

West Sussex County Council – Ordinary Meeting

22 October 2021

At the Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held at 10.30 am on Friday, 22 October 2021, at County Hall, Chichester PO19 1RQ, the members present being:

Cllr Bradbury (Chairman)

Cllr Albury	Cllr A Jupp
Cllr Ali	Cllr N Jupp
Cllr Atkins, RD	Cllr Kenyon
Cllr Baldwin	Cllr Lanzer
Cllr Baxter	Cllr Lord
Cllr Bence	Cllr Markwell
Cllr Bennett	Cllr Marshall
Cllr Boram	Cllr McDonald
Cllr Britton	Cllr McGregor
Cllr Burgess	Cllr Milne
Cllr Burrett	Cllr Mitchell
Cllr Charles	Cllr Montyn
Cllr Cherry	Cllr Nagel
Cllr Chowdhury	Cllr Oakley
Cllr Condie	Cllr O'Kelly
Cllr A Cooper	Cllr Oppler
Cllr Cornell	Cllr Oxlade
Cllr Crow	Cllr Patel
Cllr J Dennis	Cllr Pudaloff
Cllr Duncton	Cllr Quinn
Cllr Dunn	Cllr Richardson
Cllr Elkins	Cllr Russell
Cllr Evans	Cllr Sharp
Cllr Forbes	Cllr Smith
Cllr Gibson	Cllr Sparkes
Cllr Greenway	Cllr Urquhart
Cllr Hall	Cllr Waight
Cllr Hillier	Cllr Wall
Cllr Hunt	Cllr WalshKStJ, RD
Cllr Johnson	Cllr Wickremaratchi
Cllr Joy	

27 Death of Sir David Amess

27.1 The Chairman led a minute's silence in memory of Sir David Amess, MP who had been killed in a terror attack.

28 Format of meeting

28.1 The Chairman reminded the Council that members participating remotely would not be able to take part in any items for decision as

the law requires members to be physically present in the chamber in order to participate and vote.

29 Deaths of former members

29.1 The Chairman reported the deaths of four former members of the Council: Mrs Sally Greenwell, who had represented the Petworth division from 1985 to 1993 and from 1997 to 2005, Mr Mike Hall, who had represented the Chichester East and later Chichester North division, serving on the Council from 1998 to 2013, Mr Peter Jones, who had represented Selsey from 1997 to 2013 and Cllr David Simmons, who had represented the Sompting & North Lancing division from 2009 to 2013 and then Southwick division from 2017 to 2021.

29.2 Members held a minute's silence.

30 Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Attendance

30.1 The following members attended the meeting virtually and therefore did not take part in or vote on items requiring a decision.

Cllr Bennett, Cllr Britton (afternoon session from 2.25 pm) Cllr Evans, Cllr Hall, Cllr Hillier, Cllr Joy (morning session), Cllr Kenyon and Cllr Nagel.

Apologies

30.2 Apologies were received from Cllr B Cooper, Cllr N Dennis, Cllr Linehan, Cllr Mercer, Cllr Payne, Cllr Pendleton and Cllr Turley.

30.3 Apologies for the afternoon session were received from Cllr Joy.

31 Members' Interests

31.1 Members declared interests as set out at Appendix 1.

32 Minutes

3.21 It was agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held on 16 July 2021 (pages 7 to 30) be approved as a correct record.

33 Appointments

33.1 The Council approved appointments as set out below which took effect from the end of the meeting.

Committee	Change
Communities, Highways and	Cllr Ali and Cllr Patel to

Committee	Change
Environment Scrutiny Committee	replace Cllr Markwell and to fill vacancy respectively
Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Linehan to fill vacancy
Foster Panel (additional member at the request of the Fostering Service)	Cllr Hall

34 Governance Committee: Use of hybrid technology for meetings

34.1 The Council considered a proposal for the use of hybrid technology for meetings in some circumstances, in the light of a report by the Governance Committee (pages 31 to 34).

34.2 Resolved –

That the proposed changes to Standing Orders, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

35 Address by a Cabinet Member

35.1 Members received an address by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on the recent Ofsted monitoring visit. The Cabinet Member answered questions from members on the matter.

36 Governance Committee: Terms of Reference of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Member Development Group

36.1 The Council considered changes to the terms of reference of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Member Development Group in the light of a report from the Governance Committee (pages 35 to 42).

