
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, the Chief Executive, the Cabinet Member for Adults Services and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change attended the **County Councils Network annual conference**. The conference provided an opportunity to build relationships with colleagues and explore the key challenges faced by county councils across the country, including devolution, health and social care integration, children’s social care and net zero.
- The Leader attended the first **Gatwick Airport Economic Summit** on 3 November. The event was hosted by Gatwick Airport Limited and brought together stakeholders from across the region to discuss long-term, sustainable economic growth. Discussions during the day included a debate around skills development and the skills pipeline in the Gatwick region, opportunities arising from tourism which featured the Sussex Visitor Economy Initiative being supported by the County Council and consideration of the opportunities from growth sectors across West Sussex, Surrey, East Sussex, Kent and South London.
- The County Council, bidding as part of a South-East consortium, has been successful in securing funding from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to deliver the **Create Growth Programme** across the county. The programme will provide support for high-growth potential businesses in the creative industries, including in film, TV, design, music, performing arts and IT and computer services, through developing the knowledge and skills needed to access private sector investment. The programme will launch in January 2023 and further information can be found on the County Council’s [website](#).
- The Leader attended the **Manor Royal Matters and Business Improvement District (BID) annual review** on 10 November, which showcased what the BID has achieved over the last 10 years to improve the quality of trading and working environments in Crawley and Gatwick and considered future planning. The County Council and Crawley Borough Council have been working alongside the BID, as a key partner on the Crawley Growth Programme, to deliver multiple projects including the £3.98m scheme [Manor Royal Highways Improvements](#). Phase one of the partnership scheme was completed in the summer and phase two is scheduled for completion in March 2023. The project will improve the business environment, ease traffic flow, and enhance sustainable transport infrastructure in Manor Royal. Manor Royal BID will continue to be a key partner as the County Council looks to refresh the Growth Deal next year and continues to support business investment and employment growth.

Adults Services - Amanda Jupp

- Carers Rights Day on 24 November focused on helping carers to understand their rights and what support is available. A free service by **Supported Employment West Sussex**, commissioned by the County Council, was

highlighted which supports carers in the workplace and those who want to return to employment. Also showcased on the day was [Carers Support West Sussex](#), a charity which works closely with the Council and has useful tips on its website or employers who want to support staff members who have caring responsibilities. The [Joint Carer Strategy in West Sussex](#) was included which helps employers to see how they can support employees who have caring commitments. A list of [frequently asked questions](#) and answers in relation to carers and available employment is available at Supported Employment West Sussex. This service can also be contacted by calling 01903 730044 or emailing workability@impact-initiatives.org.uk.

- The County Council worked with East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Councils to raise awareness of adult safeguarding across Sussex during **Safeguarding Adults** Week in November. This year had a different safeguarding focus for each day of the week, enabling organisations to share information and raise awareness of a variety of safeguarding issues. [Resources that are available](#) for use by professionals, community groups, organisations, and members of the public were shared in order to raise awareness of adult safeguarding and support all those who come into contact with vulnerable people living across Sussex.
- Last month the Leader and Cabinet used the regular meeting with [West Sussex MPs](#) to raise the significant **pressures within the adult social care system**. Issues discussed included the increased demand for services, delayed discharge, funding pressures, the implications of the confirmed delays to the adult social care reforms and the need for more detailed guidance to understand the implications of the additional funding for West Sussex. It was agreed that the deployment of the adult social care discharge funding would be a key topic of discussion with them at the next meeting.

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

- A new [package of support and advice created especially for care leavers](#) in West Sussex has been launched. The [new Leaving Care Local Offer](#), developed in conjunction with care leavers and partners, provides the information young people need as they move out of care and into independence. It sets out the support and financial help they are entitled to and all of the different ways the County Council's Leaving Care Service is available to them.
- The [Exceptional People in Care \(EPIC\) awards](#) took place in November, celebrating the successes and achievements of children in care and care leavers. The ceremony was themed 'Be You' and organised in collaboration with the [Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Advisory Board](#) who also contributed to hosting the event. Categories of winners on the day included Big Hearts and Big Strength, Children we care for Young Person of the Year 2022 and Care Leaver of the Year 2022.
- A new [Fostering West Sussex website](#) has been launched to coincide with the current [urgent appeal for more people to become foster carers for 11 to 17-year-olds](#). The website provides a wealth of information including an insight into fostering via video stories provided by West Sussex foster carers. It also provides details of the comprehensive training, ongoing 24/7 professional

support and competitive allowances that all County Council foster carers receive.

