

## 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	
	<b>1720</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>1836</b>	<b>1883</b>	<b>1917</b>	<b>1970</b>	
<b>Additional Places</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>Total 250</b>

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

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

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>
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.

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

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**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?

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- 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

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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.



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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.