36.2 In response to a suggestion from Cllr Pudaloff that it would be helpful to have someone with lived experience of disabilities on the group to feed into the process, the Chairman said that Cllr Wickremaratchi, Chairman of the Member Development Group, would contact her for a discussion.

36.3 Resolved –

(1) That the revised terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and

(2) That the proposed amendment to the terms of reference of the Member Development Group, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

37 Question Time

37.1 Members asked questions of members of the Cabinet on matters relevant to their portfolios and asked questions of chairmen, as set out at Appendix 3. This included questions on those matters contained within the Cabinet report (pages 43 to 48) and a supplementary report (supplement page 1) and written questions and answers pursuant to Standing Order 2.38 (set out at Appendix 2).

38 Motion on Gatwick Airport Runway Capacity (for debate)

38.1 The following motion was moved by Cllr Wall and seconded by Cllr Dunton.

'West Sussex County Council is a statutory consultee in the Development Consent Order process with regard to the proposal by Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) to bring the Northern/Emergency runway into routine use (for departures only). This Council notes the proposed economic benefits and likely adverse social and environmental impacts of GAL's Northern Runway Project.

This Council resolves to ask the Cabinet to seek evidence and assurance from GAL that it will mitigate the following key impacts as part of the proposed development:

- (1) Any increase in aircraft noise levels/noise distribution pattern.
- (2) Any adverse traffic and surface access impacts (forecasting, transport assessment methodology, modal shift).
- (3) Any additional social and environmental impacts, including on health and well-being, air quality and carbon reduction targets.
- (4) Any increase in the need for new homes (supply/demand from anticipated additional workforce) and supporting infrastructure, including County Council services.

In addition, whilst not part of the formal consultation, the safeguarded land allocation to the south of the existing runway for an additional runway should be reviewed and recommendations as to its future use should be made by the Cabinet to Her Majesty's Government.'

38.2 An amendment was proposed by Cllr Lord and seconded by Cllr Condie as set out below.

'West Sussex County Council is a statutory consultee in the Development Consent Order process with regard to the proposal by Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) to bring the Northern/Emergency runway into routine use (for departures only). This Council notes the

proposed economic benefits and likely adverse social and environmental impacts of GAL's Northern Runway Project.

This Council resolves to ask the Cabinet to seek **and be satisfied by** evidence and assurance from GAL that it will mitigate the following key impacts as part of the proposed development **before any final position on the proposal can be taken by the Council:**

- (1) Any increase in aircraft noise levels/noise distribution pattern.
- (2) Any adverse traffic and surface access impacts (forecasting, transport assessment methodology, modal shift).
- (3) Any additional social and environmental impacts, including on health and well-being, air quality and carbon reduction targets.
- (4) Any increase in the need for new homes (supply/demand from anticipated additional workforce) and supporting infrastructure, including County Council services.

In addition, whilst not part of the formal consultation, the safeguarded land allocation to the south of the existing runway for an additional runway should be reviewed and recommendations as to its future use **in line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy** should be made by the Cabinet to Her Majesty's Government.'

38.3 The amendment was lost.

38.4 The motion was carried.

39 Motion on Land Use (for debate)

39.1 At the County Council meeting on 16 July 2021 the following motion had been moved by Cllr Milne, seconded by Cllr Mercer, and referred to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property for consideration. A report by the Cabinet Member was included with the agenda (pages 40 and 50).

'This Council calls upon the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property to put in place a clear process, such that any currently-owned Council land will always be first considered for possible social, community or environmental use, particularly where this complements the Council's ambitions relating to climate change, prior to deeming it surplus to requirements, which could see it allocated for development within West Sussex County Council's Joint Venture development company.'

39.2 An amendment was moved by Cllr Duncton and seconded by Cllr Elkins as set out below.

'This Council **confirms that** ~~calls upon~~ the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property **has** ~~to~~ put in place a clear process, such that any currently-owned Council land **is** ~~will~~ always be first considered for possible social, community or environmental use, particularly where this **could** complements the Council's ambitions relating to climate change, prior to deeming it surplus to requirements, **one of** which **options** could **be** ~~see it allocated~~ for development ~~within West Sussex~~ **by the** County Council's Joint Venture development company.'

