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West Sussex County Council – Ordinary Meeting

15 December 2023

At the Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held at 10.30 am on Friday, 15 December 2023, at County Hall, Chichester PO19 1RQ, the members present being:

Cllr Bradbury (Chairman)

Cllr Wickremaratchi (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Albury

Cllr Ali

Cllr Atkins, RD

Cllr Baldwin

Cllr Baxter

Cllr Boram

Cllr Britton

Cllr Burgess

Cllr Burrett

Cllr Cherry

Cllr Chowdhury

Cllr Condie

Cllr Cooper

Cllr Cornell

Cllr Crow

Cllr Dabell

Cllr J Dennis

Cllr N Dennis

Cllr Duncton

Cllr Elkins

Cllr Gibson

Cllr Greenway

Cllr Hillier

Cllr Hunt

Cllr Johnson

Cllr Joy

Cllr A Jupp

Cllr N Jupp

Cllr Kenyon

Cllr Kerry-Bedell

Cllr Lanzer

Cllr Lord

Cllr Marshall

Cllr McDonald

Cllr McGregor

Cllr Mercer

Cllr Milne

Cllr Montyn

Cllr Nagel

Cllr Oakley

Cllr O'Kelly

Cllr Oppler

Cllr Oxlade

Cllr Payne

Cllr Pendleton

Cllr Pudaloff

Cllr Quinn

Cllr Russell

Cllr Smith

Cllr Sparkes

Cllr Turley

Cllr Urquhart

Cllr Waight

Cllr Wall

Cllr Walsh, KStJ, RD

Cllr Wild

41 Death of Mr Alan Chaplin

41.1 The Chairman reported the death of a former member of the County Council, Mr Alan Chaplin, who had represented Chichester South from 2005 to 2009.

41.2 Members held a minute's silence.

42 Apologies for Absence

- 42.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Bence, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Evans, Cllr Forbes, Cllr Hall, Cllr Linehan, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Mitchell, Cllr Patel, Cllr Richardson and Cllr Sharp.
- 42.2 Cllr Britton, Cllr Burgess and Cllr Joy arrived at 10.40 am.
- 42.3 Cllr Markwell was absent.

43 Members' Interests

- 43.1 Members declared interests as set out at Appendix 1.

44 Minutes

- 44.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held on 13 October 2023 (pages 5 to 24) be approved as a correct record.

45 Appointments

- 45.1 The Council approved appointments as set out below.

| Committee | Change |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee | Cllr N Jupp in place of Cllr Ali |
| Planning and Rights of Way Committee | Cllr N Jupp in place of Cllr Ali |

46 Governance Committee: Minor revisions to the Constitution

- 46.1 The Council considered minor changes to the Constitution in relation to the approval, by the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee, of sections of the Constitution and an update to the procedure for the appointment of the Independent Chairman of the Pension Advisory Board, in the light of a report by the Governance Committee (pages 25 to 30).
- 46.2 Resolved
- (1) That changes to Parts 2 and 3 so that in future amendments to Part 4, Sections 2 to 4 be made by the County Council on the recommendation of the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee, be approved; and
 - (2) That the change to the process for the appointment of the Independent Chairman of the Pension Advisory Board be approved, as out at Appendix 1.

47 Cllr Sarah Sharp

47.1 The Council resolved that, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, Cllr Sharp's current circumstances should be approved as a reason for absence.

48 Report of Urgent Action

48.1 The report of urgent action taken under regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (pages 31 and 32) was noted.

49 Question Time

49.1 Members asked questions of members of the Cabinet on matters relevant to their portfolios, as set out at Appendix 3. This included questions on those matters contained within the Cabinet report (pages 33 to 38) and a supplementary report (supplement page 7) and written questions and answers pursuant to Standing Order 2.38 (set out at Appendix 2).

50 Motion on Funding

50.1 The following motion was moved by Cllr Lord and seconded by Cllr O'Kelly.

'For 2024/25 and beyond, councils are experiencing budget pressures greater than those experienced at any time before. The Local Government Association (LGA) reports that councils have experienced a 27% real terms cut in core funding central government since 2010. Meanwhile, cost and demand pressures will have added 29% to the cost of delivering council services between 2021/22 and 2024/25.

