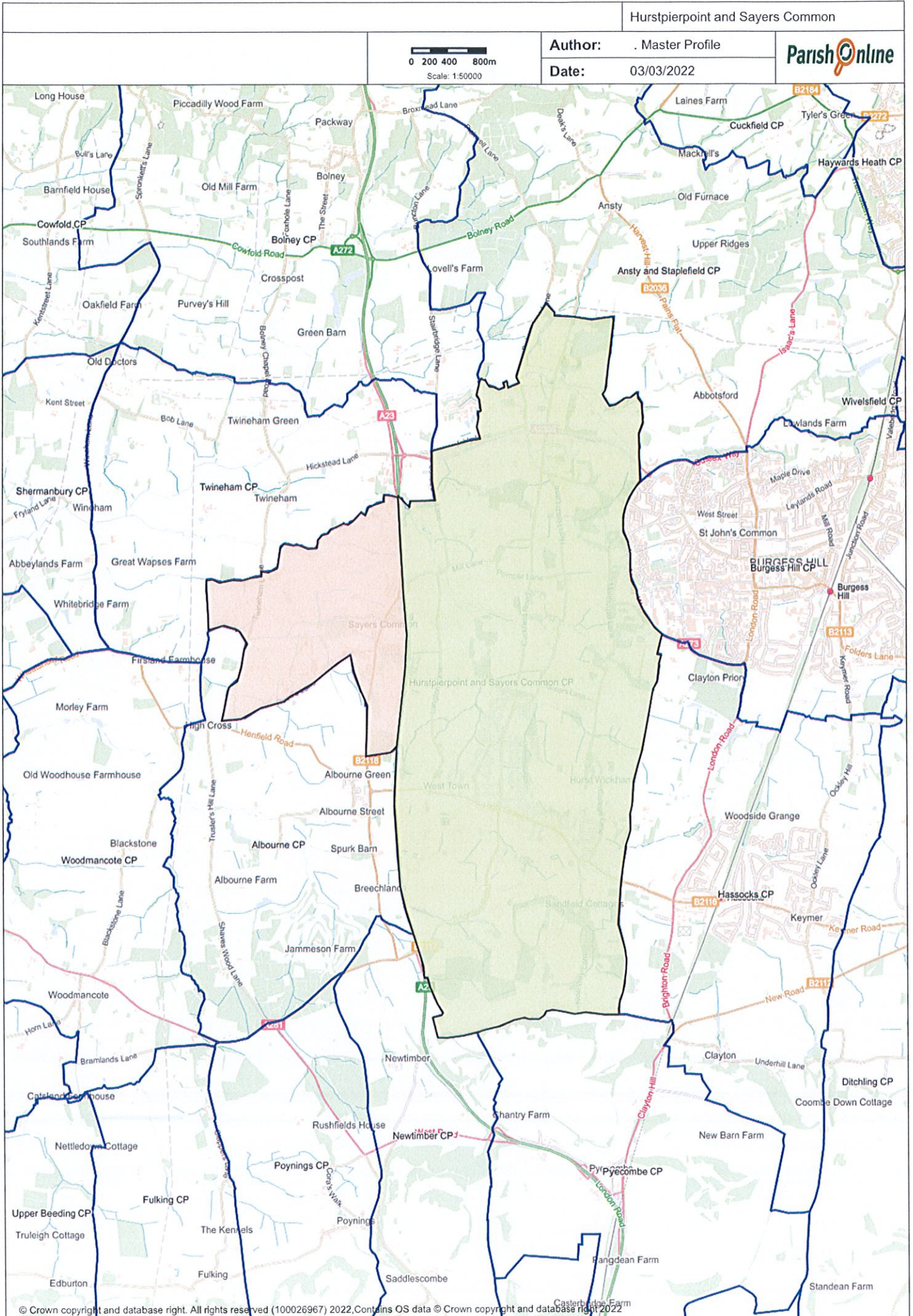
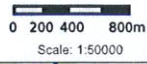
We look forward to reviewing your draft recommendations when you publish them on 3 June 2022 and commenting on them again before 1 August 2022.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Sarah Groom
CLERK TO THE COUNCIL



Petitioners Submission

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2021-22

SUBMISSION UNDER PUBLIC CONSULTATION 1

BY

SAYERS COMMON VILLAGE SOCIETY

Key Facts.