39.3 The amendment was carried.

39.4 The motion, as amended and set out below, was carried.

'This Council confirms that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property has put in place a clear process, such that any currently-owned Council land is always first considered for possible social, community or environmental use, particularly where this could complements the Council's ambitions relating to climate change, prior to deeming it surplus to requirements, one of which options could be for development by the County Council's Joint Venture development company.'

40 Motion on Male Violence (not for debate)

40.1 The following motion was moved by Cllr Lord and seconded by Cllr Cherry:

'Recent news reports have highlighted the impact of male violence in the UK, including in West Sussex. This Council believes that:

- (a) Victims of male violence are never to blame.
- (b) Significantly reducing male violence will make women and men safer and lessen the suspicion that groups of young men and single men in particular face.
- (c) Alongside enhancing services for victims, agencies should focus their efforts on preventing male violence rather than asking innocent people to modify their behaviour.
- (d) The causes of male violence are complex and often start in early life.
- (e) Solutions cannot be created by agencies and voluntary organisations working in isolation.

This Council therefore calls on the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue to convene a cross-agency group (including but not limited to the police, health services, county, district and borough councils, and voluntary organisations) with the remit to:

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- (1) Understand the extent and nature of male violence in West Sussex;
 - (2) Assess the effectiveness of the programmes currently in place;
 - (3) Identify gaps in provision with reference to national and international best practice; and

Report back to this Council within six months with details of a comprehensive and ambitious plan to ultimately end male violence in West Sussex, including details of the resources and timelines required.'

40.2 The motion was referred to the Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue for consideration.

41 Motion on Adult Social Care Charges (not for debate)

41.1 The following motion was moved by Cllr Milne and seconded by Cllr Walsh:

'Recent increases in Adult Social Care charges are causing severe distress to vulnerable individuals and their families, who are being asked to fund charge increases of as much as 400% overnight.

While we recognise the enormous stress on the County Council's budget caused by a decade of government cuts to local authority funding, this is clearly too much of an increase, too fast.

This Council therefore resolves to ask the Cabinet Member for Adults Services to:

- (1) Reconsider the issue of Adult Social Care charges in West Sussex;
- (2) Look at alternative methods of funding and examine ways to reduce the impact on the public; and

Agree a cap on annual charge increases, such that no individual's bill can rise by more than a fixed maximum percentage in a single year (unless there has been a material change in their service provision).'

41.2 The motion was referred to the Cabinet Member for Adults Services for consideration.

The Council rose at 3.53 pm

Interests

Members declared interests as set out below. All the interests listed below were personal but not pecuniary or prejudicial unless indicated.

Item	Member	Nature of Interest
6 – Cabinet Member Address	Cllr Oppler	Foster carer
8 – Question Time, Written Question Number 9	Cllr Atkins	Governor of Durrington Infant and Junior Federated Schools
8 – Question Time	Cllr Boram	Executive Member for Health and Well-being at Adur District Council
8 – Question Time	Cllr Sharp	Member of Chichester City Council
8 – Question Time (economic recovery in Worthing)	Cllr Sparkes	Member of Worthing Borough Council
8 – Question Time (economic recovery in Worthing)	Cllr Waight	Member of Worthing Borough Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Ali	Member of Crawley Borough Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Burrett	Member of Crawley Borough Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Burgess	Member of Crawley Borough Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Gibson	Member of Mid Sussex District Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Hillier	Cabinet Member for Economic Growth at Mid Sussex District Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Lanzer	Member of Crawley Borough Council
9(a) – Motion on Gatwick Airport	Cllr Mitchell	Member of Horsham District Council

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Written Questions: 22 October 2021**1. Written question from Cllr Beccy Cooper for reply by Cabinet Member for Adults Services****Question**

- (a) How many complaints are currently being processed with regards to the increase in Care Charges?
- (b) What is the maximum waiting time currently for these complaints to be processed?
- (c) Of the complaints that have been processed, how many have resulted in a reduction in the increased charges?

