

Adult Social Care Newsletter



A message from the cabinet member.

Welcome to my first newsletter as Cabinet Member for Adults and Health. As you will see in this edition, since my appointment in September I have been meeting with local people and our key partners and stakeholders to listen to their views on Adult Social Care in West Sussex.

I am pleased to be supported by my advisors, Ashvin Patel, Senior Adviser for Adult Social Care and Safeguarding, and Viral Parikh, Adviser on Health Partnership Liaison and Public Health (jointly with the Leader). They will be helping me in my work to ensure we continue to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people of West Sussex against the backdrop of ongoing national financial and demographic challenges.

In order to do this, the County Council recently agreed its vision for the next five years. The [2017-2022 West Sussex Plan](#) outlines our ambitious agenda to drive forward change and progress for West Sussex. I would encourage everyone to read the Plan. To achieve its vision we have focussed on five key priorities that we believe will make the biggest difference to our residents. These include:

- Best start in life
- A prosperous place
- A strong, safe and sustainable place
- Independence for later life
- A council that works for the community.

My main responsibilities lie within 'Independence for Later Life' and the outcomes in this area reflect our intention that older people should feel safe and secure, have opportunities to thrive, be healthy and well and feel part of their community. This will achieve our ambition that West Sussex continues to be a great place to grow older. We continue to work with a range of partners to progress our programme of transformation across Adults' Services so that we are in a good position to meet the ongoing financial pressures whilst continuing to deliver quality services to our residents.

The County Council is currently confirming its plan for a balanced budget for 2018/19 and this will be agreed in February 2018. We are proposing a 1.95% increase to council tax for 2018/19, with a further 2% increase to support the cost of providing adult social care. This works out at around 95 pence per week for the average West Sussex

household. I can assure you that we do not take these decisions lightly, however it is vital to us that we protect frontline services during this challenging financial time.

I will provide more information about our various transformation projects in this newsletter, but I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all our staff who are working hard to implement our programme of change. Their dedication to supporting our customers and carers has been proved time and again over the past few years, and I'm looking forward to working with them to build on our past successes.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you a very happy and healthy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Sussex Health Care

You will be aware that we continue to work closely with partners, including the Care Quality Commission, Sussex Police and Health colleagues, looking in detail at care at a number of services run by Sussex Health Care. I am extremely saddened that such investigations are having to take place. I know a number of staff are working tirelessly in this matter and I would like to thank them for their continued hard work. Louise Goldsmith, Leader of the Council has recently issued a blog addressing this issue that you can read [here](#).

Care month and Care Recruitment

For the third year in a row, October was [Care Month](#) in West Sussex. This year's activities focussed on the everyday things that people can do to help avoid unplanned hospital visits and the support available to people once they leave hospital. The campaign included radio broadcasts on More and Spirit FM where we ran a series of short information items on a range of topics and you can listen to them all on [Spirit FM's website](#).



During Care Month, I spent an enjoyable afternoon at The Rowans, one of the Council's specialist day care centres, having tea and a chat with people who access the centre about the activities they most enjoy. I was also able to speak with staff, learning more about the vital work they do for our residents.

Alongside our Care Month activities in October we continued to promote our long-running [care recruitment campaign](#). The campaign was developed in response to the ongoing national challenge in recruiting people to work in the care sector and it continues to go from strength to strength. I look forward to updating you further as we continue to measure success.

'Think Carer'

Over 84,000 West Sussex residents of all ages care for family members, neighbours or friends. We're aware that many people miss out on valuable information, support and advice because they don't identify themselves as a carer and are not sure where or who to turn to.

As part of Carers Rights Day on 24 November we launched a new [video](#) which shares stories and experiences of West Sussex carers. It also encourages people to 'Think Carer' and asks us all to help carers find the advice and support they need. I would encourage everyone to watch the video.



If you, or someone you know, looks out for someone who is reliant on that support then visit [Carers Support West Sussex](#) for advice, or call them on 0300 028 8888 (calls charged at a local rate).



Supporting Lives, Connecting People

As you may be aware, over the past year we have been trialling a new approach to delivering adult social care in response to the financial and demographic pressures we face. The first trial period has now finished and we have been considering the findings from the evaluation. This included feedback

from a wide ranging programme of stakeholder engagement which involved our residents, customers, 'family and friends' carers, and community groups. As part of this work we also held two large events for voluntary and community sector organisations and these were planned and hosted jointly with our local Clinical Commissioning Groups who are also developing community-based approaches to the delivery of Health services. These were well-attended and provided much valuable feedback to inform our new approach to adult social care and also our future working relationship with the sector.

The evaluation has provided us with considerable information, but we want to do more work to understand how the approach can help us to improve the support we provide to people. To do this we will shortly be starting a second trial period. This will include a focus on further testing of the 'Talk Local' sessions, where our staff meet with people in their local communities to discuss their situation and social care needs. We will also be undertaking more work on how we respond in a more streamlined way to people asking about adult social care support.

