
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 [Horsham Enterprise Park](#) project at the former Novartis site in central Horsham is progressing well with regeneration partner MUSE and the developer in close contact with planners at Horsham District Council. A formal reserved matters application will be submitted in early 2023 and MUSE has now commenced active marketing of the site. Formal public consultation over the proposals started at the end of September. Once the reserved matters application is approved, MUSE intend to move swiftly with their partner on the first phase of residential development. The Park will deliver a high quality mixed commercial and residential scheme to boost the local economy, including employment spaces and community facilities which will bring new jobs and investment to Horsham.
- During the Conservative Party Leadership contest the Leader wrote to candidates to lobby for investment in local government and highlight some of the challenges facing West Sussex County Council. The Leader and Cabinet will continue to work with West Sussex MPs in **lobbying the new Government** including highlighting how the County Council can contribute to delivering improved economic growth in West Sussex, while also focusing on the issues facing the county and the wider local government community.

Adults Services - Amanda Jupp

- [Meals on wheels](#) customers across the county will continue to receive more than just a meal after the County Council [agreed an innovative new partnership](#) that is set to start this month. Customers will enjoy food made and supplied by apetito, which will now be delivered by Health and Independent Living Support (HILS) West Sussex, for at least the next five years. HILS drivers and customer support teams will offer important welfare checks while delivering meals, to ensure customers are well, healthy and safe, providing company for those who might not otherwise have any visitors and become isolated. More [information about the meals on wheels service](#) is available on line or by telephone at 01225 759691.
- [Living well in your community: Your West Sussex Care Guide 2022/23](#) provides a range of useful information to support people to make informed decisions with regard to their preparations for later life and maintaining their independence. The guide offers details of services including domiciliary care, day services, extra care housing and residential care for when people need more help, as well as a comprehensive list of providers. One of the key priorities of the Council's [adult social care strategy](#) is to give residents the information they need to make decisions that can support their wish to stay independent, living the life they want to lead.
- On 6 September Adult Social Care staff and customers held a **Directly Provided Services Co-Production Event** in support of people and

organisations working together to share influence, skills and experience to design, deliver and monitor care services and projects. The event provided an opportunity to showcase and celebrate many of the Social Care co-production projects over the last year as well as facilitate networking and future planning, including a newly designed co-production toolkit for staff to utilise.

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

- The implementation of the [Family Safeguarding Model](#) aims to keep families together by helping them to identify what changes are needed to address behaviours that impact on the children and supporting families to achieve these changes. The upcoming [award of contracts for the provision of specialist staff](#) will assist with delivery of a key aspect of the model, by ensuring wrap-around support is available for the adults in families facing issues with domestic abuse and alcohol and drug use.
- A recent [Children’s Services recruitment event](#) held in Horsham proved successful, resulting in vacant posts being filled and generating increased interest in roles across the service. The event is part of a multi-faceted approach to improve recruitment and retention of staff, set against the challenge of a national shortage of social workers. Other initiatives the County Council is pursuing include developing newly-qualified staff through the in-house Social Work Academy and apprenticeships and exploring the potential for recruiting professionals from abroad.

Learning and Skills – Nigel Jupp

- More than £57m funding has been approved to [build a new secondary school in Burgess Hill](#) providing pupil places for those who live in the new 3,500 home Brookleigh development and the wider local area. A Special Support Centre will also be included at the site to enable children with special educational needs and disabilities to attend the school. The design of the building incorporates features which ensure high energy efficiency and low carbon emissions, thereby delivering against commitments in the [West Sussex County Council Climate Change Strategy 2020-30](#) (PDF, 1MB).
- The County Council’s school meals team has won the [Catering Business of the Year 2022 award](#) at the [LACA Awards for Excellence](#), which recognises individuals and teams who make a real difference in education catering and school food. The judges praised the Council’s ability to grow its school meals service to meet the increase in pupils with special educational needs and for serving nutritious food while keeping costs low for schools.

Community Support, Fire and Rescue – Duncan Crow

- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has launched a free interactive [Business Fire Safety Awareness Tool](#) to help business owners understand their legal duties when keeping workplaces safe from fire. The Service’s Fire Safety Team has been on hand throughout [Business Safety Week](#) (from 5 to 11 September) to give free safety advice to local proprietors. The tool was [developed as a collaborative partnership](#) following investment from the Regulator’s Pioneer Fund and will assist in protecting businesses as one of the key priorities of the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

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- A partnership between the County Council and [Get Safe Online](#), which works with the local community to encourage safer use of online devices and the internet, has trained [24 volunteer Digital Ambassadors](#). The Digital Ambassadors provide residents with advice and support, talking to individuals and groups free of charge on online safety issues such as how to avoid being a victim of online scams, safe online banking, strong passwords, software updates and shopping safely online.
 - **West Sussex Library Service** has offered free-to-attend [Discovery Days](#) throughout August and September which have been very well received by residents. The days aimed to break conventional library stereotypes and help people discover what libraries have to offer beyond books. From games and author evenings, free ancestry history meetings and digital subscriptions, [West Sussex County Council Libraries](#) provide a shared social space for all to enjoy. All 36 libraries are [free to join](#) for those who live, work and study in the area. There are also digital options for members offered 24/7, 365 days a year.

