
Cabinet Report: Delivering Our Council Plan 2021-25

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.

Leader – Paul Marshall

- The Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Property represented the County Council at the [**County Councils Network Annual Conference**](#) from 21 to 23 November 2021. This was one of the first in-person local government events since early 2020. Over 200 delegates heard from expert and high-profile speakers including Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Gillian Keegan, Minister of State for Care. The agenda covered a wide range of topics, including Levelling Up, the future of adult and children's social care and the role of counties in delivering net zero emissions.
- **Crawley is bidding to become a city** as part of the 2022 national [**Civil Honours Competition**](#) to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The County Council is supporting this bid, which recognises Crawley as a growing, vibrant and diverse regional and national centre for economic, social and cultural activity. The economic boost from obtaining city status could be significant for residents and businesses in Crawley and to the wider West Sussex economy.

Adults Services - Amanda Jupp

- The County Council, East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council have been awarded just over £3.1m of government funding to implement the duty placed on local authorities under the [**Domestic Abuse Act 2021**](#). The Cabinet Member for Adults Services will be asked to agree a Sussex-wide Domestic Abuse Accommodation and Support strategy to be published in early January 2022, setting out how the councils will protect and assist survivors of domestic abuse in safe accommodation. Residents are being asked for their views on the draft strategy via [an online survey](#) which will help shape how funding will be invested in services. The survey is open until 19 December 2021.
- [**The Joint Carer Strategy 2021-26**](#) (PDF, 521KB) has been endorsed by the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board at its last meeting on 7 October 2021. The refreshed strategy provides a clear direction of travel for carer identification and support in West Sussex, having been developed with carer engagement for all ages as well as wider stakeholders. Key aims of the Strategy are to ensure carer recognition, provide targeted support, advance equality of access, ensure contingency planning for young carers, limit financial hardship and reduce carer isolation. The Board will monitor progress of the strategy against its key aims.
- The Cabinet Member for Adults Services, as Chairman of the [**Learning Disability Partnership Board**](#), has supported work on raising [**Learning Disability Awareness**](#). Partner organisations, including the NHS, Voluntary Sector and district and borough councils have been assessing health

inequalities with the focus on life expectancy, reasonable adjustments to make sure people can access services and digital inclusion. A specific set of targets are being set, identifying the actions required to achieve results as set out in a [report](#) (PDF, 65.4KB) to the [West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board](#). The Board will monitor progress over the next year.

Children and Young People (Lead Member for Children) – Jacquie Russell

- The strong commitment of County Council social worker Vivian Okeze-Tirado in advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace and society was acknowledged at the recent [Social Worker of the Year Awards](#). Vivian was named category winner of the 'Social Justice Advocate of the Year' award and her dedication was also recognised by the Social Work Awards Board of Trustees who determined that, from all the category winners, she should be awarded the prestigious accolade of '[Overall Social Worker of the Year](#)'.
- The Cabinet welcomed the Chair of the Youth Cabinet to a recent meeting to provide an [address on the Youth Cabinet's activities, campaigns and future plans](#). The Youth Cabinet's [regular engagement](#) (PDF, 132KB) with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee was also highlighted. This provides further opportunity for the voice and experiences of young people to be heard and taken into account, building a better understanding of the issues that affect them.
- The [Exceptional People in Care \(EPIC\) awards](#) have taken place, recognising the many achievements of children in care and of care leavers. The ceremony was superhero-themed and a total of 15 awards were on offer with categories including 'Big Hearts and Big Strength', 'Children we care for Young Person of the Year 2021', 'Care Leaver of the Year 2021', and 'Best Foster Carer 2021'.