Cost pressures are particularly acute in adult and children's services for all councils including West Sussex County Council. These include but are not limited to the cost of increasingly complex care alongside the increasing difficulty of finding appropriate provision within the care market, more requests for Special Education Needs (SEND) support than can be processed each month, and continually rising costs in home to school transport. Children's services accounts for £22.8m of WSCC's predicted £26.5m overspend this year.

Despite lobbying of government by the County Councils Network and the LGA and of our MPs by this Council, the Government provided no protection for councils from real terms cuts in the Autumn Statement and there was no increased funding in children's and adults' services.

Alongside other county councils, West Sussex County Council is in the invidious position of having to increase council tax by the

maximum available during a cost of living crisis whilst also having to find savings from the services it offers to residents. Even with this there is currently a predicted shortfall of £4.4 m in the council's budget for 2024/25 with a cumulative budget gap out to 2026/27 of £51.1m and of £91.8m out to 2028/29.

Therefore, this Council calls on the Leader to:

- (1) Call upon our MPs to make the cause of adequate funding for West Sussex County Council their top priority in the final year of this government;
- (2) (Call upon the Government to urgently address the acute financial challenges affecting councils in order to protect the local services our communities rely on;
- (3) Back the County Councils Network calls for emergency funding for children's services this year and next;
- (4) Back the LGA's calls for a long term plan for adequate council funding from government; and
- (5) Write to the Secretary of State and our MPs to lobby for an urgent injection of funding before our budget needs to be set in February 2024 and for the local government financial settlement to guarantee adequately increased funding out to at least 2026/27 to allow for certainty in planning.'

50.2 An amendment was proposed by Cllr Wall which was accepted by the proposer.

'For 2024/25 and beyond, councils are experiencing budget pressures greater than those experienced at any time before. The Local Government Association (LGA) reports that councils have experienced a 27% real terms cut in core funding **from** central government since 2010. Meanwhile, cost and demand pressures will have added 29% to the cost of delivering council services between 2021/22 and 2024/25.

Cost pressures are particularly acute in adult and children's services for all councils including West Sussex County Council. These include but are not limited to the cost of increasingly complex care alongside the increasing difficulty of finding appropriate provision within the care market, more requests for Special Educational Needs (SEND) support than can be processed each month, and continually rising costs in home to school transport. **It is currently projected that** Children's services **will** accounts for £22.8m of WSCC's predicted £26.5m overspend **on portfolio budgets** this year.

This Council has consistently lobbied the Government for increased funding for all of the services referenced above, especially recognising the need for a considerable increase in

the funds needed to provide appropriate levels of services for vulnerable people, alongside adequate funding for those services used by all residents, such as Highways and Library services.

Despite ***In view of the challenges being faced and the continued*** lobbying of government by the County Councils Network and the LGA and of our MPs by this Council, ***the Council is disappointed that*** the Government provided ***little or no*** protection for ***council services*** councils from real terms cuts in the Autumn Statement and there was no increased funding in children's and adults' services.

Alongside other county councils, West Sussex County Council ***remains*** is in the ***likely*** invidious position of having to ***propose an*** increase ***in*** council tax by the maximum available during a ***difficult financial time for our residents*** cost of living crisis whilst also having to find savings ***through efficiencies*** from the services it offers to residents. Even with this there is currently a predicted shortfall of £4.4 m in the council's budget for 2024/25 with a cumulative budget gap out to 2026/27 of £51.1m and of £91.8m out to 2028/29.

Therefore, this Council ***strongly supports*** calls on the ***efforts of the*** Leader ***and Cabinet*** to:

- (1) ***Continue to support*** Call upon our MPs to make the cause of adequate funding for West Sussex County Council their top priority in the final year of this ***Parliament*** government;
- (2) ***Continue to call*** upon the Government to urgently address the acute financial challenges affecting councils in order to protect the local services our communities rely on;
- (3) ***Continue to back*** the County Councils Network calls for emergency funding for children's services this year and next;
- (4) ***Continue to back*** the LGA's calls for a long term plan for adequate council funding from government; and Write ***once again*** to the Secretary of State and our MPs to lobby for an urgent injection of funding before our budget needs to be set in February 2024 and for the local government financial settlement to ***set out*** guarantee adequately increased funding out to at least 2026/27 to allow for certainty in planning.'

50.3 The amended motion, as set out below, was carried.

'For 2024/25 and beyond, councils are experiencing budget pressures greater than those experienced at any time before. The Local Government Association (LGA) reports that councils have experienced a 27% real terms cut in core funding from central government since 2010. Meanwhile, cost and demand pressures will

have added 29% to the cost of delivering council services between 2021/22 and 2024/25.