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

- On 22 September, as part of this year's celebrations for the 40th anniversary of [Buchan Country Park](#), members visited to see the Park and the work of the permanent and volunteer Countryside Rangers. The Park, which continues to grow in popularity, has held the prestigious Green Flag status for over 10 years and the Rangers continue to ensure that Buchan Country Park is a fantastic place not only for visitors to the county but also for Sussex wildlife.
- The County Council, as part of a consortium involving West Sussex councils and Portsmouth City Council, has secured funding to help low-income households improve their home energy efficiency. The [Warmer Homes Programme](#) aims to help residents living in a home with a low energy efficiency rating to install energy saving measures such as insulation, heat pumps and solar panels to save on energy bills and reduce impact on the environment.
- A pilot scheme aiming to help West Sussex residents with cost-of-living pressures by [avoiding food waste](#) will start on 5 October. Residents will be guided on ways to reduce edible food waste and signposted to existing surplus food rescue services. Co-ordinated by the Recycling and Waste team and working closely with the Communities team, UK Harvest, borough and district councils, partnerships and charities, the pilot will run for six months in Bognor Regis, Crawley (Broadfield area) and Southwick (Adur).

Highways and Transport – Joy Dennis

- This Council set out its most [ambitious investment programme in the highway network](#) ever with more than 640 schemes (not including major road projects) to be delivered across the network, with a total value of more than £25m. To-date, 318 schemes have been completed with a value of around £13m. As planned, the programme is on target to deliver in full by the end of the financial year.
- The County Council is launching a [Bus It! campaign](#) to encourage senior residents back on the buses. The aim is to increase the number of bus users with a free bus pass back to pre-pandemic levels (there has been a 20%

decline) and to encourage people to apply for a free bus pass (which they can do when they reach state pension age - currently 66).

- Following a very dry summer, the fourth urban grass cut was cancelled and resources were diverted to other activities such as [clearing vegetation from signs and cleaning the signage](#). More than 1,000 individual jobs have been completed to-date.

Public Health and Wellbeing – Bob Lanzer

- The Integrated Care Partnership, the [Sussex Health and Care Assembly](#), is the statutory joint committee between the NHS and local government (West Sussex, East Sussex, Brighton & Hove). The Partnership comes together to formally agree the strategic direction for the local health and social care system. The Assembly's introductory seminar took place on 12 September with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing in attendance as the Council's representative in his capacity as Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB). In addition, a HWB seminar will take place on 7 October, focusing discussion on how organisations can work together at place-level to ensure effective system and placed-based working to help improve the health and wellbeing of residents and communities, and reduce inequalities.
- The autumn [COVID-19 booster programme](#) led by NHS Sussex is underway across the county. Currently, those eligible for the first ever variant-targeted booster vaccine include care home residents; the severely immunosuppressed; people aged 65 and over; frontline health and care workers; pregnant women and carers. As with previous campaigns, those most at risk will be called forward first, with people able to book in online or through 119 as long as it has been three months since their last dose. From September, the NHS is also rolling out the year's flu vaccine, with eligible people able to get their flu and Covid-19 jab at the same time depending on local arrangements. The County Council is supporting both vaccination programmes, carrying out targeted work with partners to increase uptake, reduce inequalities, and improve the health of our local population.
- Throughout October, the organisations in the [Smokefree West Sussex Partnership](#) (PDF, 1MB), led by the County Council, have supported the annual national stop smoking challenge, encouraging and supporting smokers to make a quit attempt during October. The campaign engages with smokers through a range of media channels, with an emphasis on targeting smokers aged 25 to 50 from lower socio-economic groups who work in routine and manual jobs. The messaging focus is on promoting the benefits of quitting, but also giving smokers the confidence that they can quit successfully. In addition to the work of the campaign, stop smoking support tools are available on the [Better Health website](#) and those living and working in West Sussex can also access support to stop smoking from West Sussex Wellbeing.

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. A **Smarter Working** project team has considered the impact of those changes and the risks and possible opportunities they have

highlighted. Proposals are now being developed to support current and future service requirements and the location of physical workspace. The plans include additional investment into the main building at County Hall, Chichester to make spaces more suitable for Smarter Working, and the closure of Northleigh and The Grange on the Chichester campus as soon as practicable, with staff currently based there relocating into County Hall. Plans are in place for specific engagement with all those affected to give staff and members confidence that they will have the workspace they need when coming into the office.

- The Council's **Smartcore project** is progressing on the replacement of the current locally-operated SAP enterprise resource planning system with cloud-based business application system [Oracle Fusion](#). The new system is based on a set of design principles that seek to establish 'a single source of truth' for key data and information relating to Finance, Human Resources, Payroll and Procurement and Contract Management Services. As the project has developed, additional measures have been identified as necessary to support the implementation, partly driven by the impact of the pandemic but also on reviews of the input required as the project teams developed a greater understanding of the scope of the project. The Cabinet Member has recently taken a decision to increase the funding for the project which once the new system is in place will provide opportunities to introduce productivity gains via business process improvements. The implementation of the new system is planned by spring 2023.
- The County Council's ten-year contract with Capita for **internal support services** ended on 30 September with Accounts Payable, Business Services Administration, Operational Procurement, Online Service Delivery (web team) and the Customer Service Function moving to the Council. Employment Services (including Payroll, Shared HR Services and HR Services to Schools), had already transitioned as planned in June. The induction of over 300 staff is well underway with a focus on maintaining service continuity and supporting the aims and objectives of the organisation as set out in [Our Council Plan \(PDF, 1.4MB\)](#).

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Background papers

None