Learning and Skills – Nigel Jupp

- **Work has started to create a new college at Woodlands Mead** following the signing of a development agreement with the school's governors. An [increased budget](#) for the project was recently approved, reinforcing the County Council's ongoing commitment to significantly improve facilities for pupils at the site. The [rebuilding project](#) will lead to the creation of a compliant college building with new classrooms, a hydrotherapy pool, new outdoor learning space and high quality sporting facilities.
- Funding has been approved to create 28 extra Special Support Centre (SSC) places as part of a **wider programme to deliver 82 additional SSC places across the county**. SSCs are located in mainstream schools and provide additional support for children with an Education Health and Care Plan for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The additional places created at two primary schools - [St Margaret's](#) in Angmering and [West Park](#) in Worthing and the secondary school [Felpham Community College](#) will enable more children with SEND to attend school in their local area, helping to meet a key objective of the County Council's [SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019 - 2024](#) (PDF, 1.75MB).

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- Following the success over the summer of the [**Holiday Activities and Food Programmes**](#), the County Council has been working with various organisations so children eligible for free school meals can attend a holiday club or activity and have a hot meal during the Christmas break. They will provide healthy and nutritious meals for all children attending, a wide range of fun and enriching activities, education around healthy eating and preparing food and a safe space for children to interact with others.

Community Support, Fire and Rescue – Duncan Crow

- The County Council's Communities Team has been working alongside Sussex Police and the Police & Crime Commissioner for the last six months to put together a bid for the latest round of the [**Safer Streets Fund**](#) which has a particular emphasis on the safety of women and girls. The Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue has announced that the partnership has been awarded nearly £1m from the Fund. [**Safeguarding residents**](#) is a key priority for the council and this money will be used to ensure that residents are supported to feel as safe as possible.
- Following investigation, [**West Sussex Trading Standards**](#) has secured a prison sentence for a [**rogue trader who conned elderly people**](#) into having home improvements which then proved to be sub-standard. Trading Standards is encouraging those considering having work undertaken to access its '[**Buy with Confidence' webpage**](#) and use a Trading Standards approved 'Buy with Confidence' trader'. Anyone concerned about a rogue trader can [**contact Trading Standards online**](#) or via Citizens Advice 03454 040506.
- Work is due to get underway at the site of the [**West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Horsham Fire Station and Training Centre**](#). The site will be home to a new 24-hour fire station for Horsham, along with an industry leading training centre, including a live fire training facility and road traffic collision training area. The new fire station will incorporate best practice around firefighters' health and wellbeing, including improved contamination management for firefighters returning from incidents. The facility will incorporate renewable energy sources, such as solar panels and air source heat pumps to provide heating, as well as electric vehicle charging points, in-line with the County Council's drive to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has launched a public consultation on proposals for the [**Community Risk Management Plan \(CRMP\) 2022-26**](#). This is a key opportunity for residents and partners to [**have their say**](#) on the proposals. Responses will be assessed and used to inform the final CRMP which is due to launch in spring 2022. The Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue encourages all to take part in the consultation by the closing date of 21 January 2022.

Environment and Climate Change (and Deputy Leader) – Deborah Urquhart

- The County Council has published its first [**Climate Change Annual Report**](#) (PDF, 1.1MB). A new capital investment fund of £10m for climate change projects including decarbonisation is being developed and, to-date, £442,000 is allocated to projects supporting reduction of the County Council's biggest carbon source – heat demand from schools. In addition, decarbonisation plans are being produced for 50 of the largest corporate sites as part of an ongoing

plan to achieve the goal of carbon neutral in the County Council's operations by 2030. In partnership with six district and borough councils, a contract has been let to create a publicly accessible and affordable electric vehicle chargepoint network across the county, which will be powered by renewable energy.

- [**Local Nature Recovery Strategies \(LNRS\)**](#), a flagship measure in the [**Environment Act 2021**](#), are a new system of spatial strategies for nature that will plan, map, and help drive more coordinated, focused action and investment in nature's recovery; the County Council will have a significant role in the preparation of the LNRS that will cover West Sussex. Emerging nature improvement initiatives in Sussex will help to inform the LNRS and also help to deliver it. This includes the ambitious [**Weald to Waves**](#) project, which brings together major landowners in Sussex to seek to create a contiguous thriving wildlife corridor, 50 miles in length, from the Climping Gap near Littlehampton to the Ashdown Forest.