This period will last for about three months and will provide us with more evidence before I take a decision about the County Council's approach to adult social care. We anticipate that this will be in Spring 2018.

Lifelong Services

The County Council is developing 'Lifelong Services' - a new approach to how we work with people who have lifelong disabilities acquired before the age of 25 - this includes autism and people with learning disabilities.



Typically, these are people who will have support from us either through additional help in education or social care as a child or adult.

Parts of Adults' and Children's Services will come together in a new, seamless service. It aims to provide consistency, so that we don't ask individuals and families to keep on telling us their story. It will also prevent people undergoing duplicate assessments and allow young people to plan for adulthood earlier, helping them to be more independent and to find employment.

At the moment, workers from the Child Disability Team, Community Learning Disability Team, Independent Living Service and Special Education Needs Assessment Team are working together on a trial basis. This will run until January 2018 and if it is successful the trial will be extended. We are working closely with the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum on the trial.

If you want to know more, you can sign up for the Lifelong Services Newsletter by emailing lifelong.services@westsussex.gov.uk.



Safer Seasons: Winter

As we approach the winter months we all need to think about how we can try and stay safe and well and help support our loved ones and people we care for. We will shortly be launching a festive-themed campaign on tips to stay safe and well through the season, and you can find out more on our [website](#). Some of the main things you can do

and highlight to the people you work with include:

Get your FREE flu jab: the flu virus is active in winter and it can be far more serious than you think. Contact your GP, practice nurse or pharmacist to book an appointment now.

Eat well: regular hot meals and drinks will keep you warm. Stock up on tinned or frozen foods. Get it delivered if you can, so you don't have to go out when it's cold or icy.

Get your heating system checked: make sure it is working safely and efficiently. Install a BS EN 50291 standard carbon monoxide alarm

Keep your home warm: heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F). Keeping warm can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

On 19th October, I chaired the first of my Adult Social Care Roundtable meetings and I was delighted to see so many people in attendance. Since the meetings began two years ago, all involved have expressed how much they value having a forum where customers, carers, County Councillors and senior officers can openly debate issues of mutual importance and gain increased understanding of each other's views. The recent meeting was no exception.



I also wanted to also let you know that RCSAS recently launched #AreYouListening, a social media awareness campaign for International Day to End Violence Against Women on Saturday 25 November. The initiative ran for 16 days and raised awareness of the prevalence of violence against women and girls and the need to listen to survivors.

I'm looking forward to future meetings and more of the lively discussion that this forum encourages.



Healthwatch West Sussex is the independent local consumer champion for health and social care services. It is supported by Healthwatch England, which is part of the Care Quality Commission (CQC). It has a statutory role in providing local people the opportunity to have a say about the health and care services they use.

Healthwatch West Sussex does this by speaking to people all over the county and listening to their experiences. It also conducts in-depth research on key priority issues. Healthwatch West Sussex is a valued critical friend to the Council, and its work helps to ensure that the views of local people are heard when we are planning and delivering our services.

If you have an experience you would like to share with Healthwatch West Sussex you can contact them by telephone on **0300 012 0122** (calls charged at local rate) or via email helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk.

West Sussex Connect to Support Website

Following feedback from our website users, we have been enhancing [West Sussex Connect to Support](#). It's now even easier to navigate and with one click you can access helpful information and advice, browse and shop for products and services and discover a wide range of local groups and activities in your community.



We continue to improve the website search function to ensure that you can easily find the information you are looking for. We welcome any feedback on your experience of using the site. Please just click on 'how would you rate this site' on the homepage.



In House Services

We are currently considering how we deliver the services we directly provide to people. This includes day centres, residential homes and 'Shared Lives' services. We are considering the best way we can plan for the future to help us meet demand, respond to local need and pressures, and work together with a range of different partners to deliver those services.

Over the last year we have been speaking with people who use our services, their families and carers to understand what is working well, what is not and why. We have also been finding out what people want, what other services there are in each local area, and how other local authorities have been approaching similar issues. We know that our services overall are highly thought of, but some are not well used and are expensive to run. Maintaining and adapting buildings can also be costly and some sites are not fit for people's changing needs.

This does not mean that we intend to withdraw services but may mean that we will deliver them in a different way. We are currently developing proposals, which should be completed by the end of the year. We will then engage with people who use our services and their families and carers on these in the early part of 2018. No decision will be made until we have considered people's comments.

If you would like to find out more about the work please contact the project team at: IHSC.Options.Appraisal@westsussex.gov.uk.

Decisions taken since the March 2017 Newsletter

31 March – to set the annual fees paid by the County Council to independent providers of adults' social care in West Sussex. This includes care homes and care homes with nursing.

22 November – to approve a competitive procurement process starting in December for the provision of specialist health services for people with learning disabilities and autism. The current contracts end on 30 June 2018 and have a combined value of £3.68m per year.

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