Cost pressures are particularly acute in adult and children's services for all councils including West Sussex County Council. These include but are not limited to the cost of increasingly complex care alongside the increasing difficulty of finding appropriate provision within the care market, more requests for Special Educational Needs (SEND) support than can be processed each month, and continually rising costs in home to school transport. It is currently projected that Children's services will account for £22.8m of WSCC's predicted £26.5m overspend on portfolio budgets this year.

This Council has consistently lobbied the Government for increased funding for all of the services referenced above, especially recognising the need for a considerable increase in the funds needed to provide appropriate levels of services for vulnerable people, alongside adequate funding for those services used by all residents, such as Highways and Library services.

In view of the challenges being faced and the continued lobbying of government by the County Councils Network and the LGA and of our MPs by this Council, the Council is disappointed that the Government provided little or no protection for council services in the Autumn Statement and there was no increased funding in children's and adults' services.

Alongside other county councils, West Sussex County Council remains in the likely position of having to propose an increase in council tax by the maximum available during a difficult financial time for our residents whilst also having to find savings through efficiencies from the services it offers to residents. Even with this there is currently a predicted shortfall of £4.4 m in the council's budget for 2024/25 with a cumulative budget gap to 2026/27 of £51.1m and of £91.8m to 2028/29.

Therefore, this Council strongly supports the efforts of the Leader and Cabinet to:

- (1) Continue to support our MPs to make the cause of adequate funding for West Sussex County Council their top priority in the final year of this Parliament;
- (2) Continue to call upon the Government to urgently address the acute financial challenges affecting councils in order to protect the local services our communities rely on;
- (3) Continue to back the County Councils Network calls for emergency funding for children's services this year and next;
- (4) Continue to back the LGA's calls for a long term plan for adequate council funding from government; and

Write once again to the Secretary of State and our MPs to lobby for an urgent injection of funding before our budget needs to be set in February 2024 and for the local government financial settlement to set out adequately increased funding to at least 2026/27 to allow for certainty in planning.'

51 Motion on Food Security

51.1 The following motion was moved by Cllr Duncton and seconded by Cllr Ali.

'This Council notes the importance of farming, growers, fisheries and agriculture to the West Sussex economy, and recognises that many West Sussex residents rely on these industries for their livelihoods.

The Council is concerned that initiatives to limit the availability of non-plant based foods, supported by other local authorities, would have a serious detrimental effect on the farming and fishing industries in West Sussex, and would impact on the livelihoods of our residents as a result, as well as limiting choice for those residents who eat meals at Council-run establishments.

The Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader and Cabinet to ensure that all commissioned meals served in West Sussex schools, care homes and other establishments where food is provided for users of our services continue to offer the full range of meat, fish, dairy, vegetarian and vegan options, so as to enable the full range of choice and balanced diets to be available to all those residents who use the Council's services.'

51.2 An amendment was proposed by Cllr Lord which was accepted by the proposer.

'This Council notes the importance of farming, growers, fisheries and agriculture to the West Sussex economy, and recognises that many West Sussex residents rely on these industries for their livelihoods.

The Council is concerned that initiatives to limit the availability of non-plant based foods, supported by **some** other local authorities, **could** ~~would~~ have a serious detrimental effect on **some parts of** the farming and fishing industries in West Sussex, and **may** ~~would~~ impact on the livelihoods of **some of** our residents as a result, as well as **potentially** limiting choice for ~~these~~ **some** residents who eat meals at Council-run establishments.

The Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader and Cabinet to ensure that all commissioned meals served in West Sussex schools, care homes and other establishments where food is provided for users of our services continue to offer the full range of meat, fish, dairy, vegetarian and vegan options, **preferably using West**

Sussex produce, so as to enable the full range of choice and balanced diets to be available to all those residents who use the Council's services.'

51.3 The amended motion, as set out below, was carried.

'This Council notes the importance of farming, growers, fisheries and agriculture to the West Sussex economy, and recognises that many West Sussex residents rely on these industries for their livelihoods.

The Council is concerned that initiatives to limit the availability of non-plant based foods, supported by some local authorities, could have a detrimental effect on some parts of the farming and fishing industries in West Sussex, and may impact on the livelihoods of some of our residents as a result, as well as potentially limiting choice for some residents who eat meals at Council-run establishments.

The Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader and Cabinet to ensure that all commissioned meals served in West Sussex schools, care homes and other establishments where food is provided for users of our services continue to offer the full range of meat, fish, dairy, vegetarian and vegan options, preferably using West Sussex produce, so as to enable the full range of choice and balanced diets to be available to all those residents who use the Council's services.'

Chairman

The Council rose at 3.23 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 |
|--|---------------|--|
| Chairman's introduction | Cllr Bradbury | Chairman of Building Heroes Education Foundation |
| 6 – Governance Committee: Minor Revisions to the Constitution (Pension Advisory Board) | Cllr Burrett | Deferred member of the Local Government Pension Scheme |
| 6 – Governance Committee: Minor Revisions to the Constitution (Pension Advisory Board) | Cllr Lanzer | Deferred member of the Local Government Pension Scheme |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Ali | Member of Crawley Borough Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Atkins | Member of Worthing Borough Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Baxter | Member of Worthing Borough Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Condie | Member of Burgess Hill Town Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Cooper | Member of Arun District Council |
| 9 – Question Time, Written Questions | Cllr Cornell | Governor at Manor Green College, Crawley |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Gibson | Member of Mid Sussex District Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Greenway | Member of Arun District Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Mercer | Chair of Orchard Hill College Academy Trust and Member of Horsham District Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Milne | Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure at Horsham District Council |
| 9 – Question Time | Cllr Montyn | Member of Chichester Harbour Conservancy |

| Item | Member | Nature of Interest |
|---|---------------|--|
| 10(a) – Notice of Motion on Funding | Cllr Atkins | Member of Chartered Institute of Fundraising |
| 10(a) – Notice of Motion on Funding | Cllr Turley | Member of Worthing Borough Council |
| 10(b) – Notice of Motion on Food Security | Cllr Ali | Member of Crawley Borough Council |
| 10(b) – Notice of Motion on Food Security | Cllr Atkins | Member of Trussell Trust UK Foodbanks |
| 10(b) – Notice of Motion on Food Security | Cllr Duncton | Family are farmers |
| 10(b) – Notice of Motion on Food Security | Cllr Turley | Member of Worthing Borough Council |

Written Questions: 15 December 2023

1. Written question from **Cllr Cornell** for reply by **Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Education and Skills**

Question

Given the rise in complexity and demand for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) places for children in West Sussex (and nationally) and the current clear struggle to meet demand, can the Cabinet Member tell us:

- (a) How many SEND student places have been created each year in Local Authority Special Schools across West Sussex since 2018?
- (b) How many Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) have been awarded each year since 2018?
- (c) How closely have the former tracked the latter?

Answer

- (a) Special School Places 2018/19 to 2023/24:

| School | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Cornfield | 62 | 62 | 62 | 64 | 64 | 72 | |
| Fordwater | 121 | 130 | 130 | 136 | 136 | 144 | |
| Hérons Dale Primary | 99 | 99 | 125 | 131 | 130 | 130 | |
| Littlegreen | 75 | 75 | 75 | 80 | 80 | 81 | |
| Brantridge | 0 | 0 | 36 | 40 | 44 | 48 | |
| Manor Green College | 208 | 210 | 216 | 210 | 210 | 212 | |
| Manor Green Primary | 185 | 200 | 208 | 210 | 210 | 220 | |
| Oak Grove College | 260 | 256 | 256 | 263 | 264 | 274 | |
| Palatine Primary | 136 | 136 | 151 | 158 | 175 | 175 | |
| QEII | 100 | 105 | 105 | 110 | 120 | 120 | |
| St Anthony's | 206 | 213 | 213 | 222 | 225 | 235 | |
| Woodlands Meed | 268 | 259 | 259 | 259 | 259 | 259 | |
| | 1720 | 1745 | 1836 | 1883 | 1917 | 1970 | |
| Additional Places | | 25 | 91 | 47 | 34 | 53 | Total 250 |

- (b) Data taken from [Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2023 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

Number of New Plans issued in West Sussex 2018 to 2022 (January to December of each year):

| Year | Number |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2018 | 615 |
| 2019 | 764 |
| 2020 | 649 |
| 2021 | 678 |
| 2022 | 695 |

- (c) There have been an additional 250 places created in our special school and an increase in the number of new plans issued each year from 615 in 2018 to 695 in 2022.

We are aware of an increasing demand for special school places over this period of time.