- The petition was submitted by parishioners of the Sayers Common ward (LAB) register of electors under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 as revised by The Legislative Reform (Community Governance Reviews) Order 2014 and 2015.
- It was formally accepted by the Electoral Services Department of Mid Sussex District Council on 7 August 2019.
- There are 348 petition signatories from an electoral register of 871 (at the time). This compares with a minimum requirement of 187 and the just over 200 electors that voted at the polling station at the 2019 local elections.
- Petitioners are located in all parts of the village including the most outlying borders of the ward, (please refer to **The Petition Process** for further information).
- Submissions in response to the LGBCE's Mid Sussex District Council Review draft recommendations consultation made by both the district Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties involved the separation of Sayers Common from Hurstpierpoint and alignment with neighbouring similarly categorised settlements.
- In recommending the inclusion of Sayers Common in a newly created "Downland Villages" ward the LGBCE accepted that:
Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common are two distinct villages.
The two villages are different communities.
To place the two villages in separate district wards does not completely divide a single community.
- If the above Final Recommendation is approved, under present circumstances Sayers Common will be the only village ward member **not represented by its own Parish Council but by only two councillors, members of a Council located in another district ward.**
- Smaller neighbouring villages, e.g. Twineham and Albourne, have their own parish councils that have governed successfully over many decades.
- With its own parish council Sayers Common electoral ward parishioners will have the benefit of the intellects and energy of seven councillors to safeguard and enhance their interests, as opposed to the two of 15 under the current structure.
- **By the time that the Review Order is made the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council will have had more than three years in which to formulate a contingency business continuity strategy to ensure the maintenance/improvement of its services to Hurstpierpoint parishioners.**

Background

When the village was grouped with Hurstpierpoint for local governance it was little more than a hamlet populated by brick works and agricultural workers. It had the church and an inn that are still present, two shops and a village school.

It has not been possible to determine why the village was grouped with Hurstpierpoint. Why not with similar neighbouring villages, Twineham and/or Albourne, both were granted their separate parishes, the latter of which separates Sayers Common from Hurstpierpoint, with both of which it had more in common than with the much larger settlement?

The first relevantly significant growth of the village occurred at the end of the last century with the Berrylands Farm development of 96 units. Overall, the past 30 years, when current consents are built out, will see the number of residential units in the village centre more than treble (331%). Regrettably, the only infrastructure improvements, apart from the Community Shop, founded and run by villagers, have been the opening of the LVS specialist school for children on the autism spectrum and an eye hospital. The village school was closed in the mid 1970s.

The Localism Movement

Rumours abound concerning the timing of the earliest rumblings of dissatisfaction with the local governance of Sayers Common by **Hurstpierpoint Parish Council** but it was not until the late 1990s that concrete evidence of that emerges. The Berrylands Farm development brought a large number of young families with fresh vision into the village community and it is believed that they were influential in the emerging demand for greater recognition of the village's identity by the Parish Council. That led to a ward councillor being persuaded to propose, successfully, a change of name to **Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council**.

The localism movement in the context of local governance was recognised in the macro by central government and supported by the passing of the Act of 2007. This set out the provisions by which local communities could petition for independent parish governance.

The succeeding central administration further encouraged the movement by passing amending orders that reduced the qualifying petitioning percentage of the electorate (2014) and speeded up the review process (2015).

Until 2018 the Sayers Common Village Society existed as a medium for the promulgation of village news. However, reacting to a justified groundswell conviction within the community that the parish governance structure was no longer serving its best interests the Society was energised into becoming a unifying voice for villagers. Through surveys it determined the essential and desirable improvements to the village and to village life that the community wished to achieve and was given a mandate to pursue those objectives.

We are told that the Society's early successes further encouraged the belief that parishioners would be better served by independent, community-centred local governance and that there is the capability within the village of managing that. The 2007 Act was brought to the Society's attention.

