

WSSC Report Stedham Parish Council 9th Jan 2025

Devolution / Local Gov Reorganisation

Gov White paper published just before Xmas. Direction of travel is unitary authorities. WSSC leaders are planning on putting in a request to fast track to becoming a Sussex Strategic Mayoralty Authority with Brighton and Hove and East Sussex. But there is no agreed plan in place for Local Gov reorganisation and the geographical make up of the unitaries as no work has been done on this. Positions are being firmed up this week. Our group view is this is too hasty and although the Strategic Authority is desirable for large strategic project the detail work needs to be done with all stakeholders consulted as to the best way to reorganise the area into unitary councils and how this works with parish and town Councils. There is a danger of taking decisions further away from the communities with this so-called devolution.

We will making the case to go ahead with devolution as this is definitely happening but not in the first wave so the detailed work can be done and local elections for the County in 2025 should go ahead as planned.

Health and Adult Social Care Committee

At the meeting last month we scrutinised the Winter Plan as presented to us by the NHS leaders.

Not enough data was presented we asked for evidence rather than warm words.

Vaccination rates for Covid, Flu and the new RSV vaccine takeup was around national average but only 53% for Covid and 36% for Flu in eligible groups.

We asked for data on bed occupancy as we go into Winter, they have already had to escalate their systems as they are at max occupancy which means more beds in a bay and more time waiting in the Emergency Dept for a bed.

We asked again of evidence of their 'improvement journey' to improve times for discharge of medically fit patients.

Overall a worrying picture at this stage of the Winter.

HASC this week we will be asking urgent questions about Flu status inpatients and in the community as well as scrutinising access to NHS dentistry and Primary Care services.

Sussex HealthWatch have got a survey running on NHS Dentistry access

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Dentistry2025/>

Full Council

Full Council – last month there was a motion on family farms and also on breast cancer awareness. We are also reviewed the armed forces covenant.

Drainage

WSSC has 156,000 drainage assets including gullies, manholes and soakaways which are cleared in a four-year program. The fastest speed highways are cleared every 6 months and

the less used rural networks every year to four years. When gullies are checked they are cleared jet cleaned and tested to make sure that they are working.

Their data - 6,200 drains and gullies cleared in 2023, only 40 sites have had to be revisited.

For more details of the WSCC plan see: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/maintaining-roads-verges-and-pavements/road-maintenance/winter-service/>

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