

## **Our Council Plan and KPIs**

### **Introduction**

**The importance of the services provided by this Council has once again been evident over the past year, particularly the crucial support for those in our county who are most vulnerable.**

The global economic situation and the legacy of the pandemic have continued to have significant impact on local people, places and on the local economy. We have continued to focus on delivering our residents' priorities, including significant investment in highways maintenance, all while continuing to balance our budget.

We are in a period of growing demand for our services. With inflation pushing up costs, difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff for us and our providers, having to meet changes in inspection regimes, government policy and funding, we are facing a very challenging picture.

It is therefore more important than ever that our priorities are clear and that we focus on delivering these effectively and efficiently. Our business planning continues to be underpinned by a relentless focus on our priorities and delivering the outcomes we set. As we approach a General Election, we are also seeking to influence and respond to a range of significant national policy developments which will have implications for the Council's services and role in our community, particularly work to take the lead on supporting economic growth in the County from 1 April 2024.

Our ambitions are captured each year in a detailed Council Plan. It sets out what we aim to achieve for our communities. It covers what we will do and the targets we will use to judge our performance during the year. The Council Plan, revenue budget and capital programme are integrated through our business planning process. The Plan is based around four priority outcomes, with an underlying commitment to protect our environment:

- Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations;
- A sustainable and prosperous economy;
- Helping people and communities fulfil their potential; and
- Making best use of resources.

We consulted West Sussex residents on our priorities – to ensure we are focusing our efforts in the right places. 68% strongly agreed or tended to agree with the County Council's priorities. We are therefore confident that our priorities are right, and they will continue to inform how we prioritise competing demands for our resources in the coming year.

The real progress we have made over the last few years on our improvement journey, which has been recognised by Ofsted and HM's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, puts us in a strong position to deal with the challenges. We know we have more to do and will continue to seek ever better ways to:

- Put residents and communities at the heart of everything we do;
- Provide strong and visible leadership and stand up for the interests of West Sussex as a convener for place;
- Work closely with communities and partners;
- Invest in and value the staff that work for us and

- Make the way we work as a council as straightforward as possible for the communities we serve.

As well as supporting residents directly we recognise how close and effective partnerships are key to being able to deliver our priorities and to maximise our value for residents. We will continue to build and strengthen our collaborative working including with the districts and boroughs, the NHS and voluntary and community sector through the Sussex Integrated Care System, with schools and with care providers. We will also build on our work with businesses, employers and other economic partners as we take on the functions of the Local Enterprise Partnership.

With rising demand, costs and funding pressures, we will need to continue to:

- Prioritise our key outcomes;
- Carefully manage the demand on our services;
- Make sure our resources go to where they are needed most;
- Continue to get the best value for money from our resources, in the short and long term; and
- Lobby Government to understand the pressures we are facing, and the difficult decisions needed about the services we provide, if adequate, sustainable, long-term funding is not provided.

The Council Plan, and the way we have put it together, reflects the range of what we do – as deliverer, convener or enabler to put in place what is needed to serve our communities. It acts as a framework for us to deliver on our ambitions in a way that means we are clear on what we want to achieve and how to do so but are flexible to respond to whatever comes our way.

Having this clear plan ensures that putting our communities first remains the foundation on which we continue to improve and deliver.

### **Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations**

We know that there will be times in people's lives when they need more help. We will be there to ensure timely support to manage risk and prevent escalation of need. We will focus our activity in the following areas:

- Children's services will continue to take a 'whole family' approach to ensuring children are safe, with families supported by multi-agency 'early help hubs' to provide coordinated early support.
- Children's Services will keep children with their families wherever possible, to ensure quality family life and reduce reliance on costly short-term placements. Where this is not possible, we will ensure we find a safe and supportive environment for children to live and thrive.
- Fire and Rescue Service – through the Community Risk Management Plan, we will prevent fire wherever possible, through fire safety checks targeted at those who need it most and our wider public awareness campaigns.
- We will continue to act on behalf of the Government, supporting refugees and displaced families.
- Trading standards will respond to residents' reports of predatory trading and prevent them from becoming repeat victims.
- Adult Social Care will work with its partners to ensure that those with care and support needs who may be experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect are safeguarded. We will continue to increase our effectiveness and through our

strength-based working ensure that residents are supported to live independently at home.