2. Written question from Cllr Smith for reply by Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Education and Skills

Question

Adur families applying for Year 7 places in September 2024 will undoubtedly welcome the announcement of 70 more places being made available at the Sir Robert Woodard Academy. However, as this is due to the current large Year 11 cohort leaving the school rather than West Sussex proactively increasing local provision in the area, could you please advise the following:

- (a) Based on the numbers of pupil places available (PAN) in the 2024 intake cohort, how many children will be offered a place at their first, second or third preferences next September in the two Adur High Schools, Sir Robert Woodard Academy and Shoreham Academy?
- (b) How many children will need to be placed at a school outside of Adur?
- (c) How are places now being actively planned for Year 7 applications for 2025 and beyond to avoid a repeat of 2023 allocations issues?

Answer

- (a) The Admission Number for September 2024 entry to Shoreham Academy is 300 and 310 at Sir Robert Woodard Academy and we expect places to be offered up to those numbers. The information on how many children will be offered a place at their first, second or third preference school will not be available until all the places have been offered and decisions conveyed to parents on 1 March 2024.
- (b) We will not have that information until all the places have been offered and decisions conveyed to parents on 1 March 2024.
- (c) As both Shoreham Academy and Sir Robert Woodard Academy are their own admissions authority it is for them to confirm how many places they will offer. The County Council will continue to discuss the opportunity for both schools to

offer in excess of the Published Admission Numbers of 300 and 240 respectively for Year 7 in 2025 and beyond.

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

Question

Could the Cabinet Member please advise:

- (a) What evidence supports the proposed introduction of a booking system at the Billingshurst, Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, Midhurst, and Westhampnett Recycling Centres?
- (b) For each centre, in the last 12 months:
 - (i) How many residents using the centre have requested the introduction of a booking system?
 - (ii) How many users have been turned away due to exceeding the maximum number of visits allowed?
- (c) For recycling centres operating the booking system, what percentage of users reached the maximum number of visits allowed in the last 12 months?
- (d) Based on the latest 12 month figures, what are the recycling rates for recycling centres with and without booking systems?
- (e) How has the anticipated saving of £200,000 been calculated?
- (f) What is the expected cost of handling the increased number of telephone bookings?
- (g) What processes and agreements have been put in place to allow non-West Sussex residents to continue to use the East Grinstead centre?

Answer

The County Council does not hold information on the number of residents using the centres that have requested the introduction of a booking system nor on the number of users that have been turned away due to exceeding the maximum number of visits allowed. Similarly, the percentage of users that reached the maximum number of visits allowed in the last 12 months is unknown.

The booking system limits bookings to no more than five per month (but does not report on the number of attempted exceedances). Visits to Recycling Centres that do not have a booking system are currently unrestricted.

A breakdown of the recycling rate achieved for each Recycling Centre has been provided at the end of this answer.

Waste has reduced by just under 3% at Recycling Centres with booking requirements. The same level of waste reduction has been used to estimate the saving that would result from the introduction of booking at the remaining sites.

Minute Item 49

There is not expected to be an increase in costs from the handling of telephone bookings. Over 98% of residents book online, so the increase in calls should be managed within existing resources.

Surrey County Council has an agreement with West Sussex to allow for residents living in certain Surrey postcodes (RH7 6, RH10 3, RH19 2, RH19 3, TN8 7, TN8 5 and TN8 6) access to the East Grinstead site. Residents in these postcodes will still be allowed access and can make a booking via the booking system.

