

**Report for Chichester City Council**  
**by Cllr Sarah Sharp, County Councillor for Chichester South**  
**September 2025**

**1) West Sussex Plan has been refreshed to include another priority**

- Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations.
- A sustainable and prosperous economy.
- Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential.
- Making the best use of resources.
- Maximising the benefits of devolution and local government reorganisation for our residents and communities.**

[Our Council Plan - West Sussex County Council](#)

**All the priorities are underpinned with the underlying theme of protecting the environment.**

**2) Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation**

Votes were taken on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September to determine the option the County supports for Local Government Reorganisation. The County voted to recommend the one unitary model and the District backed the 2 unitary model. However, it will be Government that makes the final decision after a period of consultation in the autumn.

**3) Community Tension**

**Background:**

The area has seen a number of St George's flags put up on lamp posts or spraypainted on bus stops, signs, bridges, roundabouts etc as in other parts of the country.

The decision was made by Highways not to take them down just ahead of the demonstration outside the Chichester Park Hotel on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> August in order not to exasperate matters but since then the flags have been taken down. Another demonstration took place on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August which was less intimidating.

Two events were held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September. A march organised with the Leader of UKIP from the Cattle Market Car Park to the hotel which houses mainly women and children asylum seekers and a Peace and Unity rally at the Cross.

The later was well attended with music, home-made banners, many speeches. All passed off peacefully at the Cross.

**Hotels housing asylum seekers**

There are a number of facilities across the country, including here in Chichester at the Park Hotel, that provide contingency accommodation to both people seeking asylum in the UK and people settling here as refugees. These are sometimes hotels used temporarily when no other safe options are available.

All contingency accommodation facilities for both asylum seekers and refugees are run by the Government not by the County Council.

Asylum seekers are people who have fled their own country to seek protection in another country by applying for refugee status. There is no such thing as an illegal asylum seeker.

Refugees in the UK are people who have left their own country and come here under a government-approved resettlement scheme. These schemes offer a safe and legal route to vulnerable refugees in need of protection. Contingency accommodation supports them to do so temporarily while longer-term solutions are found.

### **Reporting hate crimes**

*Everyone has the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of abuse, but when abuse relates to a person's race, faith, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, it may constitute a hate incident or hate crime. Hate incidents and crimes can take many forms and may cause considerable distress.*

*If you experience, witness, or become aware of hostile or abusive behaviour that you believe is targeted due to your own or someone else's race, faith, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, please [report it](#) to our Hate Incident Support Service.*

*By reporting it, you/the victim will also have the option to access free, confidential help from Victim Support. More information available here*

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/report-problems-in-your-area/report-a-hate-crime>

### **Road Safety Issues**

I have received requests about the removal of flags fixed to street furniture, typically lamp columns, and the removal of the St George's cross on mini roundabouts, other road markings, and signage. These activities are unlawful and potentially dangerous to both the individual carrying out this activity as well as motorists and other road users.

Any such instances may be reported through the usual channels:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/report-other-road-or-pavement-problems-1/>

For street lights, illuminated signs and bollards, which are maintained by Enerveo, reports can be made directly to them using this link:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/maintaining-roads-verges-and-pavements/lights-markings-and-signs/streetlights-illuminated-signs-and-bollards/>

The Council will be responding to these reports as part of their usual operational approach with any issue considered by the Highways Service as safety critical or containing offensive or discriminatory language being prioritised. Examples would be where visibility splays are compromised, or safety road signs are completely obscured. Otherwise, removal will be undertaken when they can be programmed or co-ordinated with other highway work in that location.

#### **4) Next Year's Budget**

- Pressures are always tight but on the positive note the Government has committed to a multi- year settlement – the first one in a decade. This should make it easier to plan.
- Costs of waste will go up as we will have to include household food collections from April 2026
- Growing number of children with special needs means the cost of home to school transport is going up
- Growing number of children with special needs means that when they transfer to adult services as they grow older there are higher costs for adult services
- Adult services are stretched due to complexity of need, ageing population, national living wage and employer NI contributions
- The government will confirm the outcome of their consultation on the revised local government funding regime, known as “Fair Funding 2.0”. There are pretty clear indications that this will make the county's task harder rather than easier, as a priority is placed on targeting funding towards “more deprived” areas and those with lower council tax bases.
- The government will also be announcing changes to SEND shortly which could also have a big impact on the County Council's budget.

