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## 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.

### Adults Services - Amanda Jupp

- A number of organisations which work closely with adult social care services have received laptops to support their work as part of the **social value element of the County Council's IT contract with XMA**. XMA has provided 1,000 laptops to the County Council to be used to benefit the local community. Organisations have been selected as part of a collaborative project across directorates, led by officers within adult social care, to identify suitable organisations to receive them. Those receiving laptops include Domestic Violence services (My Sister's House); homelessness charities (Stone Pillow, Crawley Open House); care leavers service; digitally excluded youth groups (Electric Storm, Audio Active, Sid Youth and Hope); My Network and My Network Plus (Learning Disability Services); Citizen's Advice; Carer's Support West Sussex; Worthing Early Intervention in Psychosis Service and resettled refugee families. The Library Service, which has helped to identify and liaise with providers and officers within the Fire and Rescue Service, is distributing the laptops to the organisations identified.
- To address the vacancy gap for qualified social workers and occupational therapists, an improved pay and reward scheme has been implemented, using the additional £2m allocated for this purpose in the County Council's 2022/23 agreed budget. This will help to improve the County Council's appeal as an employer for this staff group. In addition, a project to **recruit qualified social workers from overseas** is also underway, with offers made to 11 overseas social workers so far, who are due to start arriving from mid-June. Candidates have been recruited from a range of countries (Canada, India, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Caribbean) and will bring with them a wealth of experience in adult social work. They will take up posts across the county in community, hospital, learning disability and mental health teams. It is planned to extend the project to recruit a similar number of occupational therapists, in the second half of the year.

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

- The County Council is [seeking views](#) on a **Children and Young People's Plan** for 2022 to 2025 which sets out key priorities the Council and partners will focus on to make life better for children and young people. Parents and carers, young people and a number of partner organisations have worked together to agree these priorities, and the feedback received during the 12-week consultation will contribute to further developing and shaping the final Plan.
- A [new Youth Cabinet](#) has been elected to represent the voices of young people across all parts of West Sussex. An important part of Youth Cabinet's role is engagement with the County Council's Cabinet, to ensure it is aware of the wide range of issues that impact children and young people. The Youth Cabinet is creating a manifesto that sets out the campaign pledges for its time

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in office and all county councillors will have an opportunity to learn about this at a launch event in June.

### **Leader – Paul Marshall**

- West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council are collaborating on a new initiative for the [visitor economy across Sussex](#), instigated in response to the impact of the pandemic on the sector. Collaborative working will seek to boost recovery and sustainable growth, through a focus on longer staying national and international visitors. A recent meeting with invited industry representatives from across Sussex endorsed the new approach and welcomed the opportunity to be involved as the work progresses. The meeting followed the good news that £100,000 of marketing support for Sussex tourism has been awarded from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Visit England Recovery Fund. Experience West Sussex is working with Visit Brighton and other destinations to maximise the opportunities for the whole county.

### **Learning and Skills – Nigel Jupp**

- Over 98% of pupils will be attending one of their three top preference primary schools this September following [primary school offer day](#) with all 8,842 pupils who applied being offered a place. West Sussex schools offer great support to children starting in Reception and families can now begin to plan for this big and exciting next step in their child's life.
- The County Council will [receive over £10m in each of the next two financial years](#) to support the **creation of new school places and improve existing provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**. The funding is allocated from the £2.6bn capital investment announced in the 2021 Spending Review which the Government is providing to address the growing demand for school places for children with SEND and will support the County Council in its aim of enabling more children to attend school locally.

### **Community Support, Fire and Rescue – Duncan Crow**

- The Cabinet Member recently visited **Bognor Regis Library** to see the school holiday events programme in action. There were many families in the library, sharing a story-time and taking part in Easter themed crafts. The library was also hosting some one-to-one digital support sessions with volunteers, providing valuable assistance to residents looking to take the first steps to get online. The Cabinet Member heard from library staff about the wide range of support offered to residents returning to the library after the challenges of the pandemic, and about the meeting rooms and library garden which are well used by a range of community partners in their work with residents. This work demonstrates the extent of services offered by the library service to their local communities.

### **Environment and Climate Change (and Deputy Leader) - Deborah Urquhart**

- The [Electric Vehicle chargepoint project](#) will result in hundreds of chargepoints being installed across the county. The first chargepoints have already been installed in East Grinstead, with two rapid chargepoints being replaced in Storrington and Billingshurst.

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- A **scheme to recycle hard plastic waste** at Shoreham, Worthing, Crawley, Burgess Hill and Chichester Recycling Centres is now in operation. An additional facility will be added at Horsham, Billingshurst and East Grinstead in the next few weeks. Typical hard plastic items include garden furniture, plant pots, guttering, children's toys and hard plastic containers. Plastic bottles and other rigid food packaging items like pots, tubs and trays are already accepted in kerbside collections and should continue to be placed there. In March 2022 the five sites collected 50 tonnes of hard plastics with an expectation of 700 tonnes per annum. Some items are separated for re-use, the remainder are broken down to pellet form, to make new plastic components.
  - A key goal of the County Council's [Climate Change Strategy](#) is to **achieve carbon neutrality** in the Council's operations by 2030 and the single largest source of carbon emissions is heating buildings across the corporate estate (offices, libraries, depots and fire stations). A study has been completed which identifies technical options to reduce carbon emissions from the top 50 emitting sites. Utilising the £20m fund set aside for climate change delivery and bids for government funding, this will form the basis of a strategic programme of works to make these buildings significantly more carbon efficient and minimise their reliance on fossil fuels such as natural gas. Along with the Smarter Working initiative this programme will enable the County Council to create a more efficient working environment that will be resilient in the long term to the benefit of its employees, residents and the environment.