Breakdown of the recycling rate achieved for each Recycling Centre

Including Green Waste 2022/23

| With Green | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | |
|---------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Billingshurst | 68.50% | 74.87% | 73.43% | 76.58% | 73.55% | 74.09% | 74.96% | 74.08% | 70.15% | 70.41% | 70.91% | 73.63% | 72.93% |
| Bognor Regis | 77.14% | 78.23% | 82.49% | 74.31% | 77.60% | 76.83% | 73.78% | 73.54% | 72.77% | 68.98% | 75.20% | 75.52% | 75.53% |
| Burgess Hill | 79.97% | 80.32% | 78.34% | 80.19% | 76.17% | 76.84% | 80.33% | 72.78% | 76.51% | 70.24% | 73.14% | 71.71% | 76.38% |
| Crawley | 74.16% | 74.14% | 81.15% | 80.03% | 74.98% | 74.70% | 79.37% | 81.72% | 65.81% | 72.01% | 71.72% | 72.45% | 75.19% |
| East Grin'd | 84.56% | 82.33% | 84.88% | 85.10% | 79.09% | 84.00% | 83.64% | 82.38% | 76.40% | 74.34% | 79.42% | 79.82% | 81.33% |
| Horsham | 72.62% | 73.45% | 77.28% | 70.51% | 70.90% | 77.74% | 76.94% | 76.15% | 61.77% | 69.55% | 70.68% | 73.56% | 72.60% |
| Littlehampton | 74.87% | 79.88% | 82.10% | 78.37% | 79.52% | 79.90% | 79.53% | 76.18% | 70.54% | 70.16% | 76.73% | 78.01% | 77.15% |
| Midhurst | 69.57% | 70.56% | 77.40% | 70.03% | 72.02% | 73.11% | 71.88% | 75.31% | 65.99% | 67.27% | 72.05% | 72.20% | 71.45% |
| Shoreham | 58.90%* | 78.11% | 81.69% | 78.88% | 76.80% | 75.27% | 78.10% | 75.35% | 66.29% | 70.45% | 78.68% | 72.56% | 74.26% |
| Chichester | 80.22% | 82.95% | 82.78% | 83.15% | 80.65% | 81.10% | 83.59% | 78.22% | 80.34% | 73.97% | 78.29% | 80.19% | 80.45% |
| Worthing | 54.75%* | 73.78% | 73.68% | 72.56% | 71.85% | 71.21% | 72.59% | 68.77% | 61.47% | 60.42% | 71.59% | 68.98% | 68.47% |

Excluding Green Waste 2022/23

| Excluding Green | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | |
|-----------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Billingshurst | 62.32% | 68.12% | 73.43% | 76.58% | 73.55% | 74.09% | 74.96% | 74.08% | 70.15% | 68.44% | 64.20% | 69.39% | 70.78% |
| Bognor Regis | 71.25% | 71.27% | 82.49% | 74.31% | 77.60% | 76.83% | 73.78% | 73.54% | 72.77% | 68.98% | 75.20% | 72.81% | 74.23% |
| Burgess Hill | 80.10% | 76.66% | 78.34% | 80.19% | 76.17% | 76.84% | 80.33% | 72.78% | 76.51% | 67.19% | 69.03% | 70.26% | 75.37% |
| Crawley | 70.39% | 72.42% | 81.15% | 80.03% | 74.98% | 74.70% | 79.37% | 81.72% | 65.81% | 72.01% | 68.81% | 70.17% | 74.30% |
| East Grin'd | 79.95% | 77.57% | 86.71% | 86.69% | 80.82% | 85.60% | 85.55% | 85.19% | 79.28% | 72.05% | 75.96% | 79.32% | 81.22% |
| Horsham | 70.19% | 70.13% | 77.28% | 70.51% | 70.90% | 77.74% | 76.94% | 76.15% | 61.77% | 69.55% | 70.68% | 72.11% | 71.99% |
| Littlehampton | 69.53% | 73.66% | 82.10% | 78.37% | 79.52% | 79.90% | 79.53% | 76.18% | 70.54% | 70.16% | 72.39% | 74.74% | 75.55% |
| Midhurst | 60.11% | 58.27% | 77.40% | 70.03% | 72.02% | 73.11% | 71.88% | 75.31% | 65.99% | 67.27% | 62.67% | 66.06% | 68.34% |
| Shoreham | 51.74%* | 74.36% | 81.69% | 78.88% | 76.80% | 75.27% | 78.10% | 75.35% | 66.29% | 70.45% | 75.30% | 70.28% | 72.87% |
| Chichester | 83.67% | 85.95% | 87.90% | 87.84% | 87.32% | 83.85% | 87.27% | 82.62% | 90.77% | 81.11% | 78.75% | 81.37% | 84.87% |
| Worthing | 47.42%* | 67.76% | 73.68% | 72.56% | 71.85% | 71.21% | 72.59% | 68.77% | 61.47% | 60.42% | 68.88% | 65.73% | 66.86% |

* Adur and Worthing strike

4. Written question from Cllr Kerry-Bedell for reply by Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

Question

The Energy Act 2023 has finally been enacted and promotes: (a) a net zero objective; (b) a security of supply objective; (c) an efficiency and economy objective. This Act allows for the development of local hydrogen generation and power as an alternative to hydrocarbon based fuels and electric power. The completion of Rampion 2 will create over 1GW of offshore wind power, but could also allow the county to develop an alternative future hydrogen fuel supply source that is less reliant on fossil fuels and is less constrained by the know limitation of the electricity power grid network.