#### **5) Devolution**

Budget for Combined Authority has been set for £1.1bn for the next 30 years ie £38m per annum. This is 50% revenue and 50% capital and unringfenced. The Govt is giving £3m over 3 years to set up the new Combined Authority in Sussex. Work still ongoing to try and change the name of the new Combined Authority to just be Sussex – the County wants to drop the inclusion of Brighton in the name. Also there are still great concerns that the decision making body of the Combined Authority won't be proportionate, should there be only 1 unitary in West Sussex. Currently the plan is for each unitary to have 2 representatives despite population sizes being very different.

#### **6) Adults Services rated “Good”**

The County Council looks after 8,500 people in care, it carries out 29,000 support plans, 27,000 assessments, 17,000 reviews and has 100,000 contacts per year.

West Sussex County Council's Adults Services have been rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

**Key strengths include:**

- Leadership, improvement and innovation
- Preventative services having a real impact on people's wellbeing, helping them to remain independent for longer
- A culture of learning, providing positive feedback and career development for staff
- Clear government and risk management
- Relationships with stakeholders and partners
- A well-established multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Proactive engagement with minority groups and a good understanding of culture, diversity and advocacy
- Strong focus on population and health and preventative care

**Areas for improvement include:**

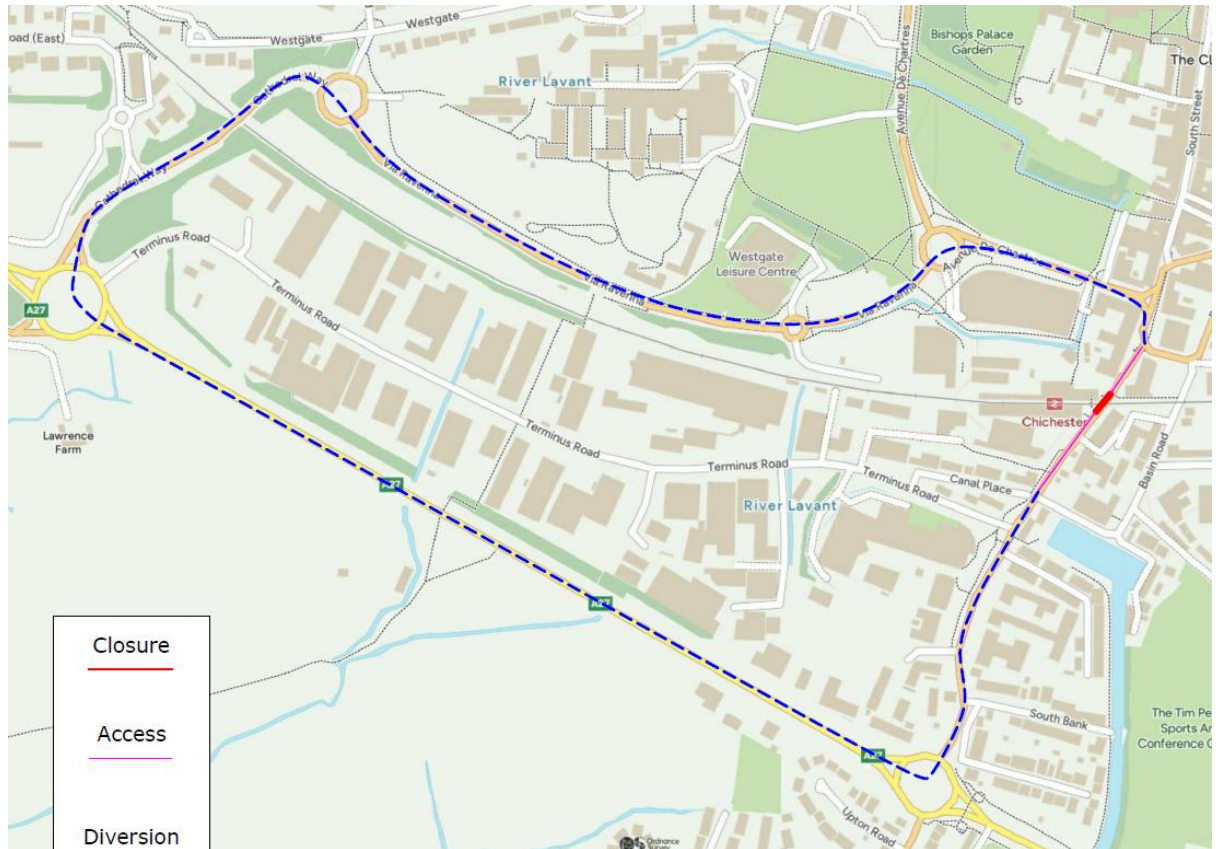
- Faster completion of Care Act reviews
  - Simplification and consistency in the direct payments process
  - Addressing gaps in provision for people with complex and multiple needs, younger people living with dementia, emergency respite care, and people with progressive conditions
  - Some unpaid carers wished for more respite and involvement in decision making
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- **Actions taken to address these areas:**
  - Introducing a dedicated review team, which has improved waiting times from the previous year.
  - The report recognised strong awareness and collaboration with partners to identify needs and actions to address gaps in provision.
  - A Direct Payment Programme, including updated policy, that is improving consistency and the numbers of people in receipt of direct payments.
  - Planned engagement with unpaid carers as part of refreshing our Carers Strategy over the coming months.