Learning and Skills – Nigel Jupp

- A [consultation has been launched](#) on proposed solutions to help reduce surplus primary school places in the Worthing and Durrington area. An excess of vacant pupil places creates a number of financial challenges for schools so views are being sought from schools, parents and members of the public on options to address the surplus and assist schools to become more sustainable into the future.
- [Free holiday club places will be available over the school Christmas holidays](#) for children who receive means-tested free school meals. There are 41 organisations assisting with delivery of the [Holiday Activity and Food programme](#) (HAF) across the county, with a wide range of activities on offer, including sports, theatre, making music, cooking and gymnastics. Each child will also be given a meal for every day they take part. Separate to the HAF programme the County Council is also providing a £15 supermarket food voucher to eligible families, which will support over 17,500 children in West Sussex.

Community Support, Fire and Rescue – Duncan Crow

- **Biker Down workshops**, run by firefighters in West Sussex, have been undertaken during October and November. The course teaches skills that could save a life in the event of a road traffic collision involving a motorcycle. The free workshops include training on scene management following a collision involving a motorbike, first aid, including helmet removal, and how to best be seen on the road. The Biker Down training is useful for all road users, not just bikers as the actions taken in the early moments of a collision are essential to minimise injuries. People can register to be notified when future workshops are confirmed on the [Eventbrite page](#).
- **West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has relaunched its road safety show** for the first time since the pandemic with a new interactive element. [Safe Drive Stay Alive](#), a driver awareness programme, has been delivered to thousands of young people across the county since it first launched in 2006. The show, which is aimed specifically at young people, explores the consequences of being involved in a collision. Safe Drive Stay Alive, returned to Chichester College in November and was delivered to more than 3,000 students. As part of the relaunch, which tied in with Road Safety Week, students were invited to answer road safety questions throughout the show using interactive tools on their phones. The survey found that 82% of students felt they had learnt more about road safety because of the show.
- As part of [Explore Your Archive Week](#), West Sussex Record Office offered a free introduction to the Record Office, its Searchroom, collections and online resources. Visitors were given the opportunity to sign up for a free [Archives Card](#), enabling future visits to investigate the history of family and homes and to access other resources including military and hospital records and the archives of estates and manors. From January, the Record Office's [Coffee Time workshops](#) will return on the first Wednesday of each month to provide an opportunity for residents to learn from the experts on subjects such as how to

start a family tree, researching the history of a house and getting started with [Ancestry.co.uk](https://www.ancestry.co.uk).

- The County Council is working in partnership to support people and families who are struggling with the rising **cost of living**. The County Council is using the Government's Household Support Fund to provide financial and practical assistance to people this winter. Working closely with borough and district councils and charities, the Council's Community Hub continues to offer direct support to vulnerable households, providing essentials such as food and supplies, as well as grants to those who are eligible. The 36 West Sussex libraries offer a warm welcome to all visitors and library staff are on hand to help advise people on topics, from money management to energy saving, job seeking and benefits guidance. '[Here to help - Cost of living](#)' assists with practical advice and information about how to apply for extra local and national support.

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

- The West Sussex Waste Partnership is working to inspire **15 to 24-year-old residents**, to engage with waste prevention and to empower students and staff to demonstrate positive recycling and waste reduction behaviours. To achieve this, the Higher Education Recycling Project team is working across West Sussex with further and higher education establishments (Chichester University, Chichester College Group – Brinsbury, Chichester, Crawley, Haywards Heath, Northbrook and Worthing), **to improve recycling rates, recycling quality and reduce waste**, both on campus and at home. The [project](#) started in February and runs until June 2023.
- A new interactive [Resident Climate Action Hub](#) has been launched by the County Council to provide an online space for people to share their ideas and views on ways to tackle climate change. Actions that individuals, households, and communities could take can be added to an 'Ideas Bank', and people can start conversations on issues such as electric vehicles, recycling, biodiversity, and food waste. The hub also has a Community Climate Action Map which aims to demonstrate the scale of collective action on climate change taking place across West Sussex.
- [Sussex Nature Partnership](#), the Woodland Trust and South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) have collaborated to produce a [Woodland Opportunity Map](#) for Sussex and the areas of the SDNPA in Hampshire. The map was launched in National Tree week and will give farmers, landowners, and managers initial guidance on identifying sites suitable for woodland creation. The event also provided updates and information about other strategies to support woodland including tools, grants and what advice is available in Sussex.

Finance and Property – Jeremy Hunt

- The [Chancellor's Autumn Statement](#) was announced on 17 November alongside the [latest economic forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility](#) (OBR) As expected, the announcements were very high level and the specific allocations for West Sussex will not be known until the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, which is expected on 21 December. The Government did recognise the pressure on local government, particularly those

with social care responsibilities, and is therefore proposing to increase social care funding by £2.8bn next year and £4.7bn in 2024/25. Whilst the County Council welcomes the additional funding, longer-term solutions are still required to put social care on a sustainable footing. The **draft budget, which will be presented at Public Cabinet on 31 January 2023**, will include the outcome of the settlement, as well as reflecting on the Council's increased costs of delivering its services. The increased costs cover a number of pressures, including the OBR's forecast on inflation and interest rates. The Autumn Statement also included additional core funding for schools – £2.3bn in 2023/24 and £2.3bn in 2024/25 – although full details are not expected until the New Year. Finally, the statement included the flexibility to increase the referendum limit on council tax for 2023/24 to 3% and, for those local authorities with adult social care responsibilities, the ability to raise the adult social care precept up to 2%. As usual, any decisions on council tax will form part of the overall budget which will be presented for approval at the County Council meeting on 17 February 2023.

