
Supplementary 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 – Jacquie Russell

- The [report detailing the Ofsted Inspectors findings](#) (PDF, 226KB) following the recent focused visit to assess the response of Children’s Services to COVID-19 has been published. The report highlights positive progress on how social workers support families and the higher than national average school attendance. Ofsted also recognised that the planned improvement work has continued throughout the pandemic, and did not identify any new priority actions, something the regulator does when there are urgent problems to be addressed. The report acknowledged that the County Council understood the areas needing rapid improvement and was already addressing them as a priority.



Independence for Later Life

Cabinet Member for Adults and Health – Amanda Jupp

- The [West Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategy 2017-20](#) which launched in March 2018, is being revised by the West Sussex Suicide Prevention Steering Group. The Sussex Health and Care Partnership Suicide Prevention Programme has implemented a ‘Warning Signs’ Pan-Sussex social media campaign focused on supporting middle-aged men in crisis which has had 80,500 unique views since launching in May 2020. The programme has commissioned Cruse to provide bereavement support and the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide debt support for Crawley BAME communities. To support the wider West Sussex Workforce, small and medium enterprises across the county will be offered free ‘suicide prevention train the trainer’ packages funded from the NHS England/Improvement transformation fund, to start early next year.



A Council that works for the Community

Cabinet Member for Finance - Jeremy Hunt

- The West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) was Highly Commended at the [Local Government Pension Scheme of the Year awards \(those with assets over £2.5bn\)](#) on 2 December. The nomination for the award was based on strong investment performance, a high funding level and effective governance. The West Sussex LGPS has a clear strategy and has been successful in choosing managers with an ability to generate strong investment returns. As a result of this proactive approach, the Scheme's investment performance improved the funding position significantly and the Committee was able to report a closing funding position at 31 March 2019 of 112% - placing the West Sussex LGPS in the top tier of Local Authority Pension Schemes in England and Wales. The Fund remains over 100% funded.
- The Medium-Term Financial Strategy report presented to the [Cabinet](#) on 24 November set out **a budget gap of around £110m over the next four years, prior to considering savings options. The predicted gap for 2021/22 was £43.6m, reducing to £23.4m after savings.** The one-year [Government Comprehensive Spending Review](#) announced on 25 November outlined the Government's funding proposals for public services. Key announcements relevant to local authorities included the option to levy a 3% Adult Social Care precept, an additional grant for social care, 75% compensation for irrecoverable losses of income from council tax and business rates and a pause in pay rises for council employees earning over £24,000. The provisional Finance Settlement, expected to be announced next week, will provide some of the detail behind those announcements. Work continues to update the Council's budget assumptions including on precepts, pay increases, inflation and demand projections. Following this an updated budget position will be presented to the Member Day in January and to Cabinet on 22 January. The financial position for future years beyond 2021/22 remains uncertain and challenging.

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Background papers

None