Answer

- (a) There are 74 complaints that are currently in process that are related to the increase in care charges with 41 of these having the increase as the main issue. However currently approximately 10 of the complaints are duplicated (a customer has complained both directly to the council and also via a councillor or an MP).
- (b) The maximum waiting time currently is just over three months, but the oldest cases are complex cases that require specialist knowledge to ensure that the response is informative and complete. Further engagement has been required with the customer or their financial representative and a full review is completed on previous calculations which can take some time. These cases also have multiple questions that cut across a number of services and require a co-ordinated approach. Complaints that require further information from the customer are common and are shared with the specialist assessors to follow up more quickly and these are now being answered in less than six weeks and additional resource and support that has been secured with reduce this time very shortly. It is the case that some of the complaints that are about a specific issue are dealt with within the published timeframes. Often an officer will call the customer first to explain the position so that the customer is informed but the formal response follows at a later date.
- (c) The work in responding to the complaints is focussed on ensuring that the financial assessment for each customer is correct and addressing any issues in that context. Outcomes on contributions are not specifically recorded separately as in many of the current cases the financial assessment is correct, and the response is primarily explaining the calculation and any other related facts that have led to the increase.

2. Written question from Cllr Pudaloff for reply by Cabinet Member for Adults Services**Question**

The Forward Plan contains details of a proposed decision to extend the Direct Payment Service Contract before the current contract expires in February 2022.

- (a) Can the Cabinet Member please inform me as to whether there are any changes planned to the terms and conditions affecting service users?
- (b) What will be the relationship between those delivering the Direct Payments Service Contract and those conducting financial assessments to ensure a service user's whole circumstances will be taken into account, and enable service users to fully understand the relationship between the support they receive and the contributions they make?

Answer

- (a) Under the provisions of the current contract Adult Social Care is requesting the extension of the contract, in this case there are no changes to the terms and conditions of the contract.
- (b) A direct payment is a method of providing a customer money to enable them to organise and pay for their own care. The amount of the payment is based on their care and support plan which identifies how they propose to provide their care.

The customer can choose to use what is called a pre-paid card, where the Council provide the amount of funds and effectively place funds into an account which can be accessed using the card. The card is provided by the firm who has been awarded the direct payment services contract. Customers are financially assessed to identify if they contribute to their care, based on their individual circumstances. When customers opt to receive funding through a direct payment then a contract is signed by the customer where they agree that any contribution to care will be made by them and placed into the direct payment account and this will then be added to the Council funding and be accessed by the pre-paid card. The total of the funding paid by the Council and the individual customer is the total funding for their care. Customers are informed of both the money provided by the Council and their contribution, from this the customer is informed of both elements.

3. Written question from Cllr Sharp for reply by Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

Question

On 5 October, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change wrote to the Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP, President of COP26, to highlight that the Council is striving to achieve net zero and to push for the creation of a national and local taskforce to tackle climate change with easier funding arrangements and nationally set targets. This was published in the Bulletin on 13 October 2021. The letter was along similar lines to a motion that, by coincidence, I had been working on so I am very pleased that we are working collaboratively with the LGA, ADEPT and National Audit Office.

- (a) Will the Cabinet Member agree to publish the response from the Government when it is received, or at least share it with all members of the Council?
- (b) The letter calls on the Government to provide long-term sustainable funding for local authorities to help them to work towards net Zero. What amount does the Cabinet Member believe would be adequate from the Government? Does the

Cabinet Member agree that funding for net zero should form part of the local government spending review?

- (c) What are the Cabinet's big ideas to bring real change in tackling climate change, if this funding is provided?

Answer

- (a) Yes
- (b)
- (i) This cannot be quantified at this time but see (c) below
- (ii) Yes
- (c) The Council's Climate Change Strategy was approved in July 2020 since then substantial new resources have been applied to initiatives aiming to decarbonise the council estate, generate more renewable energy and raise awareness of the climate change challenge amongst council staff. Having completed a full year of delivery, appointed new team members and with the expectation of new enabling legislation shortly, the first major review of the Climate Change Strategy is in underway. It seeks to learn from the initial mobilisation and aims to identify options for how the council could transform its impact against the Climate Change Strategy.

The review will clarify the gaps in data, resources and technology as well as addressing the cultural changes we will need to implement across the whole council in order to make inroads into the 2030 net zero target and achieve the wider range of environmental targets set out in the council's business plan and economic reset plan. The revised strategy will be taken through internal governance processes early in 2022 and member input into the process will be welcome. The key areas will continue to include decarbonisation of the estate, travel and procurement whilst also examining the options to deliver against emerging duties in relation to biodiversity net gain and natural capital (all driven by national legislation in particular the Environment Bill). The council has made a good start on its journey towards responding to the climate change emergency and is taking responsible steps to optimise outcomes while ensuring it continues to successfully deliver for its residents and wider community.

