
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 – Jacquie Russell

- A commitment to support children in care and care leavers has been launched by the County Council, its partners and the [Corporate Parenting Panel](#). **The Promise 2020** outlines the aspiration to help young people in care to stay healthy and happy, develop skills through education, training and work, listen to their views and act on what they say. It was developed in conjunction with [young people in care and care leavers](#) to ensure their thoughts and views were central in shaping The Promise, which aims to bring positive changes to their lives.
- Proposals are progressing to **re-open three Children’s Homes** with works underway to remodel the properties. When the refurbishment is complete the homes will provide placements for the most vulnerable children, including those ‘on the edge of care’, enabling them to be supported close to home. The re-opening of [Cissbury Lodge](#), [May House and Seaside](#) Children’s Homes, projected for early 2021, forms phase 1 of the [Children First In-House Residential Strategy 2019-22](#).

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – Nigel Jupp

- A [Back to School webpage](#) was added to the County Council website in August containing a wealth of information and resources to help every pupil feel confident and ready to return to or start school. The page contains answers to typical questions that children, parents and carers have. It also contains a [video message](#) from pupils who attended school during the summer term, to assist children in understanding what they could expect the school experience to be like on their return.
- An online toolkit has been developed, in collaboration with key partners in health and safeguarding, to support schools in the teaching of the [new compulsory curriculum](#) for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). The **Education for Safeguarding (E4S)** toolkit provides every child with a universal safeguarding offer and aims to ensure children and young people are taught to develop their own skills, knowledge and understanding of how to be who they are, understand the world they are growing up in and how to keep themselves safe.



A Prosperous Place

Leader – Paul Marshall

- Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic the Leader has been regularly participating in meetings with partners at a regional and national level to ensure a **coordinated COVID-19 response** and that Government understands the challenges West Sussex County Council is facing. These meetings include chairing a regular teleconference with West Sussex MPs, fortnightly calls with West Sussex district and borough leaders, weekly calls with South East 7 Leaders, and weekly calls with County Councils Network (CCN) leaders. In addition, there have been a range of meetings with partners on specific issues as they have arisen.
- As part of **government engagement on economic recovery** the Leader has recently written to the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, alongside many of the Leaders of Gatwick Diamond local authorities and the Coast to Capital LEP, highlighting the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the aviation sector. Separately, the Leader has written to the Chancellor to share concerns regarding the financial pressures that West Sussex County Council is facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact that this is likely to have on the Council's ability to contribute to the economic and social recovery of the county.
- The County Council has received the prestigious **Gold Award as part of the [Defence Employer Recognition Scheme](#)**. Announced on 30 July this follows on from 2017, when the council achieved the Silver Award. In support of the Gold Award, the County Council has proactively demonstrated that it advocates the benefits of supporting those within the Armed Forces community, encouraged others to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and engaged fully in the Employer Recognition Scheme. The Council has also provided ten extra paid days leave for Reservists on the council staff and has supportive Human Resources policies in place for Veterans, Reserves, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and Spouses and Partners of those serving in the Armed Forces.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure – Roger Elkins

- **Emergency Active Travel funding** was [announced by the Secretary of State](#) for the Department for Transport in May 2020 as part of the work to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Implementation of [seven temporary cycle route schemes](#) is underway in West Sussex following a successful Tranche One bid to the fund. An Executive Task and Finish Group meeting on 7 September considered feedback on the first schemes to open. Tranche 1 schemes are progressing to completion by the end of September in line with Government requirements.

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- The [A259 Improvement Scheme](#) at Littlehampton and Angmering has commenced this month following advance site preparation works. The scheme, which is jointly funded by the County Council, Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership and Developer Contributions will cost £25.8m and deliver 2km of dual carriageway and cycle path improvements, reducing traffic congestion and increasing the capacity of the network to support development. The works will take approximately 2 years to complete.



A Strong, Safe and Sustainable Place

Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities – Duncan Crow

- As part of the Council's Fleet Asset Management Plan, the [West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service](#) has taken delivery of seven new Fire Appliance Vehicles. The new vehicles will reduce overall vehicle costs, reduce environmental impact, for example through reduced exhaust gas emissions and improve access to incidents particularly in urban areas.
- The [West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service](#) has been informed that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) will visit the Service in the week commencing 5 October 2020 to undertake a COVID-19 Inspection Update. Over the course of the pandemic the Service has helped distribute more than 700,000 items of Personal Protective Equipment, visited vulnerable people or those on the National Shielding Register, carried out urgent welfare checks and Safe & Well Visits and assisted with urgent deliveries of medical and food supplies.
- Demonstrating the council's commitment to '[#West Sussex Together](#)' partnership working the Fire and Rescue Service's Technical Rescue Unit and the Communities team were able to deliver ten pallets of surplus food to [UKHarvest](#) and four pallets to [FareShare Sussex](#) to help West Sussex residents in need. The items became surplus from the beginning of August, when the government advised that shielding restrictions were eased.