Highways and Transport – Joy Dennis

- Construction commenced on 31 October on the [Lyminster Bypass](#) to create a verge on one side of the bypass and a footway/cycleway on the other. When finished, it will complete the link between the A27 and the A259, bypassing the Lyminster bends and the existing level crossing, helping to boost the local economy and supporting the development of homes and jobs in Littlehampton.
- Government funding of up to £1.8m has been awarded to the [West Sussex Chargepoint Network](#), which is providing electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints for residents in areas that have no off-street parking. The award will part-fund up to 450 on-street chargepoints and 100 in public car parks with the remainder funded by the supplier, Connected Kerb. This will further boost what is already the UK's largest rollout of electric vehicle chargepoints by a local authority.

Public Health and Wellbeing – Bob Lanzer

- With the oversight of the [Sussex Health and Care Assembly, the Integrated Care Strategy](#) is being developed, following a period of co-production and suggestions for content, capitalising on opportunities created by being part of an Integrated Care System. A draft strategy is expected to be circulated to the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board virtually during November, for comments before the final strategy is presented to the Sussex Health and Care Assembly in December for sign off. Residents can find out how to get involved in shaping the future of health and care in Sussex here: [Shaping better health and care - Sussex Health and Care](#).
- A **County Council Member Development Session** focused on **Public Health in West Sussex** took place on 4 November. Hosted by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing and led by the Director of Public Health and members of her leadership team, the session provided an opportunity for members to learn about public health and how it is delivered locally in West Sussex. This included statutory duties, key themes, funding and public health contributions to improving the impacts and outcomes of the four Council priorities. The session also outlined the role of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board and its strong links with the new Integrated Care System for

Sussex. There will be opportunities for further learning on public health topics for members at future Member Development Sessions.

- Promotion of this year's **Stoptober campaign**, the annual national stop smoking challenge, encouraging and supporting smokers to make a quit attempt during October, started on 22 September. Organisations in the [Smokefree West Sussex Partnership \(PDF, 1MB\)](#), led by the County Council, supported the campaign by engaging 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. Evaluation of the campaign locally is underway. Between 1 September and 16 October there were over 1,150 unique page views of the stop smoking services page on the West Sussex Wellbeing website - an increase of 135% from the same period last year. Those living and working in West Sussex can continue to access support to stop smoking from [West Sussex Wellbeing](#) and stop smoking support tools are available on the [Better Health website](#).

Support Services and Economic Development – Steve Waight

- The County Council is working in partnership with Adur District Council (ADC) on **revitalising the Southwick Square pedestrian area** in Southwick to make it a more vibrant place for visitors. The initiative, with the input of local residents and businesses, is set to transform the area by revitalising the seating and park area by the east parade, making it much more inviting and accessible. Funding for the work as part of the Adur Growth Deal involves £87,000 from ADC and up to £600,000, subject to key decision by the Cabinet Member, from the County Council. ADC carried out a [public consultation](#) in October to seek the views of residents and businesses which will inform the final details. Work is anticipated to begin in spring 2023 with a completion date planned for the summer.
- The County Council continues to work collaboratively with Arun District Council (ADC) on an **Esplanade Public Realm Improvement in Bognor Regis** for the seafront area between Clarence Road and Lennox Street. The scheme aims to improve accessibility north of the Esplanade to the Place Saint-Maur area, which has been the subject of recent regeneration by ADC. Also key to the project will be a 20mph zone with enhanced crossing facilities at three locations, changes to the road layout to incorporate landscape planting and improvement to walking and cycling facilities along the route. The project, part of the County Council's Growth deal with ADC, has a budget of circa £1.8m to cover design and construction. Preliminary design work is nearing completion and expected that works will commence in autumn 2023 with delivery planned for winter 2023/24.
- The **West Sussex County Council website has gained accreditation from the Shaw Trust** this year, recognising the website as compliant with accessibility standards and supportive of users with a wide range of disabilities and impairments who wish to access and use the site. [Shaw Trust](#) is a leading UK charity that supports over 50,000 people a year throughout the UK and further afield to live independent and inclusive lives. West Sussex is currently the only County Council to hold the website accreditation. Any website carrying this mark has been tested by people with a wide range of disabilities and found to be accessible. Work on the website continues in order to ensure the best possible experience for residents.

Contact Officer: Helen Kenny, Head of Democratic Services, 033 022 22532,
helen.kenny@westsussex.gov.uk

Background papers

None