4. Written question from Cllr Beccy Cooper for reply by Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

Question

Please provide an update on assessing County assets that are surplus to the County portfolio.

- (a) How many assets do you anticipate will be sold in 21/22 and 22/23 and what will that raise for the County?
- (b) How will those additional funds be utilised?

Answer

- (a) So far in 2021/22 the County Council has sold seven assets and achieved a capital receipt of £2,910,000. It is anticipated a further six assets may be sold this year bringing in additional receipts. The target capital receipt for 2021/22 is £5,300,000 and it is expected this will be achieved.

A further 10 assets have been identified for disposal next year but the final value of which will be determined by a number of factors including the outcome of planning applications, developer progress and interest in the market.

The above figures do not include those sites optioned to the Joint Venture. The actual disposal of these sites will be dependent upon the programme for development and viability testing.

- (b) Capital receipts are used either to fund the capital programme or to support service transformation projects as enabled by the Secretary of State's Direction and outlined in the Government's Statutory Guidance on the flexible use of capital receipts.

5. Written question from Cllr Baxter for reply by Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Question

The Conservative manifesto of 2019 promised £2bn of funding for the 'biggest ever pothole-filling programme' the country has ever seen. The Government has just announced that local councils will receive £1.2m of further cuts to local road maintenance budgets for 2022/23. What assurances can the Cabinet Member provide to drivers, cyclists and those who use mobility vehicles regarding the state of the roads?

Answer

The cuts recently announced in the media refer to this financial year 2021/22 and are being highlighted by the Local Government Association ahead of the government's spending review announcement on 27 October 2021.

The decision to reduce road maintenance funding from the previous year was made during the Covid-19 pandemic at the governments one year spending review in October 2020. The reduction in funding followed the highest levels of funding received by local authorities in 2020/21.

Local road maintenance remains a priority for the County Council and in recognition of this importance the County Council provided an additional £12m at the February 2020 Full Council budget meeting. This money is being invested into our road network over the next three years and will complement the governments grant funding to ensure our roads remain safe.

6. Written question from **Cllr Sharp** for reply by **Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

Question

In the government policy document, '[Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain](#)', the Secretary of State for Transport says that Local Transport Plans will "need to set out how local areas will deliver ambitious quantifiable carbon reductions in transport. This will need to be in line with carbon budgets and net zero". He also says, "We will drive decarbonisation and transport improvements at a local level by making quantifiable carbon reductions a fundamental part of local transport planning and funding."

- (a) Our draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) does not provide any quantifiable targets or milestones for carbon reduction. Can these targets be added before the final publication of the document?
- (b) Is the Cabinet Member satisfied that this Plan provides a credible route to achieving the government's targets of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 or the interim reductions of 68% on 1990 levels by 2030 (the UK's Nationally Determined Contribution) and 78% by 2035 (to meet the 6th carbon budget)?

The Government stipulates that changes we make to our roads should '**not be a barrier to the zero-emission transition**' and the Surface Transport section of the Government's [Sixth Carbon Budget report](#) (PDF, 1.2MB) says that car mileage will need to be reduced by 9% by 2035 and by 17% by 2050 in order to reach net zero, even with the transition to electric vehicles.

Our LTP's infrastructure commitments predominantly comprise considerable major road schemes alongside an objective of maintaining 'static' levels of traffic.

- (c) Considering the very likely traffic increases generated by increased road capacity, is the Cabinet Member satisfied that a Plan heavily based on road expansion, without measures for traffic reduction, will not be a barrier to the zero-emission transition?
- (d) And is the Cabinet Member concerned that the continued car focus of the LTP will be a barrier to the shift to shared and active travel that the Plan itself recognises is needed not only to enable West Sussex to reach net zero but also to achieve the air quality, health, and social benefits we sorely need?

Answer

- (a) The Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP) was published just as the Draft West Sussex Transport Plan (WSTP) was being published for consultation, so its contents could not be taken into account. However, the TDP and its request for local transport authorities to set quantifiable carbon targets, will be taken into account when the Plan is revised following the recent consultation and prior to adoption.
- (b) The WSTP, particularly the initiatives within it to increase walking, cycling, rail and shared transport use, will help the Government's targets to be achieved. However, success in achieving the targets will depend on securing the

necessary funding, public acceptance of the initiatives, and changes in travel behaviour, matters that are largely outside the County Council's control.

