
Cabinet Report: Delivering the West Sussex Plan 2017-22

This report sets out the key strategic decisions, policy and programme initiatives, consultations, government announcements and key events within each Cabinet portfolio area to deliver our strategic priorities.



Best Start in Life

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Jackie Russell

- The **Exceptional People in Care awards** [event](#) to recognise the achievements and successes of young people in care and care leavers has taken place with a virtual ceremony this year. The event was organised by the [Children in Care Council](#), a group of young people aged 10 to 16 who are looked after by the County Council. There were over 300 nominees and the award categories ranged from the Big Heart Award to the Best Supporting Adult of the Year.

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – Nigel Jupp

- A [guidance document](#) (PDF, 470KB) has been produced and shared with schools to support school governors who may be considering exploring the option of collaborating with another school. The **Guidance for governing boards - partnership working and forming a federation** outlines the range of different models and the necessary steps required to set these up. The guide aims to help governors in assessing whether they could benefit from sharing resources, which may include staff, and working collaboratively with another school to assist in driving improved opportunities for their pupils.



A Prosperous Place

Leader – Paul Marshall

- The Leader and Cabinet continue to raise concerns with MPs and the Government regarding the **financial pressures that the County Council is facing** due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact that this is likely to have on the Council's ability to contribute to the economic and social recovery of West Sussex as well as to the climate change agenda. In October, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance wrote to the Secretary of State setting out the financial challenges faced and the impact this is having on setting the budget for 2021, and Cabinet highlighted at a recent meeting with MPs, the pressure and possible impact on services to residents. The Council is working with organisations such as SE7 and the County Councils Network to promote a collective voice for West Sussex on this challenging issue.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure – Roger Elkins

- The Government recently [announced](#) the results of tranche 2 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund to create **safe space for cycling and walking** and West Sussex received £2.35m against an indicative allocation of £3.1m. Priorities for this funding will be determined by the Cabinet Member with support from the Walking and Cycling Executive Task and Finish Group.
- Plans to **grit the highways network** this year are the same as last year; 1,690km of key highway routes will be gritted. More efficient route planning (21 routes have been reduced to 19) has reduced the cost of the service by approximately £80,000. There is a stockpile of 8,200 tonnes of rock salt and 800 community salt bins are stocked and available. Operations for 20/21 are set out in the [Winter Service Plan](#).

Cabinet Member for Economy and Corporate Resources – Bob Lanzer

- A [#ShopSussex](#) initiative has been launched by Experience West Sussex, with support from the County Council, to help local tourism. The initiative offers a wealth of online gift ideas and the chance to buy vouchers for unusual local experiences to be enjoyed when COVID-19 National Restrictions allow. [Experience West Sussex](#) is responding to calls from businesses for meaningful, practical support and #ShopSussex is free for businesses to use this year.
- The County Council continues to make **more services accessible for those who wish to interact with the County Council digitally** and has seen a further increase in communications uptake via digital channels during the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparing figures in October this year with the same month last year, online applications for Blue Badges had increased to 76% of all applications compared to 47%. There had been a decrease in highways enquiries during the COVID-19 period due to travel restrictions. However, 43% of highways enquiries were logged online compared with 33% in October 2019, 80% of potholes were reported online compared with 63% and 97% of highways claims were received and processed digitally since [eform](#) was introduced in October 2019.



A Strong, Safe and Sustainable Place

Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities – Duncan Crow

- [West Sussex County Council's Community Hub](#) remains in operation providing support, as a result of the pandemic, seven days a week from 8 am to 8 pm. West Sussex residents will continue to be supported on matters including immediate need for food/essential supplies, signposting to a variety of organisations for longer-term support, discharge from hospital, individuals advised to isolate and those that have been adversely affected financially by COVID-19.

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- [West Sussex Community Fire Safety Officers and Safe and Well Officers](#) are working with the Community Hub and colleagues in the Library Service to deliver same-day **emergency food parcels** countywide to provide speedy support to vulnerable residents in need.
 - The Cabinet Member has attended the [West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service's Annual Awards event](#), held online this year due to COVID-19. The ceremony celebrated those staff who achieved their 40 years' service and 20 years' service medals and certificates. Twelve commendation awards were also presented including Team of the Year, Shining Star Award and Lifetime Achievement Award. For the first time the fire service presented two new awards for exceptional service during COVID-19.

Cabinet Member for Environment – Deborah Urquhart

- In partnership with the County Council, Arun District Council recently [decided to implement](#) a **food waste trial** from spring 2021, with the aim of increasing recycling and reducing waste. Around 1,150 properties will have a weekly collection of food waste and an opt-in absorbent hygiene products collection. Households in the trial will receive a food waste caddy for their kitchen, a lockable, outside food waste bin and a 240-litre wheeled bin (if they do not already have one) for black bag waste.
- The Leader and the Cabinet Member for Environment recently visited two woodlands near Hassocks for an overview of the Woodland Trust's [Lost Woods of the Low Weald and Downs](#) project. The aim is to restore and reconnect ancient woodland sites, working with local landowners and engaging the wider community, and £340,000 funding has been received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Most of the project area is in West Sussex and covers about 150 square miles extending from Pulborough to the edge of Lewes.



Independence for Later Life

Cabinet Member for Adults and Health – Amanda Jupp

- **A Creating Healthy and Sustainable Places Framework** for the West Sussex is being developed by the County Council, prioritising local health and sustainability needs to deliver the best planning outcomes for West Sussex residents. [A public consultation](#) started on 16 November and will run for eight weeks until 11 January. Results will be reviewed at the [West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board](#) meeting on 28 January.
- The County Council has been working alongside health colleagues to successfully navigate [hospital discharge](#) pathways under the pressure of COVID-19. There have been over 5,000 patient referrals since March 2020 with the average wait for discharge from hospital decreasing from 15 days pre-pandemic to four to five days. Patients are discharged as soon as they can be, whilst being provided with the correct support to recover, re-enable and prevent further admission back into an acute setting.



A Council that works for the Community

Cabinet Member for Finance - Jeremy Hunt

- Following a delay due to COVID-19 constraints, [a scheme to support homeless families needing temporary accommodation](#) to whom the Council owes a duty to facilitate accommodation, is now progressing. The scheme will see a small stock of surplus residential properties, owned by the County Council, leased to the YMCA. The YMCA will bring the properties up to a lettable standard, with assistance from grants through Homes England, and manage them as part of their wider accommodation portfolio, collecting rents and carrying out repairs and maintenance as required. The housing association will also support the tenants in managing their tenancy and on their next steps to finding permanent housing, thus facilitating their independence. This will also facilitate a turnover of the properties, thereby assisting other households needing temporary accommodation. This scheme not only has the benefit of providing good quality temporary accommodation in the county but will also reduce the cost of alternative provision.

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Background papers

None