

Report of County & District Councillor Janet Duncton

For those looking for a warm place most of West Sussex Libraries are open and are designated plus you can check online and should be able to find a place nearer to you if there isn't a Library fairly close. Those who are struggling with bills etc can find help at both District and County level and probably the best advice if it's possible to get to one is attend a Citizens Advice Bureau. They know all the places where help is available.

The Gritters are out on all the main roads, and I know the Parish has Salt stations and winter plans.

There are of course all the usual comments I try to pass on and just so that you know our Children's Services are still going in the right direction and we are expecting a big inspection from OFSTED early in 2023.

We recently held the EPIC awards which we do annually for children in our Care and for the Foster parents; this stands for Exceptional People in Care and is always a thoroughly good and fun day with many awards for special achievements including the Foster Parents who do a great job and speaking of which if you know anyone who would like to be a Foster Parent we are always in need.

Whilst on the subject of course our Care Services are always needing Social workers. The problem is we are not alone, all Councils that employ Social workers are in the same boat. We are doing all we can to get Social workers and have been training many in house. We have also gone abroad to recruit which has been very successful and we train them on arrival so that they know what is expected of a Social Worker here. So far so good.

If you travel to Horsham, you will have noticed that the new Fire and Rescue centre is well under way. When finished it will also provide training for any Fire and Rescue Service that would like to hire it for training purposes.

Not directly next to Plaistow and Ifold but there is a growing need for more places for special needs children. As I have said before we are developing a new School on the Woodlands Mead site near East Grinstead, and this is being redeveloped on the site of a present School which will of course be demolished. On top of that there are talks going on for getting more special needs provision into the County so will report on that at a later date.

Last month for the first time in over 2 years we held one of the Safe Drive Stay Alive sessions that are run by Fire and Rescue and the Police. For those who don't know about them we usually get some large event place and in this recent event we had Chichester College and invite students about the age of 16+ and present films etc of how accidents on the roads can happen with scenarios of say mobile use while driving and drinking etc. Amongst the films we also have some brave people to talk about their own experiences like for instance one lady who lost 2 of her close family to drunken drivers and another man who had spent 2 years in Prison for killing someone whilst riding a motorbike when very

much over the limit. In 98% of the audience, they get it and you hear them talking as they leave the auditorium. We had some 3000 youngsters at the Chichester event.

I think I did write and ask if some of my northern Parishes who suffer from overflowing sewage on their properties if they would like me to try and get a meeting with Southern Water to discuss this. It would probably be just 2 or 3 from each Parish who have gathered evidence of this and if we can then find a date to suit all. Once I hear from the Parish's although probably only initially before Christmas and the New Year, I will ask Southern water if they would come and speak with us and to give me some dates.

One more thing. You may have heard that there was a possibility of a strike by our Refuse collectors. Agreement has been reached and a strike in the new year will not now take place.

So sorry not to be with you but I wish you all a happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to working with you all in 2023.

Janet Duncton
County Councillor Petworth division
CDC Councillor Loxwood ward