The Petition Process

- A well-attended meeting of villagers on 19 January 2019 discussed the perceived benefits and threats derived from having its own parish council. It unanimously minus one mandated the Society to provide the information presented to all villagers and thereafter to proceed to petitioning.
- It is believed that all households in the ward were contacted by email, cold calling or leaflet drops.
- The petitioning was conducted in the main by doorstep conversations but there were forms in the Community Shop for LAB registered supporters to sign.
- Support for the petition came not only from the residents of the village centre but also from those of the outlying areas of the ward, for example Twineham Lane (Twineham), Langton Lane (Hurstpierpoint), Cuckfield Road north of the Goddards Green roundabout (Ansty), Bishopstone Lane (Goddards Green/Ansty), Gatehouse Lane (Goddards Green/Burgess Hill), etc.
- The results were reported to a meeting of villagers on 23 June and it voted unanimously minus one for the petition to be submitted to MSDC.
- This was done in July and the Society was notified of validation and acceptance within a month

The Benefits of Degrouping.

There is much in our Village that brings its residents together and an interest in local governance by the community for the community is one of them. The attempts of the two ward parish councillors to have the existing Parish Council address villagers' dissatisfaction has had minimal effect and they struggle to overcome the continuing, general sentiment that Sayers Common will always come off second-best under the current structure. No matter how the fact that the representation on council is proportionally based on population is explained it only serves to exacerbate the despair that the more numerous, complex and more highly leveraged demands of the larger community with a 13 to 2 voting majority will always prevail.

However, when democracy comes to Sayers Common in the shape of the PC meeting held annually in the village there is always a large attendance, larger than ever seen at Hurstpierpoint based meetings other than perhaps the Annual Parish Meeting. Last September villager numbers were such that many were turned away.

With its own parish council of seven local people, ideally drawn from all points of the ward compass, devoting 100% of their local knowledge, governance intellects and energy to benefitting the village and villagers and with all council meetings held in the centre of the village there is no doubt that the latent desire for engagement will rapidly become reality.

As with most communities Sayers Common ward has micro divisions. They range from development additions to the original village, for example, Oakhurst and Berrylands Farm, to the remote outlying ward borders, e.g. Twineham and Goddards Green. Whilst they retain their identities they readily come together to well communicated events such as charity fund raising, village social gatherings, the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, etc.

If successfully encouraged to put up parish councillors to represent them the parishioners resident in these areas will come to see themselves as individual pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that come together to form the picture that is Sayers Common.

It is not surprising that the petitioners, in common with others, regard rule by Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council as rule by big brother and not democracy. Only one visit a year by the Council, the very rare and unannounced visit by a councillor and poor communication, news being distributed solely by the PC website and **Hurst** Life, and none of the dominant social media, adds to the feeling of remoteness from the action.

We do not seek to comment adversely on the existing parish council's delivery of routine services. Where there is a problem, however, is in the time taken to react and respond to new or changed circumstances due to its present structuring and protocols creating unnecessary delivery delays.

Take a hypothetical new project proposal. It will probably start life by being referred to the Community Engagement Committee. As it only meets five times a year in a worst-case scenario the wait could be three months. The CEC would submit a draft proposition to Council. If Council requires amendments it will refer the matter back to committee (despite the fact that there would probably be a CEC quorum present). A delay this time of two months. Then back to Council, then from Council to Finance and Governance Committee which in due course responds to Council, copying CEC. Council resolves to proceed and refers to CEC to implement. But we are now back to a three month wait.

A contributor to this submission compares this to his experience of 21 years past experience as an Albourne parish councillor. Council members had (and probably still have) designated areas of responsibility, e.g. Policy and Strategy, Finance, Planning, etc. and met in council monthly, no multiple committee meetings. It was extremely unlikely for a decision on a new project to take more than two months.

If it mirrored the Albourne model, Sayers Common Parish would be able to deliver with the speed and manoeuvrability of a port tug boat compared with that of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council's super tanker.

Identity.