- Through the West Sussex Local Offer, Children's Services will continue to deliver information, advice and guidance for children, families and young people with special educational needs and disabilities up to 25 years old.
- Adults' Social Care will work with partners to provide early support in the community and close to home, including support to unpaid carers for working age and older people.
- Fire and Rescue will continue to conduct 'safe and well' visits for people who need it most, including fitting smoke alarms and fire detection equipment free of charge.
- Cost of living – we will provide support where we can and signpost wider support that is available to residents who are struggling with the impacts of cost-of-living pressures through our website, libraries and Community Hub.

## **A sustainable and prosperous economy**

A sustainable and prosperous economy in West Sussex is key to the future wellbeing of the county and it has never been more important for us to focus on this. Ensuring that businesses are supported to sustain and grow, that local people have access to well-paid employment, and that the conditions are right for enterprise and innovation will have a positive impact on the long-term health of residents and on young people achieving their potential. We will focus our activity in the following areas:

- We will take on the functions of the Local Enterprise Partnership on 1 April 2024 and will work to ensure that the business voice in West Sussex is heard and the Government understands the need to invest in West Sussex to grow the economy.
- We will deliver the Council's Economic Plan, focussing on the challenges faced by different places in the county; on supporting new and existing businesses; on employment and skills activities to support and create jobs and on digital technology to boost growth. Protecting the environment will underpin our approach to supporting the economy.
- We will work with district and borough councils and other partners on strategic opportunities to promote a sustainable economy and jobs growth across the county, including taking advantage of all available funding and potential future devolution opportunities.
- West Sussex Growth Deals – we will continue to deliver on existing deals with district and borough councils which aim to support town centre growth, unlock housing and employment sites and attract investment. We will seek to refresh deals that are due to expire after their 5-year term.
- Social value framework – we will ensure our procurement processes are accessible to local providers to maximise the use of local suppliers in our supply chains and secure economic, social and environmental benefits for our residents. This includes jobs and opportunities for local people and access to education, training and support.
- We will work with social care providers to deliver our new market sustainability plan which supports the delivery of affordable and sustainable care provision to meet residents needs to maintain their independence.
- West Sussex Transport Plan – we are delivering the objectives and strategic priorities for improving the transport network up to 2036 set out in our West Sussex Transport Plan of April 2022, to enable active travel and access to

education, employment and services, and decarbonise the transport system while protecting the local environment.

- We will continue to invest in and maintain our roads to enable a safe and effective transport option that offers choice, is convenient to use, enhances the environment and enables economic growth.
- Digital infrastructure – we will continue to work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the telecoms market to accelerate gigabit-capable infrastructure; support economic growth and innovation and enable connected spaces that serve both the people and places of West Sussex.
- We will work with employers, education and training providers to progress skills and employment opportunities to support residents and the local economy in the medium and longer term.
- As part of our overarching commitment to protecting our environment we will continue to deliver commitments in our Climate Change Strategy, in particular positioning the county as a place for innovation in green technology and renewable energy. We will take advantage of Government grants and 'green finance' options. We will also seek to encourage and enable the community and businesses to innovate and make decisions which optimise the use of renewable energy, reduce carbon impact and promote nature recovery and biodiversity.

## **Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential**

Enabling people and communities to fulfil their potential is at the heart of the Council's ambition for West Sussex. To achieve this, we need to improve and sustain the conditions that will enable people to be independent, and communities to feel and be safe, to benefit from a prosperous, sustainable economy and to lead healthy, fulfilling lives. We will focus our activity in the following areas:

