
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 – Paul Marshall

- The County Council has been working with [Coram Voice](#) and the University of Bristol on the [Bright Spots Programme](#). This aims to capture the views of young people in care and identify where positive differences can be made to the support and services provided. The initial outcomes of this work have been shared with young people with assurances that their voices have been heard and it will lead to change.
- The [Exceptional People in Care awards event](#) has taken place to celebrate the achievements and successes of young people in care and care leavers. The annual ceremony is a positive example of partnership working with both local and national organisations providing sponsorship to fund the prizes the young people received.

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – Richard Burrett

- Provisional **exam results** indicate that pupils in West Sussex are maintaining or improving on performance from previous years. For those who took [GCSEs](#), the proportion of West Sussex students achieving the pass level Grade 4 (equivalent of a C grade) has gone up by 0.3% from 2018. The overall pass rate for [A level](#) students was close to 97.6% which was in line with the national average. More detailed results will be released later in the year, once the final figures have been confirmed.



A Prosperous Place

Leader & Cabinet Member for Economy – Louise Goldsmith

- The **Summertime Sussex** campaign focused on encouraging families to explore the local area during the school holidays. The aim was to showcase West Sussex and point residents to [Experience West Sussex](#) for ideas and inspiration to increase visitors to the area and boost the local economy. Results show that all web pages promoted saw a significant increase in views as well as good engagement across social media. The campaign included a series of

[videos](#) involving local school children talking about their favourite things to do in West Sussex during the summer.

- On 17 September The Leader addressed the 3rd Annual **Tackling Air Pollution Forum** in London. The Leader highlighted the success of '[Breathing Better](#): a partnership approach to improving air quality in West Sussex' and also how the County Council has reduced carbon emissions by 46% by improving building management systems, improving insulation, upgraded lighting in its buildings and upgraded street lights across the county.
- The Leader, along with the Leader of East Sussex County Council, hosted a **Business Summit** on 13 September to bring local businesses and the Government together and provide an opportunity for two-way conversation. The event was well attended and feedback received has been positive. The Government has provided a [checklist for getting ready for Brexit](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/get-ready-brexit-check>). Members are asked to share this link with their residents.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure – Roger Elkins

- The Department for Transport (DfT) recently announced two **competitive funding opportunities for local authorities** - the [Local Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund](#) and [Local Pinch Point Fund](#) for major maintenance projects that are otherwise difficult to fund, as well as for small scale improvements including road widening, junction improvements and measures to improve traffic flow. Expressions of interest are being developed in line with the DfT guidance and timescales.
- Highways England has opened a further [A27 Arundel consultation](#) about options for improving the A27 Arundel bypass scheme and reducing congestion. The deadline for submitting comments is 24 October and the new preferred route announcement is anticipated in 2020.
- A [framework for events requiring road closures](#) has been amended in line with recommendations made at the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee and published. Its operation will be monitored and further improvements made as necessary.
- [Transport for the South East](#) will be launching a 12-week consultation in October concerning a **Draft Transport Strategy for the South East**. Five drop-in information events are taking place in October and anyone interested in finding out more is encouraged to book a place at one of the events. Further details can be obtained by contacting tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk



A Strong, Safe and Sustainable Place

Cabinet Member for Environment – Deborah Urquhart

- Following a survey undertaken at the end of 2018 on what would help people make the switch to electric vehicles, an elected members' Task and Finish

Group has developed a **draft Electric Vehicle Strategy**. Public views on this strategy have been sought via a six-week [consultation](#).

- **Pagham Harbour Nature Reserve** on County Council land at Pagham Harbour is managed by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). The RSPB will launch a consultation on a new draft management plan this month. The RSPB has had [great success this year with increased breeding bird numbers](#) and has recently opened improved facilities including a new bird hide where visitors can watch the wildlife in comfort. The reserve also offers excellent educational facilities for children and young people to learn about their local environment.
- **Buchan Country Park**, owned and managed the County Council, has seen two different types of investment this year that will improve visitor facilities. [New play sculptures](#) were donated by the Friends of Buchan Park volunteer group and installed in the Phil Haskell Wild Garden; the feedback has been very positive. New access improvements are also planned which will be funded by the national Local Authorities Parks Improvement Fund.
- The County Council has endorsed the [United Nations e-learning materials for teachers](#) on **Climate Change** in order to support schools to prepare for the new Ofsted Inspection Framework. The rationale and intent behind curriculum choices is an important part of the inspection process and the Education and Skills team has encouraged schools to look at important themes/ideas that reflect local need and interest such as climate protection/change. The Cabinet Member urges members to promote this to schools in their divisions.
- The County Council is fully supporting the **Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities' (IFCA) restoration project** off the Sussex coast. An initial meeting with the Chief Executive of the Southern IFCA Authority discussed how the Council can assist in making this a reality. Projects include [restoring the kelp beds](#) which will work toward combatting climate change through CO₂ absorption, increasing marine biodiversity, cleaning the water and reducing wave energy, which will help to mitigate coastal erosion particularly as sea levels rise.

Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities – Jacquie Russell

- The County Council's [Community Hub in Worthing](#) is due to open in summer 2020. Worthing Library has an exhibition space where residents can see the large-scale plans for the transformation of the library into a vibrant public space for residents enabling them to access a range of services under one roof.
- The County Council has welcomed [Dr Sabrina Cohen-Hatton](#) as the **new Chief Fire Officer** with West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service. Following the recent [inspection report](#) from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services, her initial focus will be on the service improvement plan.
- The County Council has supported a Home Office-led **County Lines Intensification**. County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks using dedicated mobile phone lines to export illegal drugs out of bigger cities into smaller towns in the UK. The aim of Intensification Week is to raise awareness of how the public can help spot the signs of this criminal activity.

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- The County Council has supported [Hate Crime Awareness Week](#) from 12 to 19 October with a social media campaign to ensure West Sussex remains a place where such behaviour is not tolerated and those affected can receive support.
 - [UK Anti-Slavery Day](#) takes place on 18 October. The Safer West Sussex Partnership and the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner is committed to working with partners in order to identify victims of slavery, signpost to support and disrupt and prosecute traffickers.



Independence for Later Life

Cabinet Member for Adults and Health – Amanda Jupp

- The [Blue Badge Application process](#) has been updated by the County Council in line with government legislation on [new Blue Badge Rules in England](#) that came into force on 30 August. This will make it easier for people with hidden disabilities, such as autism, to qualify.
- October marks the annual Public Health England **stop smoking challenge, Stoptober**, encouraging smokers across England to quit for good by signing up to quit smoking for 28 days on the [national Stoptober website](#). In addition, those living and working in West Sussex can now get help to stop smoking from [West Sussex Wellbeing](#).



A Council that works for the Community

Leader – Louise Goldsmith

- As part of the Council's ongoing programme of engagement between county councillors and the West Sussex Youth Cabinet to **promote local democracy**, a debate on knife crime was held on 19 September. The topic was suggested by the Youth Cabinet as an issue of key national concern and local MPs were also invited to join in this important debate in the Council Chamber. The next event, as part of the promoting local democracy campaign, is a ['Be a Councillor'](#) event at County Hall North in Horsham on 23 October, aimed at people who might want to find out more about becoming a county councillor.

Cabinet Member for Corporate Relations – Bob Lanzer

- The Cabinet Member, in partnership with local council leaders, will in the near future consider **approval of bids to the Local Enterprise Partnership** for funding to support next generation broadband. One bid for 'Converged Fibre Connectivity' will connect public sector sites in the first instance and also

provide an open access duct and/or fibre spine to connect Crawley, Horsham and Haywards Heath to the Burgess Hill Fibre Exchange and link to the Brighton Digital Exchange and the Brighton 5G fibre Ring. The Cabinet Member will also consider a further bid for 'Gigabit Coast' which aims to connect a number of council assets to create or enhance the digital public realm in Worthing.

- The **Customer Theme** of Whole Council Design work continues to progress, focusing on making more services accessible for those who wish to interact with the County Council digitally. Last month saw the launch of a new 'Contact the Council' form to help signpost customers to the right place. A combined 'Safeguarding form' was also launched for children and adults to enable concerns to be raised via an online channel. Over the coming weeks, further online forms will come on stream for reporting potholes, highways claims and for applying for a temporary traffic regulation order.
- The **Our Work Anywhere project** of Whole Council Design continues to roll out with the provision of new IT devices to staff to enable flexible working. Over 250 staff have received new laptops and new devices are being prioritised for c500 frontline social work staff in Children's Services. The new equipment will enable social workers to access and update case notes remotely, via smart phones or Wi-Fi-enabled locations in the county. The new devices also have a longer battery life and are quicker to start up, which is particularly beneficial for social workers making home visits throughout the day. The roll out is on track to be complete by March 2020.
- A renewal is underway of the County Council's **Facilities Maintenance (FM) strategy** to ensure public facing properties are in a sustainable condition for the future. Capital spend has been accelerated, particularly to address fabric and heating issues, with inspected properties such as day care centres and children's and adults' residential homes prioritised for attention. The work is supported by the FM Service Helpdesk, introduced in February, which delivers data on maintenance response times and ensures properties with persistent issues are highlighted. In addition, the recently re-let Building Services Contract includes a Computer Assisted FM System supplying data on individual asset conditions which contributes to a dynamic understanding of the County Council's estate.
- The County Council's Facilities Management teams are working closely with environmental colleagues to ensure **sustainability** is considered in their work. This is supported by the use of [Salix funding](#) for heating-related works. Teams are also supporting conservation organisations where appropriate, as demonstrated in the recent Sussex Heritage Trust Award in the Public and Community category for the work in restoring Halnaker windmill.

Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources - Jeremy Hunt

- The County Council's external auditor (EY) issued its **audit opinion on the annual Statement of Accounts** for 2018/19 for both the County Council and the Pension Fund on 29 July. This is the second year the accounts have been produced and audited in line with the new statutory deadlines of 31 May and 31 July respectively. The auditors have again given the County Council a clean bill of health on both sets of accounts. Within their value for money conclusion, EY concluded that the Council's arrangements were adequate except for concerns raised in relation to the Ofsted report on the County Council's

Children's Services. The audited version of the accounts has been published on the [County Council's website](#).

- The **2019 Government Spending Round** responded positively to a number of the County Council's key asks: additional funding for education; extra money for social care and extended funding for the Troubled Families programme for an additional year.

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Background papers

None