Will the County embrace the opportunity to request the Government to look at all options to build a hydrogen plant offshore of the West Sussex coast where the Rampion 2 power line comes ashore?

Answer

Although the Act may allow for the development by third parties of hydrogen production and related initiatives, the Government itself is not looking at developing such schemes. Therefore, there is no reason to "request Government to look at all options to build a hydrogen plant offshore of the West Sussex coast".

Rampion 2, the extension to the existing Rampion Offshore Wind Farm, is a private development being taken forwarded for consent under the statutory Development Consent Order (DCO) process. The County Council is only a statutory consultee in the DCO process and is not the decision maker with regards to the development of the scheme. As with any planning application, the County Council cannot insist the applicant builds a substation at their cost where the cable comes ashore to facilitate a possible hydrogen plant, notwithstanding the fact that this area is at risk of flooding.

The County Council does not have the resources, capacity, or capability to develop commercial hydrogen projects and as such is supporting [Shoreham Harbour's aspirations](#) in this area.

5. Written question from Cllr Kerry-Bedell for reply by Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

Question

A Liberal Democrat motion on setting up a water quality group was proposed in October. The Chairman of the County Council declined to include it on the agenda for debate, stating that it is already setting up a similarly focused Water Summit. Despite this Summit being announced to in the members' Bulletin on 11 October there have been no further details forthcoming. The questions are:

- (a) When will the first Water Summit be held?
- (b) Will members of all parties be invited to attend?
- (c) Will the Water Summit cover all seven of the key elements of water quality, supply and impact?

- Water supply and management
- Water neutrality
- Nitrate neutrality
- Sewage capacity
- Storm sewage overflows
- Flooding driven by climate change

Answer

- (a) Positive discussions have taken place with the Environment Agency (EA) about holding the first Water Summit in the first quarter of 2024 (given the EA's need to prioritise operational matters at this time). The County Council is also in contact with Water Resource South East (comprising the six water companies in the region) and has yet to receive a response from Southern Water.
- (b) The intention is that the Water Summit provides a forum for high-level dialogue between senior members/representatives of each organisation. Therefore, it is proposed that the Leader and Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change attend on the County Council's behalf and a Leader and Chief Executive of one of the coastal district/borough councils will be invited to attend.
- (c) The proposal is that the Summit builds on the spirit of co-operation demonstrated at the Member Development Session in September 2023 and seeks to develop agreed actions for each organisation and embed a shared understanding of who is doing what, under the three themes in the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' 'Our integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water':
- Transforming management of the whole water system: to address flood risk and related matters, such as land-use planning and nature recovery.
 - Deliver a clean water environment for nature and people: to address water quality, pollution prevention, storm overflows and nutrient neutrality.
 - Secure a plentiful supply of water: to address resilience to drought, managing demand and disruption, improving efficiency, reducing leakage and water neutrality.

6. Written question from Cllr Wild for reply by Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

Question

Flooding in Bognor Regis

In 2014, the Aldingbourne Rife reached a record height of 1.14 metres. But on 3 November 2023 it reached a new record of 1.69 metres. The Environment Agency tell me that the Aldingbourne Rife pumps supplement the natural outflow of water at low tide, and over the past weeks the capacity for the catchment to drain via the gravity outfall has been reduced due to high neap tides.

Given the latest evidence shows an underestimate of future sea level rises, can the County Council, as the flood authority, influence and persuade Arun District Council as

to the severity of the flood risks within the Aldingbourne Rife flood plain, given there is an application for 480 houses on the Bognor golf course, and the Arun local plan has made provision for north/south road next to the Aldingbourne Rife and light industrial units on land adjacent to the former Lec Airfield?

Answer

The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, is only a statutory consultee for major planning applications in relation to potential flood risk to new development from surface water and groundwater.

The Environment Agency (EA) is responsible for flood risk from rivers, which includes the Aldingbourne Rife. The EA is a statutory consultee for development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, which (respectively) have medium and high probabilities of flooding from rivers and the sea.

Bognor Golf Course and adjoining land is within Flood Zone 3. Therefore, the planning application should be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), which should include an assessment of all sources of flooding (including from the Rife) and take account of climate change allowances.

The EA's consultation response should address the veracity of the submitted FRA, including whether it has taken full account of the impacts of climate change on the Rife and on sea levels.

