

# FUTURE WEST SUSSEX PLAN 2015-2019



## County Council

17 February 2017

### FUTURE WEST SUSSEX PLAN 2015-2019 and the County Council Draft Budget 2017/18 to 2020/21

Report by Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

### 1. Introduction

1.1 West Sussex County Council provides services to more than 800,000 residents – many of them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We do it with ever decreasing funding from central government. But all the time, demand for our services is increasing.

#### Future West Sussex Plan and Draft Budget

1.2 The Future West Sussex Plan was agreed and published in February 2015, providing direction and focus across the years 2015 to 2019. It provides an overarching view on the Council's ambitions, how things may develop in the future, and how it will engage with and support residents. It outlines the Council's three key priorities, how these will be delivered, and how success will be measured.

1.3 The plan continues to reflect the focus and priorities of the authority. However, over the course of the last year, considerable progress has been made on elements of the plan. For example, the quality of care in residential care homes and the quality of care received at home by providers has increased considerably with more providers now being rated good or outstanding by the Care Quality Commission. Circumstances have also changed including, for example, new legislation and closer working with partners such as supporting the work for the devolution case. For that reason, the plan has been updated to reflect past achievements and new commitments (**enclosed with the agenda as Appendix 1**). However, the fundamental priorities and aspirations of the plan remain unchanged.

1.4 Through the Future West Sussex Plan, we will continue to concentrate our efforts on the things which will make the biggest difference to the lives of residents and have the most positive impact on the prosperity of the county. The proposed budget outlines how these and other, statutory, commitments will be funded.

1.5 The proposed revisions to the Future West Sussex Plan have arisen as a result of consultation via a Member Day on 12 October 2016 and an all-member budget briefing on 19 January 2017. The proposals were also considered by the Performance and Finance Select Committee at its meeting on 19 January. The Committee supported the proposed refresh and felt that the new version looks good and is more user-friendly.

#### Proposed revisions

1.6 Further to the consultation noted above, and amendments arising, the following elements are being refreshed for next year:

- The foreword, to account for major developments and progress over the past year.
- Content, change of order to enable easier access to the description of the priorities and their measures of success.
- Guiding Principles, to emphasise that the County Council is there in times of crisis (first item). Additional item that reflects that the

Council works in partnership with many other organisations and actively promotes local aspirations with central government.

- Each priority section, more concise, easy read version for each priority that explains why these are important in West Sussex and what the County Council is focusing on.
- **Measures**, performance indicators have been graphically joined up on one page for each priority and hyperlinks to the digital performance dashboard have been added.
- **Additional measure**, to reflect ongoing commitment to pay small and micro businesses that are doing business with the County Council within 20 working days.
- **The financial commentary**, to reflect changes in Local Government Settlement and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

1.7 In these challenging financial times we will continue to concentrate our efforts on the things which will make the biggest difference to the lives of residents and have the most positive impact on the county. The budget ([\*\*Appendix 2 enclosed with the agenda\*\*](#)) outlines how we will pay for those projects and services.

1.8 Despite a reduction in local government spending, the County Council still has responsibility for a combined capital and gross revenue budget of more than £1bn. To put this into context:

- we deliver services for 836,250 residents
- we educated 110,323 pupils in 2015/16
- the Fire and Rescue Service were called out to 8,552 incidents in 2015/16
- we take care of 660 Children Looked After
- we provided long term support to over 7,200 older residents in 2015/16
- we maintain around 2,511 miles of roads and 2,538 miles of rights of way
- in the last six months we stopped 750 tonnes of plastic pots, tubs and trays going to landfill
- in 2015/16 a total of 12,702 adults received care and support from us

1.9 We know our Revenue Support Grant from the Government will reduce to zero by 2019/20 so we must plan for that eventuality and improve alternative funding streams. Added to this the council faces increasing pressures, in particular with Children Looked After and increasing numbers of older people needing social care, together with continuing burdens such as the Government's policy on the National Living Wage.