- (c) The road network improvements included in the Draft WSTP have been identified to address the transport challenges facing the County, primarily those associated with the scale and location of planned residential and other development. The improvements are part of a package that is also intended to increase walking, cycling, rail and shared transport use. The Road Network Strategy in the Draft WSTP states that major improvements and technology upgrades being delivered by the County Council will also need to provide facilities for active travel and shared transport to ensure the improvements also help to facilitate the transition to net zero.
- (d) The Draft WSTP is a plan for all modes of surface transport and seeks to balance environmental, social, and economic objectives through a wide range of initiatives targeting different modes of transport. Therefore, the Plan should not be a barrier to the transition to net zero. The Road Network Strategy states that major road network improvements are not expected in the long term, which reflects the strategic 'shift' in the WSTP to investment in sustainable modes of transport. However, to a large extent, achieving this change will depend on future decisions about the scale and location of planned development, matters that are outside the County Council's control.

7. Written question from Cllr Smith for reply by Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Question

Can the Cabinet Member please tell me to what extent pavements affected by root heave are proactively inspected by the County Council?

Root heave can impact pavements through being damaged or broken, so how can we ensure the safety of our residents who have accessibility needs, such as people with disabilities who may use support equipment when walking, or those using a disability scooter or wheelchair on the damaged pavements?

Answer

All parts of the publicly maintainable highway are inspected using the Highway Inspection Manual. One of the considerations for footways is root heave. Some roots may cause an abrupt level difference while others create heave in the footway. The minimum investigatory level for either if these is 20mm.

When root heave is identified it is not always possible to cut the root in order to make the footway level. We do, in certain situations, arrange for one of our arboriculturists to attend site to assess but more often than not by the time a root is large enough to cause an issue it is unable to be cut for fear of killing the tree. The other major problem is that the majority of trees have Tree Preservation Orders on them. This makes it legally impossible to do any work on the tree without proper authority. In most cases, for the reasons previously mentioned, this means we are unable to damage the root system.

Invariably the method for dealing with root heave is to form a ramp over the roots in order to ease passing pedestrians. Unfortunately, in urban settings, this can make the footway appear uneven.

We also undertake large-scale footway repairs as part of our annual delivery programme. Sites included in this programme are prioritised based largely on their condition, and damage to the surface caused by tree roots can be a significant contributor to the condition. The method used in our large-scale works to correct this damage is largely the same as that described above.

8. Written question from Cllr Quinn for reply by Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Question

Can the Cabinet Member confirm if she is confident there is sufficient staffing capacity to deliver the highway service effectively?

Answer

A wholesale review of the structure of the Highways Transport and Planning Directorate was undertaken in 2019. On the basis of that a new structure was implemented in 2020.

The director and his management team regularly review the workload within the directorate and the capacity of the team to deliver that. There are a very small number of posts that are difficult to recruit to as suitable candidates are in short supply nationally. In these instances, we do draw upon the resources available to us from our term consultants.

9. Written question from Cllr Atkins for reply by Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

Question

There has been a recent statistic in the UK that a considerable number of children have recently not returned to school for the autumn term and may have effectively gone missing.

- (a) Can the Cabinet Member please let me know how many children from West Sussex schools may have not returned to their schools and may have effectively gone missing?
- (b) If this is the case in West Sussex, what can be done to alleviate the situation?

Answer

The Education Act 1996 requires all schools to have an attendance register that holds the details of all children on the school roll.

Schools have a duty to monitor the attendance of the children on their roll, identifying those children missing education through non-attendance and take action to address this.

If, through their actions, the school have not been able to make contact with the young person or their family, they are able to make a Missing Pupil Referral to the Pupil Entitlement Investigation team (PEI).

- (a) Since 1 September 2021 – 15 October 2021 the PEI team have received 22 missing pupil referrals. This is compared to the same period in 2020 and 2019 where the number was 30 and 29 respectively.
- (b) The PEI team will carry out enquires to identify the whereabouts of the family. If they are unable to locate the family the child is removed from the roll of the schools and the case is passed to the Children Missing Education Team (CME).

Of the 22 missing pupil referrals received this academic year:

- 6 have been confirmed to have moved abroad
- 2 have been passed to out of county CME teams
- 4 were found and are now back in their original school
- 1 is now in a new school out of county
- 1 is now in a new school within West Sussex
- 1 has been passed to the County Council CME team for further investigation.