### **Finance and Property – Jeremy Hunt**

- In line with the [Our Council Plan](#) (PDF, 7.9MB) priority to 'make the best use of our resources', work is ongoing to **maximise the use of the Council's assets** by disposing of any that are identified as surplus to requirements. During the financial year ending 31 March 2022, the County Council disposed of 12 surplus assets (land and property), realising approx. £11.5m in capital receipts. For 2022/23, £9m of capital receipts have been budgeted for from further disposals of surplus assets. The disposals and re-investment of receipts is clear evidence of the Council making the best use of its resources.

### **Highways and Transport – Joy Dennis**

- The Cabinet Member is undertaking a [countywide road safety review](#) and has set up a cross-party Executive Task and Finish Group (TFG) to advise on this work. The TFG's work will include reviewing the speed limit policy to make it easier to introduce a lower speed limit where appropriate, exploring other traffic management measures that could help reduce serious-injury accidents and considering other highway-related issues that may contribute to road traffic collisions. The TFG is expected to conclude the review of speed limit policy and report its findings to the Cabinet Member in the summer.
- The County Council committed to enter into an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators in 2022. The Council has recently been informed by the Department for Transport (DfT) that it has indicative funding of c. £17.4m for 2022-25 to improve bus services based on the ambitions (totalling £90m+) submitted in its [Bus Services Improvement Plan](#) in October 2021. A Task and Finish Group of the Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee has commented on the ambitions to be submitted to the DfT within the [Enhanced Partnership Plan](#) in the summer and the Cabinet Member has

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been meeting local bus operators to discuss their priorities. In addition, an open-ended engagement - [#WestSussBus - finding out your views on the buses](#) - has been launched that will provide views to be considered by the Enhanced Partnership in the future.

- As a result of successful partnership working, including with Mid Sussex District Council and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, the **A2300 improvements scheme** as now been officially opened. The Council's [media release](#) on the opening attracted positive coverage for all the partners.
- The County Council and Sustrans are working to improve the [safety of pedestrians and horse riders at the A281 Downlinks Crossing, Rudgwick](#). In addition to works already installed at this location, which include new signs on the A281, wooden guard barriers on the Downlink access ramps and vegetation clearance, investigations are now underway for a Pegasus crossing. The on-road signalised crossing, with adjustment to the Downlink access ramps, would allow for much-enhanced safety for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users and equestrians.

### **Public Health and Wellbeing – Bob Lanzer**

- At its meeting on 28 April, the [West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board](#) received a [report](#) (PDF, 67.6KB) and [presentation](#) (PDF, 838KB) from the Director of Public Health on Public Health Priorities 2022/23, focused on the Government's recently published and emerging national public health policy documents, and the Chief Medical Officer for England's key messages regarding current public health priorities including the impacts of the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Early discussions enabled the Board to commence forward planning to tackle issues locally, to improve the health of the population and reduce health inequalities across West Sussex.
- The West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board has responsibility for the assessment of the health and wellbeing needs of local residents to inform strategic decisions of the Board and its constituent organisations. The [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#), led by the Council's Public Health and Social Research Unit, provides an evidence base of the health and wellbeing needs of the local population, encompassing a wide range of work including detailed needs assessments, analyses, evaluations of new programmes/activities, local surveys, and more. This is regularly reviewed, with additional information added when available; work on the main update report 'JSNA Summary 2021/22' is underway, taking into account emerging data.

### **Support Services and Economic Development – Steve Waight**

- The County Council's digital infrastructure team has recently been working with the [West Sussex Growers' Association](#) to determine how **enhanced digital infrastructure can support the County's horticultural sector** to sustain and expand production as well as compete with other regions and recover from a lack of seasonal employees. This work, with the support of funding from the West Sussex Local Enterprise Partnership, is in line with [Our Council Plan](#) (PDF, 7.9MB) priority of 'A sustainable and prosperous economy'.
- The County Council remains on track to fully commit the innovative £5.7m 'top up' fund to support West Sussex rural communities to access the Government's

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[national Gigabit Voucher Scheme](#). It is anticipated that with the support of the County Council the fund will help an additional 13,000 homes and businesses gain access to gigabit-capable broadband.

- The County Council's contract with Capita for support services will end on 30 September 2022. Whilst the majority of the services will transfer in September, the **Employment Support Service will return to the County Council in early June**. This service includes Payroll and Human Resources support for schools and the early return will ensure those services are well placed to support the return of the remaining out-sourced services at the end of September.

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### **Background papers**

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