1.10 Building on the five-year programme which was approved last year, we continue to have a sustainable and affordable capital plan, totaling £587m that goes through to 2022. This addresses the demands derived from the current projections for house building and subsequent demographic shifts and continues to lay the foundations for a thriving, competitive economy for the next generation, including:

- £135m on major highway schemes to improve journey times and unlock investment and development, with match funding from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and other external sources
  - £11m investment for the Better Pavements programme to take preventative measures to improve the condition of the county's pavements
  - £88m to provide a further approximately 4,500 school places to accommodate more school age pupils, along with £10m to invest in the County Council's buildings to reduce the number of high-cost placements
  - £20m to enable the County Council to enter into partnership with providers on joint ventures to develop and shape the care market
  - £30m to work in partnership with the districts and boroughs to support growth and lever Local Growth Funding
- 1.11 In addition, the County Council is investing over £70m of capital funding in economic development projects, which will encourage new businesses into the county. Land was purchased for the development of a Business Park in Horsham during 2016/17, with a further £50m planned investment to develop housing on the site along with the park. In addition, there are a number of other smaller schemes, all of which will contribute to improving West Sussex as a place to both live and do business. It is also good for the County Council as it means more money going into the West Sussex economy and a higher business rate return for the Council, which we can reinvest in supporting the services outlined above.
- 1.12 Given the difficult financial situation facing the County Council we must do what we can to reduce the need for additional spending in the future. Nearly £17m worth of savings has been identified for 2017/18 from the Council's total revenue spending, with plans for a further £10.8m for 2018/19. Many of these saving proposals look to deliver improved efficiency via new and/or smarter procurement or will ensure that the Council is managing its future expenditure by organising public services to cope with additional demand in the most cost effective way. The proposals for those savings are outlined at Table 3 of Appendix 2.
- 1.13 As part of the budget report, the future estimated budget gap to 2020/21 is refreshed including assumptions around how the future gap could start to be bridged. By 2020, the Government will have introduced the new scheme of 100% business rate retention to fund local authorities, but we await more than just headline details on how this will work. What we do know is that it will be financially neutral i.e. the change in itself will not provide additional resources, but we hope it offers new opportunities to benefit from economic growth.
- 1.14 The information in the budget report is consistent with Cabinet's priorities and strategic direction. The draft budget pack report is enclosed as [Appendix 2](#), and includes the following appendices:

- Budget Pack Tables ([Appendix 2A](#))
- All Portfolio Budgets ([Appendix 2B](#))

- 1.15 At the time of preparing and despatching this report, the Government's Final Local Government Settlement had still not been received. Furthermore, we are awaiting confirmation from Districts and Boroughs on funding information for 2017/18, especially in relation to business rate proceeds which are harder to predict than usual due to the impact of the national revaluation of business rates from 1 April 2017. Once these have been received and analysed appropriate supplementary papers will be prepared and sent out before the meeting as necessary.
- 1.16 The refreshment of the Future West Sussex Plan has been reviewed by the Performance and Finance Select Committee at its meeting in January 2017, and all members of the Council were invited to feed comments into the meeting. The draft Budget and Savings Plans were presented to an all-member session on 19 January 2017 and were then scrutinised by the Performance and Finance Select Committee also on 19 January 2017. Comments from the Select Committee meeting are attached as an Annex to the budget report in Appendix 2.

## **2. Resource and Risk Management Implications and Value for Money**

- 2.1 The resource and risk management implications are set out within the budget tables included in [Appendix 2](#).

### **Recommended**

The County Council is asked to:

- (1) Approve the Future West Sussex Plan 2015-19, as set out at [Appendix 1](#); and
- (2) Approve the County Council Draft Budget for 2017/18, as set out in the [Budget Pack at Appendix 2](#).

**Louise Goldsmith**  
**Leader**



**Jeremy Hunt**  
**Cabinet Member for Finance**



## Cabinet: Item 5

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**Appendices** (printed separately and enclosed with the agenda)

[Appendix 1: Refreshed draft Future West Sussex Plan 2015-19](#)

[Appendix 2: Draft Budget Pack Report](#)

[Appendix 2A: Budget Pack Tables](#)

[Appendix 2B: Portfolio Budgets](#)

**Background Paper**

[The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, December 2016](#)