Highways and Transport – Joy Dennis

- The County Council's [**winter gritting operations**](#) will grit 42% of the county's highway network when ice or frost is expected; grit is applied to [**priority routes**](#) as it is not possible to grit every road in the county. During the winter season (October to April) detailed weather forecasts are closely monitored and, when required, a fleet of 19 gritters is deployed to undertake precautionary gritting and snow clearance. In support of these operations, there are also many very active communities with local winter plans, salt bins and equipment across West Sussex.
- Since COVID-19 restrictions eased and schools reopened, the County Council's Bikeability team has been [**teaching children how to ride safely**](#) and more than 5,000 young people have been trained so far this year. Bikeability (formerly Cycle Proficiency training) is designed to give children the skills and confidence for cycling on today's roads. The theme of [**Road Safety Week 2021**](#) was road safety heroes, celebrating the work of road safety professionals.

Public Health and Wellbeing – Bob Lanzer

- Throughout October, the organisations in the Smoke Free West Sussex partnership (led by the County Council) have supported the [**Stoptober campaign**](#) - an annual Public Health England stop smoking challenge, encouraging and supporting smokers to make a quit attempt during October. To evaluate the public awareness and visibility of the 2021 Stoptober campaign, the County Council's Public Health team is conducting an [**online survey**](#), which is anonymous and takes only a few minutes to complete. The answers will be used to help improve future campaigns and support smokers in their quit attempts.
- The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing recently visited the [**Integrated Sexual Health Services Hub**](#) at St Richard's Hospital, Chichester, to meet staff and find out more about how services have continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. The service, commissioned by WSCC Public Health and funded by a ring-fenced Public Health Grant, has adapted services to meet population need, including introducing an [**online central booking triage system**](#), followed by a telephone conversation with staff to assess if a face-to-face

appointment is required, and [the introduction of online testing](#). The Hub is one of three Hub clinics across the county to reinstate face-to-face clinics for patients following triage; [face-to-face appointments are also available at Worthing and Crawley Hubs](#).

- **Management of the Council's Public Health COVID-19 response** and recovery remains vitally important and is regularly reviewed to ensure ongoing, robust preparedness, flexing to the demands of the pandemic as it evolves. To control and manage the virus, mitigating risk, public health activity continues across many areas, including surveillance/intelligence, outbreak control/management, specialist public health advice, and addressing inequalities including access to testing and vaccination. Significant Public Health resource remains allocated to the COVID-19 response and this is likely to continue into the winter and possibly beyond, depending on how the pandemic progresses.

Support Services and Economic Development – Steve Waight

- The COVID-19 pandemic and the national requirement to lock down and work from home introduced for some staff a significant unplanned change to how the County Council operates. The Council is now looking to evaluate the impact of those changes and identify the risks and possible opportunities they highlight. A **Smarter Working** project team will consider current and future service requirements and location of physical workspace. It will focus on requirements of customers and staff wellbeing; IT requirements; cost and cost recovery of any changes and opportunities to support CO2 reduction and rationalise the County Council estate. It is anticipated that Stage 1 of the project will complete in late spring 2022.
- The County Council-supported Arun District Council Growth Partnership has been successful in securing a £19.4m award from the [government Levelling Up Fund](#). The money will support Arun area regeneration and focus on The Alexandra Theatre in Bognor Regis and the seafront and riverside area in Littlehampton. The intention is to enhance facilities for residents and attract visitors and new business to the area which will boost the local economy. The County Council, through its Growth Deal with Arun District Council, will be **supporting the delivery of the Levelling Up funded projects** and complementing them with proposed investment in two projects, enhancing the public realm and crossing facilities at Littlehampton train station and improvements at the esplanade in Bognor Regis.

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Background papers

None