Sayers Common has all the hallmarks of a village. It is separated from Hurstpierpoint by open countryside, the A23 trunk road and, by road, by Albourne Parish. It relies on its larger near neighbour for many facilities but no more so than other nearby settlements.

Contributing to the LGBCE District Review both the district Liberal Democratic and Conservative parties recognised our village's identity and maturity, recommending that it be degrouped from Hurstpierpoint and regrouped with like categorised settlements. That transpired to be supported by the Commission with the creation of a new "Downland Villages" ward citing the justifications referred in the "Key Facts" above

To address the matter of personal identification we have turned to psychologists for guidance. We are told that it is a very natural instinct for humans to seek to belong, to be identified as belonging and to be respected for belonging. That apparently applies not only to such major groupings as race and religion but also moving down the scale to the likes of football club support, etc.

In Sayers Common how villagers see themselves within the community can perhaps be associated with the communications media that they support. The Village Society is supported by a cross-section of the community who look to it to act to pursue their ambitions for the village and for the exchange of more radical news. The Village Group Facebook page members are mainly the younger generations using it as the means of communicating day-to-day personal news. The most recent group to seek to identify itself is the

incoming owners of homes in Sayers Meadow, the large development in course of construction in the centre of the village, with the Sayers Meadow Community Facebook page.

We contemplate a Sayers Common Parish Council would not only support these groups but also offer a holistic grouping with which the community could meet its need for its identity acceptance as such that it does not see the current governancing arrangement ever offering.

Counter Balance

It is our village's most sincere hope and expectation that the petitioned degrouping would not impact adversely on the parishioners of Hurstpierpoint ward. We would seek a **win-win** outcome. We have considered whether the benefits to Sayers Common parishioners derived from degrouping must inevitably be counter-balanced by an adverse impact on those of Hurstpierpoint. We found no reason to believe that this would be the case.

We have considered the consequences of the petition being granted on Hurstpierpoint in terms of parishioners' **perceptions** and the **reality** of the changed circumstances.

The logical approach to the determination of perception would be to begin by undertaking a survey of villagers' views but this methodology has not been available to us for fear that it might compromise a key element of District's consultation process. However, we are told by psychologists that the human response to imposed change, as opposed to elected change, scales from concern to fear with resistance increasing as the curve rises. An instinctive, negative response to the consultation process should not, therefore, come as a surprise.

As to the reality of the consequences it is difficult to contemplate any direct adverse impact. Indirect impact is another matter and is dependent on the ability of the new unitary council to manage change. By the time that the District's Order is published the **Council will have had three years in which to formulate a contingency business continuity strategy to ensure the seamless maintenance of the quality of its services going forward.**

The compensation for the reduced precept would be a corresponding reduction in concurrent functions expenditure unless there has been cross ward subsidising. Furthermore, there could/should be a benefit derived from the fact that the new unitary Council would be able to concentrate the totality of its financial and human resources on providing the services required by its single ward parishioners.

Reaction to Rejection.

There is an air of optimism in the community generated by the response to the petition, the amount by which the number of signatories, 348, exceeded the required minimum of 187, and fuelled by the outcome of the LGBCE District Review. Underlying that, however, is the sensing of the responsibility that the village will be assuming if granted the right to independent self-governance and the confidence in its maturity to deliver the community centred service that villagers feel is long overdue.

During the pre-petitioning research process the community has learned much about the respective treatment of the two grouped villages justifying its dissatisfaction with the investment of both financial and human resources in our village. Not surprisingly the situation has improved marginally since the petition was lodged. However, the Council's ethos has not changed. A member, in Council, recently commented "Sayers Common is somewhere that you drive through, not to." She was not challenged.

If the petition is rejected the disappointment will be palpable. Not surprisingly searching questions will be asked but there will be no raising of barricades other than, perhaps, metaphorically.

Conclusion

We hope that we have faithfully discharged our responsibility to our community by demonstrating the strength of its petition and its maturity into a community deserving and capable of ploughing its own local governance furrow as successfully as nearby similar settlements, e.g. Twineham, Albourne, Poynings and Fulking, have done successfully over so many decades.

Michael Bailey,
Chairman,
Sayers Common Village Society.

4 April 2022