The remaining seven cases were received by the PEI team in the last three weeks and are still under initial investigation.

Question Time: 22 October 2021

Members asked questions of members of the Cabinet. In instances where a Cabinet Member or the Leader undertook to take follow-up action, this is noted.

Leader

The Leader answered questions on Afghan nationals arriving in the UK, from Cllr Burgess, Cllr Chowdhury and Cllr O’Kelly.

Cabinet Member for Adults Services

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Shortfall in intermediate care beds and closure of Marjorie Cobby House, from Cllr Johnson and Cllr O’Kelly.

Changing futures initiative, from Cllr Albury.

Social care levy, from Cllr Wall.

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

The Cabinet Member answered questions the following matters:

Early help redesign, from Cllr Baxter.

Impact of the pandemic on children and young people’s mental health, from Cllr Cherry, Cllr Hillier and Cllr O’Kelly.

The refurbishment of the High Trees and Teasel Close children’s homes in Crawley, from Cllr Quinn.

In response to a question about and where the children will be accommodated whilst the work is carried out, the Cabinet Member said she would write to Cllr Quinn.

Foster carers, from Cllr A Cooper.

Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

The Cabinet Member answered a question on the following matters:

Free school meals and school holidays, from Cllr Duncton.

Woodlands Meed School, from Cllr Cherry.

Impact of Covid on schools, from Cllr Lord and Cllr Smith.

In response to a question from Cllr Lord about measures to control Covid-19 within schools, the Cabinet Member said he would send her a copy of a recent circular to headteachers.

In response to a question from Cllr Smith about support in schools for children and staff with long Covid, the Cabinet Member said he would respond to her.

Cabinet Member for Communities, Fire and Rescue

The Cabinet Member answered questions on Afghan nationals arriving in the UK, from Cllr Burgess and Cllr O'Kelly.

Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Sale of Council assets and climate change, from Cllr Lord and Cllr Joy.

EV charging points, from Cllr Ali, Cllr Burgess, Cllr Cornell, Cllr O'Kelly and Cllr Sharp.

Solar Together, from Cllr Burgess, Cllr Cherry, Cllr Condie, Cllr Greenway and Cllr Lord.

In relation to applications to Solar Together, Cllr Lord asked for clarification as to whether, if residents pay a deposit to receive further information and then wish to withdraw from the scheme, they would get their deposit back. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change said she would find out and respond to Cllr Lord.

Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

As Chairman of the Pensions Committee on Pension Fund investment policy and climate change, from Cllr Condie and Cllr Oakley.

Sale of Council assets and climate change, from Cllr Lord and Cllr Joy.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Cycle paths, from Cllr Boram and Cllr Markwell.

Congestion at junction of A264 and A22, from Cllr Gibson.

In response to request from Cllr Gibson for there to be discussions with Surrey County Council about viable ways of relieving the traffic congestion on the A264/A22 junction and related local road network, the Cabinet Member said she would include the issue on the agenda for a forthcoming meeting. The Cabinet Member also accepted an invitation from Cllr Gibson to visit the junction with him.

A285 repairs at Duncton, from Cllr Oakley, Cllr Richardson and Cllr Sharp.

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Vaccination boosters and pressure on health services, from Cllr A Cooper, Cllr Cornell and Cllr Walsh.

In response to a request from Cllr Cornell for an update on the current pressure within the NHS across West Sussex due to Covid-19, the Cabinet Member said he would respond to her.

In response to the news that just over 9,000 children aged 12 to 15 years in West Sussex had received a first Covid-19 vaccination, Cllr Walsh asked about the size of that cohort of children and the Cabinet Member said he would let him know.

Access to health services and NHS dentistry, from Cllr Lord and Cllr Pudaloff.

On access to NHS dentistry, in response to a request from Cllr Lord, the Cabinet Member said he would look at the issue of the lack of NHS services available in West Sussex.

In response to a question from Cllr Pudaloff about problems with access to GPs and NHS dentistry and help available from the County Council to find pathways to services, the Cabinet Member said he would respond to her. He also agreed to respond with the measures being taken to assist digital inclusion.

Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development

The Cabinet Member answered a question on economic recovery in Worthing, from Cllr Sparkes.

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