

## County Councillor Report – July 2025

### **Devolution and mayoral election plans for Sussex and Brighton move forward**

Sussex council leaders have welcomed approval of their plans to collaborate in a single strategic authority for Sussex and Brighton with a directly elected mayor. The government has agreed to move forward with a Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) and confirmed the first mayoral election will take place in May 2026.

The new MCCA will bring together all upper tier local councils across Sussex to operate across the region while existing councils will continue to deliver day-to-day services.

The [Devolution Bill \(2025\)](#) outlines how significant powers, and funding will move down from central government to a local level, where decisions can be shaped with and by the people who live and work here. Some of the things that impact residents the most include transport, housing, jobs, economic growth and public safety. This is just one step of a journey, with the next being local government reorganisation. Conversations on what future councils might look like are happening now across the region.

The legal process for Sussex and Brighton to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) will now begin, this is known as a 'statutory instrument'. All councils in Sussex and Brighton will now look in detail at the powers proposed and understand the financial implications, before giving their formal consent through their decision-making processes.

The legislation is expected to be agreed in parliament in the Autumn. For more information on local government reorganisation and devolution visit [Future of local government in Sussex - West Sussex County Council](#) on the WSCC website.

**The West Sussex Local Flood Risk Management Strategy** (the County Council's main policy on local flood risk from surface and ground water, and a statutory document) is being reviewed and updated and will set out the County Council's strategic approach for the next five years (2025 to 2030). Adoption of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) is a requirement under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 and associated Flood Risk Management Regulations 2009. Public consultation on the draft strategy ran for six weeks during February and March 2025. This will be the latest iteration of the LFRMS and will set out how the County Council will undertake its flood risk management responsibilities to meet the statutory requirements.

### **Could you be there for a child in care?**

We need more local people to befriend children in care by becoming an Independent Visitor. These are volunteers who are matched with a child aged between 8 and 17 who are looked after by the county council and will not be returning home. The emphasis is on having fun and building up a friendship, doing things together that the young person enjoys, like going for a bike ride, having a chat over a hot chocolate, watching a film together, or visiting a museum - whatever the child is interested in and wants to do. We will be starting our next training programme in August along with an in-person Training Day on Saturday 27 September. If you would like to find out more, please email [Independent.Visitors@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Independent.Visitors@westsussex.gov.uk).

### **Summer Activities**

If you are looking for things to do and places to go in the summer holidays with your children or grandchildren then take a look at [Experience Sussex](#) on the West Sussex County Council website where you'll find inspiration and ideas to make the most of the warm summer days and nights. Whatever you do and wherever you go, make sure you stay safe and well.

Children of all ages can combine reading with nature and the great outdoors at West Sussex libraries when taking part in Story Garden, the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge. The annual initiative aims to encourage children to keep reading over the school holidays with rewards available for completing the challenge, including a special medal and certificate. The free activity runs right across the summer and children aged 4 to 11 can join in anytime from Saturday 12 July to Saturday 13 September. Little ones aged four and under can join the Story Garden Mini Challenge and collect stickers as they share library books over the summer, before receiving a special gold sticker and certificate when they finish.

## **EV Chargepoints**

The West Sussex Chargepoints Network is set to continue to grow as an additional 30 on-street sites are confirmed following a countywide consultation. The latest chargepoints will be installed alongside additional underground wiring making it easier to expand the network further in the future. The network's continuing growth will support the county's move to electric vehicles ahead of the 2035 ban on new petrol and diesel car sales. It is estimated that the number of EVs in West Sussex could increase tenfold over the next decade. No changes to existing parking arrangements are proposed at this time; other vehicles can continue to park as usual, but we do encourage considerate parking to ensure EV drivers have access to charging points. Any future changes to parking restrictions would, of course, be subject to the normal consultation process.

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