With regard to potential risks to new development from flooding, Arun District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, has a duty to take account of all material considerations, which includes consultation responses from statutory consultees.

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

Question

I have received a massive number of complaints regarding flooding on the roads in various areas of Felpham, and probably other councillors have as well in their areas. This flooding always seems to exist in the same areas and I would like to know:

- (a) What historical records you keep of continual flooding?
- (b) Why, because of this history, haven't the problems been solved over time?

Answer

- (a) All reported highway flooding is recorded, so flooding hot spots can be identified and this informs the drainage maintenance programme.
- (b) The Council, as Local Highway Authority (LHA), ensures that highway drainage infrastructure is well-maintained and effective. However, there will always be occasions when factors outside the LHA's control result in highway flooding. When this happens, officers ensure locations are safe by erecting flood signs, implementing traffic management, or (as a last resort) closing the road.

Regarding Felpham, the Bognor area received significantly higher rainfall in October; 274mm compared to the average of 62mm.

Most highway water runs into surrounding watercourses and, in many cases, directly into the sea. The recent heavy rainfall quickly overwhelmed local watercourses even where they are well-maintained. In this case, water can no longer drain away, and it floods the highway.

Furthermore, outlets into the sea are protected with tidal flaps that close when the tide is in (to prevent tidal water travelling the wrong way). When the flaps are closed and there is very heavy rainfall, the system fills with water resulting in highway flooding until the tide recedes, and the flaps open.

In addition, we have seen the impacts of main river flooding (the Aldingbourne Rife), which is the responsibility of the Environment Agency. Many highway drains outlet into the Rife; this is not possible when in flood and leads to flooding on the highway. The direct impact of the Rife bursting its banks was flooding on the highway and adjacent property, including the Council's offices at Durban House.

The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, will continue to work with key partners, including the Environment Agency, district and borough councils and water companies to understand the causes of flooding and to identify potential solutions. The review of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy will set out a plan to address flood risk in the county over the longer-term, as well as identifying specific actions to be delivered in the short-term by the responsible bodies.

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Question Time: 15 December 2023

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 the following matters:

Publication of responses from the Government to letters sent as a result of motions agreed at full Council, from Cllr Oxlade.

In response to a request for the responses to be made publicly available via the website, the Leader said he would arrange for that to be done.

Visitor economy, from Cllr N Dennis, Cllr Lord and Cllr Payne.

Water Summit, from Cllr Kerry-Bedell, Cllr Montyn and Cllr Walsh.

Cabinet Member for Adults Services

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Social care workers from overseas, from Cllr O'Kelly.

Temporary closure of Zachery Merton Hospital, Rustington, from Cllr Cooper and Cllr Walsh.

In response to a question from Cllr Cooper the Cabinet Member agreed to let her know when further information is available.

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Learning and Skills

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Schools in Burgess Hill, from Cllr Cherry, Cllr Condie and Cllr Lord.

Insourcing of Child and Adolescent Multi-Disciplinary Service, from Cllr Burgess and Cllr Mercer.

Sir Robert Woodard Academy additional places, from Cllr Boram and Cllr McGregor.

Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Community Hub, from Cllr Greenway and Cllr Johnson.

Trading Standards and Public Health initiative to combat the sale of illegal vapes and tobacco products, from Cllr Ali, Cllr Britton, Cllr Greenway and Cllr Lord.

In response to a comment from Cllr Ali that the Trading Standards online reporting tool is not very user friendly, the Cabinet Member agreed to have a look at the tool and provide feedback.

Household Support Fund, from Cllr Baxter.

Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Flooding, from Cllr Greenway.

Motion for the ocean, from Cllr Condie, Cllr Kerry-Bedell and Cllr Lord.

Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

The Cabinet Member answered questions on Durban House and the impact of flooding, from Cllr Oppler.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

The Cabinet Member answered questions on the following matters:

Flooding, from Cllr Greenway.

Bus Service Improvement Programme, from Cllr Ali, Cllr Duncton, Cllr Kerry-Bedell and Cllr Oakley.

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

The Cabinet Member answered questions the government consultation on a smokefree generation, from Cllr Ali and Cllr Lord

In response to a request from Cllr Ali the Cabinet Member agreed to circulate to all members a summary of the Council's consultation response.

Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development

The Cabinet Member answered questions about the Smartcore programme, from Cllr Kerry-Bedell and Cllr Sparkes.