

Report from County Councillor Janet Duncton

Meeting date: 08.11.2023

I wanted to wait until after County Council on Friday 13.10.2023 in case there was anything that would interest you all. There were 2 motions for voting on one had unanimous support and was about caring for those who had been in care and basically helping them to go forward into adulthood with the sort of help we would give to our own children.

The second one a bit more contentious but basically it was about not wanting the ULEZ scheme that now runs around London more or less in line with the M25 with a little bump so that Chessington gets included. We did not want it coming further south and including parts of Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Hampshire and possibly other Counties as well. This was not unanimous but went through with a big majority and those not wanting to support it abstaining.

There was one motion that the Chairman did not want to take and that was about setting up a joint committee with regard to water issues in the whole area. This wasn't taken as the motion was somewhat out of date because this joint committee is already up and running.

Some will have heard about the King Charles 111 England Coast path when completed it will be the longest coastal path in the World and from the 18th October a part of it in West Sussex from East Head to Shoreham-by-Sea will be ready for walkers. For anyone interested there are some online sites that you can visit and perhaps the most useful for anyone looking to do a walk can be found at [National Trail.co.uk](http://NationalTrail.co.uk).

The waste and recycling sites are now on their winter timetable. Billingshurst is open 9am to 4pm Monday to Wednesday and Saturday and Sunday. For those who like to use the Chichester centre it's again 9am to 4pm on Monday and then Wednesday through to Sunday.

Buchan Park in Crawley is worth a visit if you haven't already been. It's just outside of Crawley on the A264. It has received official recognition as one of the Country's best Parks.

In the coming week we have another workshop for the Budget and Council Plan so with any luck and quite a bit of work we will be able to present a balanced a good budget for then County in February. We have decided that the County meeting in February will be only for the budget which means know question time or motions. We feel it is so important that it is best to make it solely a budget meeting. This makes rather a long space between the budget meeting and the next full Council where we can question Cabinet members etc about anything we feel appropriate. With this in mind the Chairman has brought forward that meeting to the 22nd of March so that members get their questioning opportunities.

One of my Parish Chairman was interested to know what the percentage was of reuse and recycling that 200.000tonnes last year represented of the amount collected. It's 54% and virtually nothing

much goes to holes in the ground as what is over from reuse and recycling is taken to Warnham site and turned into fuel.

Trading Standards have intercepted 1.400 illegal Vapes and Tobacco items from a premises.

West Sussex Meals on Wheels Service got joint top place for the best Meals on Wheels service in the Country.

On 16.10.2023 I attended the West Sussex Youth Council in the Council Chamber, and it was a great meeting with the topic for debate being 'feeling Safe in the community'. They certainly had a lot of ideas and good ones at that which they articulated very well. Among items that stood out in the debate was the need to see more Police on the streets, to have a better relationship with Police not just being spoken at during School assembly for instance and more CCTV about.

For those Parish's within or partly within the South Downs National Park and have applied for CIL funding for capital projects in their Parish the final recommendations will go to the Planning committee I think in December. We have had a workshop to discuss them all and I am fairly confident that those who applied will be looked at with a view to meeting SDNP guidance and all should be well. Obviously I can't say anything for definite as the Planning Committee will have the final say. For those who have applied I am sure you are aware that SDNP look to see how projects are progressing and there is a cut off time of 5 years. That said I am sure if the 5 years are up and good reasons are given they would not take the money back and of course if you have a neighbourhood Plan you get 25% and 15% if you don't have a neighbourhood Plan. It really does give you the chance to do good schemes that your Parish would like and fit the requirements.

As yet we don't have a picture of what Government is going to do about CIL and some Planning issues, but as soon as we do I am sure you will also find out.

If anyone fancies commenting on the County budget, I believe there is an opportunity of the County website.

Platinum House the new Fire and Rescue Centre at Broadbridge Heath is still getting many enquiries regarding training and not just from the UK but from abroad as well.

The South Downs National Park is dealing with the largest National Park Planning application in the UK. We met as a Planning committee in Lewes recently to discuss and make some decisions on the application and we are very determined that this application will go through with all our comments taken on board. The outcome of the meeting has given the applicant the reasons of what we want to see this application do for Lewes and especially in the area if you know it, along the River Ouse, north of the Harvey's Brewery and the applicant we hope will come forward with the improvements required within 4 months.

We still have some way to go to improve Highways and of course the ever present Potholes and we are working on it. Not an excuse but it is not only County department that has some Staff shortages our Contractors are also finding it difficult. Since April we have done 16700 potholes and 15000 of these have had the better cut and saw method for dealing with them. Always trying to find new ways of dealing with this increasing situation. Our marvellous Patching machines can't work in bad weather but we are trying.

At a meeting some of us raised the issue of Contractors not collecting their signage at the end of a job. Very annoying and the signage is the Contractors and not the County's, in fact we do fine them but the fine is not very large and we are hoping it is going to be increased before long.

Please let me know if there is something in your Parish that needs my attention.

Janet Duncton
County Councillor Petworth division