

Parish's,

As I write this we are getting an awful lot of flooding along the West Sussex Coast. Last night at Earnley 180 people were evacuated, Littlehampton 15 evacuated and Bracklesham 20. Only one resident ended up in Hospital with suspected hypothermia.

Could it get much wetter. I think one of the main problems now is that the ground is soaked so even if the rainfall isn't that heavy it has very little space to drain down. I know on our Farm it is impossible at the moment to do any Tractor work. We can only hope that we soon get some respite from this dreadful weather.

I am reporting all Highways issues as I know about them either from members of the Public, Parish/Town Councils or ones that I see myself. The normal time scale for getting these works done has completely gone I'm afraid and at the moment I don't see timescales for the jobs on Highways improving.

As a County Councillor I have asked that they look seriously and getting the current Highways in good condition before committing to new projects and I include in that Cycle ways. Not sure anyone is listening but I keep trying. Probably not the most popular Councillor there at the moment but that's not what's important to me.

On the same theme I have noticed that some work has taken place on verge cutting. I can't get to the bottom of this as to whether it's part of County contract or a resident just doing so work which actually is not allowed. That said what I have seen is some pretty poor verges that begin to look like ploughed fields because they were just so wet and soft when they were cut.

On a brighter note recent OFSTED inspections on our Childrens homes have been great with 2 judged outstanding which is very hard to come by and the other 4 is good. We still have work to do in our Childrens Services but gradually getting there.

You will have noticed on your Council Tax bill notes that Childrens Services and Adult Services take the bulk of our finance and it has to be admitted that they are the 2 most important issues for the County but where does it leave us with the other important issues. They all have to be delivered and I am pleased to say that this year we have balanced the budget without cutting our Services and despite the state of the roads more and more millions are going in to that part of the budget.

You probably all saw that we have a new Chief Executive who can of course join us for another couple of months yet as he has to work out his notice as deputy Chief Executive Surrey County Council.

His name is Leigh Whitehouse and until he can join us Becky Shaw will stay with us and then return full time to East Sussex County Council.

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