- School effectiveness strategy – we will continue to support our schools on their improvement journeys and build on the success of having 259 of 284 West Sussex schools currently rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding (91%).
- We will ensure that there are sufficient school places where they are needed, and work with schools and parents to review places where they are not.
- Careers advice – we will continue to support 500 young people not in education, employment or training and provide apprenticeships with the Council and encourage others to do the same.
- We will evaluate our School Streets Active Travel Initiative and consider further roll out across the county.
- Lifelong learning – we will work with education providers to support them in running accessible learning and development opportunities.
- As part of the health and care partnership commitment to tackle health inequality we will support the continued development of 'local neighbourhood community networks' across the county. The aim is to empower communities to deliver change through collaborative working between primary care, local government, public health and local voluntary sector enterprises, and improve digital inclusion, health & wellbeing.
- Libraries – we will continue to deliver activities to support literacy and learning for children, families and older people, preventing isolation. We will work with local communities on how we can deliver these services innovatively.
- Public Health Wellbeing Programme – through our partnership with all seven district and borough councils, we will support people to maintain and improve

their health and wellbeing through advice and support that is person-centred and addresses health inequality.

- With our Adult Social Care Strategy, we will work with communities and partners to embed a strength-based approach to the delivery of adult social care – harnessing people’s strengths and connecting them with their community. By promoting people’s independence and wellbeing, we will prevent, reduce or delay their need for additional care services.
- Residential and nursing care – we will aim to support people to remain as independent as possible, for as long as possible in their own homes. However, where residential care is needed, we will work collaboratively with the care market to ensure that what is needed is available and is of good quality.
- Supported accommodation – we will work in collaboration with housing providers to develop alternative accommodation options with care, including extra care housing, enabling more people to remain in their own home.
- Day services – we will design, develop and deliver a new model for day services in coproduction with people who use the services to ensure that people with lifelong learning needs, physical or sensory impairment, acquired brain injury and neurodiversity including autism have support to access the right activities and opportunities in their local community.
- Shared Lives scheme – we will increase the number of people living in this family-based accommodation model.
- Reablement – we will increase capacity and deliver a more efficient service to ensure more people are able to remain as independent as possible in their own home.
- Dementia – in partnership with NHS Sussex, districts and boroughs and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), we will combine efforts to ensure the right accommodation and support is available for people to live independently, including support to carers.
- Digital technology – using the latest assistive technology we will enhance people’s independence and wellbeing and keep people safe in their own home for longer.
- Disabled facilities grant – we will continue working with district and borough councils to improve disabled people’s access to grant funding to adapt their homes, so they are more accessible and help to maintain their independence.
- Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan – at the heart of the plan is the prevention of fire and ensuring community safety. We will continue to deliver on this core commitment and protect people through a timely response to incidents.
- Voluntary and Community Sector – we will work collaboratively with our partners to deliver effective community-based support that reaches people most in need at the right time and in the right place.
- Tackling crime – we will work collaboratively with partners such as the Police to reduce criminality and raise awareness amongst the public to prevent crime and keep our communities safe.

### **Making the best use of resources**

In all of our business planning and delivery we will be making the best use of our resources, ensuring value for money and cost effective services. We will use the data and information available on our residents’ and communities’ needs to deliver the right things efficiently and effectively. We will learn from others and identify areas of good practice and we will work with our partners to identify opportunities where working together is better for residents. This means we continue to improve the way

we work to get the best from the resources we have to manage increasing demand. We will focus our activity in the following areas:

- Good governance – we will work in a way that ensures effective governance, supporting sound decision making and management across the County Council. This will mean we deliver the best for our residents, with transparency and openness.
- People framework – our staff will have the confidence and support to deliver change and continuous improvement. All staff will be treated with dignity and respect and will have consistent and high-quality performance and development conversations. We will attract, recruit and retain the staff we need to deliver our services and we will underpin staff development with equality, diversity and inclusion.
- We will maximise the use and value of our assets by looking creatively at how we might use them to support economic growth, financial planning and social value (for example, sharing space in our buildings with start-ups). We will reduce our overall energy consumption and decarbonise as far as possible to meet our aim of being a net carbon zero organisation by 2030. We will consider a wide range of measures to protect and safeguard the environment to achieve this ambition.
- We will modernise the way that residents can access services through the use of digital channels and technology to make it as easy as possible whilst also ensuring services are accessible by all.
- We will improve the cost effectiveness of our services by comparing how much we spend on achieving outcomes and identify opportunities to deliver the same or better for less.
- We will look to combine or share approaches and services to achieve greater efficiency.
- We will work with Districts and Boroughs to implement Simpler Recycling – to enable food waste to be collected and disposed of.