Cabinet Member for Environment – Deborah Urquhart

- A previously disused **section of the Downs Link is now open** on the old Guildford Railway Line behind Christ's Hospital station. Works to the 'missing' 1.4km section included repairing two bridges, vegetation clearance, surfacing, drainage and platform repairs. The long-term collaborative project between WSCC and Christ's Hospital school was jointly funded and supported by the local community and local organisations. The upgrade means users no longer have to travel on the road network from Mill Lane to re-join the Downs Link at Christ's Hospital. The [Downs Link](#) is a nationally-important, long distance, shared route connecting the North and South Downs, largely following a disused railway line from Guildford to Shoreham-by-Sea.

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- Plans for a [countywide charging network for electric vehicles](#) in West Sussex are moving forward. Switching to electric will help to reduce the county's carbon emissions and contribute to improved air quality. A tender has just been released to secure a supplier who will work with the County Council and its partners to plan, then fund, install, market and operate a publicly accessible chargepoint network across West Sussex. Horsham, Adur and Worthing, Mid Sussex, Arun and Crawley district and borough councils have committed assets where chargepoints could be installed. The aim is for the supplier to be in place by January 2021.
 - Following assessment of the impact of the fire at [Crawley Transfer Station](#) in July it is hoped the site can re-open for Crawley Borough Council and Mid Sussex District Council to resume deliveries of kerbside collected recycling material in early September. In the meantime, material is being diverted to Burgess Hill and East Grinstead Transfer Stations. An outside transfer area has been established at Crawley for transfer of all other waste streams from the district and borough councils including green waste and litter. Public Access to the Crawley HWRS will remain unavailable until mid-September at the earliest. The HWRS at Horsham will remain open seven days a week whilst the Crawley site is closed. Extended opening hours will soon be introduced at the East Grinstead site.



Independence for Later Life

Cabinet Member for Adults and Health – Amanda Jupp

- As restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are eased West Sussex County Council has launched a **campaign to keep [West Sussex Safe](#)**. The [campaign provides resources](#) to help remind people that the virus is still active and advises the public to continue to follow guidelines on social distancing, hand hygiene, wearing a face covering whenever appropriate and, if symptomatic, urges a [COVID-19 test](#).
- West Sussex County Council has produced a [COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan](#), as required by the Government. This details how local, regional and national organisations and responses will work together as a system to prevent cases of the virus, where possible, in West Sussex and respond to any local outbreaks.
- The Public Health Directorate is working in partnership with homeless charities across West Sussex and Totally Wicked (e-cigarette supplier) to **support homeless and rough sleepers to quit smoking** through the use of e-cigarettes, aiming to address some of the inequalities they face. These steps are being taken as high rates of smoking in this group places them at increased risk from COVID-19. Launched in July, this initiative links with the Council's COVID-19 response, providing accommodation for this population group. A six-week review with all partners is scheduled for September to monitor progress.



A Council that works for the Community

Cabinet Member for Economy and Corporate Resources – Bob Lanzer

- Work has completed on a **new creative and collaborative workspace in Bognor Regis. 'The Track'**, an initiative led by the Council, with the support of the Coast to Capital LEP, is located within Bognor Regis Railway Station. Once fully opened later this year, the hub will offer a shared and collaborative workspace, events space, meeting rooms and ultrafast fibre connection for emerging creative and digital businesses in the area. Interested parties can book an appointment to take a tour of the space via the [Bognor Regis Hub](#) website and see how it can help their local business to thrive through working in a creative, collaborative environment.
- Butlin's Resort in Bognor Regis was among several West Sussex tourist venues to welcome a **visit from the Secretary of State for Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport** on 18 August. Oliver Dowden took part in a round-table discussion at Butlins with [Experience West Sussex](#) business partners and council leaders focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism sector. Issues raised included how the summer season was progressing for businesses, the measures being taken to keep visitors safe and the ways the government could help the industry in the coming months. The discussion gave an opportunity to highlight issues and ask directly for support which will help to build the tourism offer for coastal areas in the future.

Cabinet Member for Finance - Jeremy Hunt

- The County Council's current financial modelling indicates that the **estimated gap in funding arising from the pandemic** will be between £9m and £19m in 2020/21. The picture for 2021/22 and future years remains challenging. The major variables include the impact of possible unemployment on the council tax base, the likely impact of a deteriorating economy on business rate income, and what future government funding will look like. The coming Autumn period will be key in determining the financial impact upon the Council, reflecting the local impact upon services as schools return, the likely impact on the economy as furloughing comes to an end and the possibility of a 'second' wave of COVID19 as the weather changes. The Government has indicated that plans for the future funding of local government and the public sector will be set out in the autumn statement. In the meantime, all these variable factors will be considered as the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy is developed alongside the Reset Plan.
- The [Pension Fund's Annual Report](#) has now been approved and provides an update to all stakeholders, including the 246 employers and nearly 80,000 members of the Pension Fund on the fund activities in 2019/20. The report refers to:

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- How the £4.179m investment portfolio has been actively managed to provide above market returns (3.92 % pa. over three years, and 8.53 % pa. over ten years)
 - How these strong investment returns have further improved the overall funding level (112% at the formal valuation at 31 March 2019) which has enabled a reduction in contribution rates for the majority of major employers from 1 April 2020;
 - The strong Environmental, Social and Corporate Government engagement with companies undertaken by the appointed managers; and
 - Administration performance since the transfer of the service to Hampshire Pension Services in March 2019, now reporting 100% compliance with the performance indicators.

For context, the Fund is currently estimated to be 114% funded.

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Background papers

None