**7) More traffic disruption**

Halogen bulb replacement at the junction between the bus station and the courts: To carry out the works safely, the A286, Stockbridge Road, will be closed in both directions across the level crossing for the duration of the project. A clearly signposted diversion route will be in place. Access to local businesses and the train station car park will be maintained at all times.

To make the most of the road closure, the council has also coordinated additional works in the area, including streetlighting repairs and maintenance, helping to minimise future disruption and maximise efficiency.

Work will take place between 7am and 5pm and temporary traffic signals will be used throughout with every effort being made to minimise disruption. Pedestrian routes between the bus station and city centre will be diverted and clearly signposted. Deliveries to properties will still be possible, although street parking within the works area will be restricted with notices clearly displayed.



## 8) Skills Bootcamps

The County Council is working with the Govt to provide Skills Bootcamps to help people to gain employment.

These will give help gain insight into different career options as well as interview techniques: [Skills Bootcamps - West Sussex County Council](#)

## 9) Change of Times for Westhampnett Recycling Centre

The recycling centre closes at 4 pm from the 1<sup>st</sup> October.

It's Recycle Week this month! From the 22 September to the 28 September, we will be putting the focus on rescuing recyclable materials from the general waste bin!

In West Sussex you can recycle a core set of materials:

- cartons
- foil
- glass bottles and jars
- plastic bottles and containers (all colours)
- paper and card
- metal cans and aerosols.

This includes commonly missed recyclable items such as toothpaste tubes, black plastics, bottles with trigger sprays and aerosols.  
Just make sure they are clean, dry and loose before popping them in your recycling bin!

To find out more about recycling in West Sussex, visit: [Preparing your household recycling - West Sussex County Council](#)

#### **10) Survey on GP practices**

[Your views on recent changes to GP practices Poll 2025](#)

You have until 30<sup>th</sup> September to fill this in.

#### **11) Re-routing of the 52/53 bus**

Stagecoach has decided to curtail the route of the 52/53 bus which now no longer runs between the Cathedral and the bus station. This has been of great inconvenience to residents of Stockbridge Road in particular.

Community Transport Sussex has come back to me with a suggestion of a mini-bus twice a week to serve these mainly elderly residents. A poster trying to recruit passengers has been put together by Community Transport Sussex.

The first step is to assess if there is any interest from residents.