

Additional Reports for Singleton and Charlton Parish Council Meeting to be held on Monday 17th March 2025

Jeremy Hunt

Budget 2025/26 - We have agreed a balanced budget for the year ahead which provides support for the most vulnerable, without cuts to frontline services. In the coming year, we will spend more than £2.2bn on vital services, including:

£1,284m for schools, education, and children's social care

£553m to care for adults and keep people healthy

£98m to protect the environment, recycling and waste disposal

£87m to maintain roads and provide transport

£65m for Fire and Rescue services and support for communities

£5m to support the local economy

The pressures facing us outweigh the funding we receive from government, and we were able to achieve a balanced budget by reducing spending by £12.3m, and an increase in council tax of 4.99% (2% for adults' social care and 2.99% for general fund services). The increase in council tax for a Band D property is £85.59 per year or approximately £1.65 per week.

Having said that, there are huge pressures coming through from Social care - both in Adults services and Childrens services. However much work both adults and Children's services do, in trying to meet the ever growing pressures, we are struggling to keep the costs under control in the face of ever growing demand. As well as that increasing demand, we are also faced with the ever increasing costs of sourcing and providing many of the services we need to support those residents. And with the looming increases in NI and the NLW, these financial pressures are only going to increase. This is not just an issue in West Sussex, but it is a national one which will have severe repercussions on council's right across the country - even well managed ones like West Sussex - unless the Government tackles the problem now.

[More information](#)

Devolution: have your say on plans for Sussex - Sussex has moved a step closer to gaining new powers and investment for local communities. [The government has approved a joint bid](#) between West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council, and Brighton & Hove City Council to be a priority for devolution. It means the county as a whole will have an elected mayor to lead on big issues such as transport, public safety, health, housing, the economy and the environment. Now is your chance to have your say on the plans for a Mayoral Combined Authority for Sussex and Brighton.

[Take part in the government consultation.](#)

[Read more on devolution](#)

Welcome to Experience Sussex - We're excited to introduce Experience Sussex – your ultimate guide to discovering the best of Sussex! Formerly Experience West Sussex, the website has been transformed to offer even more ways to explore, experience, and enjoy the area. If you're looking for

fun days out our [Things to Do](#) section is packed with ideas, from family attractions and historic sites to thrilling activities for all ages. Check out [What's On](#) for the latest events, festivals, and theatre in Sussex, or if you are planning a visit for friends and family our [Trip Builder](#) makes it easy to create a tailor-made itinerary, just click the heart icon on your favourite places to start. If you need inspiration, explore our [Ideas and Inspiration](#) section, where you'll find blogs, news, and discover new places right on your doorstep. And you can use our [Food & Drink](#) search to find great dining spots, hidden gems, and dog friendly pubs in your local area. Start exploring via the link below or follow @experiencesussex. Share your own adventures with us using #ExperienceSussex.

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Commute Zero Hero Awards 2025 Winner - WSCC's Active Travel team are winners of [Mobilityways Commute Zero Hero 2025](#) Active Travel Champion Award!

The Commute Zero Hero Awards honour organisations and individuals driving innovative commuting solutions that reduce carbon emissions and foster a culture of sustainability. West Sussex County Council has been recognised for its Active Travel Strategy prioritising school journeys. WSCC is committed to making sustainable travel journeys a safer, more convenient and more accessible option for our residents and visitors alike. A cornerstone of this commitment is our approach to Active Travel and in recognition of this work we were awarded Level 1 Capability status by Active Travel England last autumn. The award allows us to continue building on the progress made in recent years by bidding for funding to deliver on our ambition. A key focus for WSCC is building the habit of travelling actively from a young age. Our Active Travel to School programme involves providing site-specific improvements, such as new or upgraded crossing points, widened footways, segregated cycle tracks and behavioural change interventions to enable children and their parents to travel actively for the school run. We have also introduced School Streets at a small number of locations as part of a pilot programme which aims to reduce traffic and make the space outside the school gate safer. By restricting traffic on roads outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times, these areas become pedestrian and cycle priority zones. Although not all locations are suitable for a School Street we are committed to delivering more of them in future. Active Travel is much more than just an investment in new pavements, crossings and cycle paths. It's about providing our residents with the ability to choose to walk, wheel or cycle instead of using their cars for journeys to school, work and many more destinations.

West Sussex County Council is proud to support Food Waste Action Week, a national initiative which is part of the Waste and Resources Action Programme's (WRAP) Love Food Hate Waste campaign, running from **17 to 23 March 2025**. The campaign raises awareness of the environmental and financial impact of food waste, while encouraging local residents to make simple, cost-saving changes that can help reduce waste. Research suggests that wasted food costs an average of £20 per person per month—or £80 for a family of four. In West Sussex, food waste makes up around a third of the average household rubbish, with 70% of that being edible before getting thrown away. This year, the focus of Food Waste Action Week is on reducing packaging by encouraging shoppers to buy loose fruit and vegetables. Removing unnecessary plastic packaging from uncut fresh fruit and vegetables allows shoppers to buy the exact quantity they need, cutting down on both food and plastic waste. To support this effort, WRAP is proposing a packaging ban on 21 fruit and vegetable items. Developed in collaboration with industry stakeholders across the supply chain, this proposal will undergo formal consultation. If implemented, it could prevent approximately 100,000 tonnes of edible fruit and vegetables from being wasted annually in homes across the UK, as well as reducing 13,000 tonnes of plastic film waste. To drive action across the UK food system and address challenges faced by the industry, WRAP has emphasised that policy changes like these are essential. In West Sussex, we know that much of the food waste in our rubbish bins could have been avoided. In fact, 70% could have been eaten at some point prior to being thrown away. Of that, 41% is just not used in time and 25% is binned because too much has been cooked. Our Council Plan is underpinned

by a commitment to protect the environment. By supporting Food Waste Action Week, we aim to reduce the amount of edible food ending up in general waste and encourage sustainable shopping habits.

Alongside a social media push, West Sussex Recycles will support the campaign by hosting waste prevention stands and giving away free waste prevention tools at various community events. Local events are as follows:

Oving Community Food Hub – Tuesday, 18 March 2025

Worthing Community Food Hub – Thursday, 20 March 2025

Worthing Library – Saturday, 22 March 2025

Bognor Community Food Hub – Wednesday, 2 April 2025

Petworth Community Food Hub – Thursday, 3 April 2025

For full event details, visit: [Events - West Sussex County Council](#)

To learn more about West Sussex County Council's Fight Against Food Waste and how you can support Food Waste Action Week, visit: [Fight against food waste - West Sussex County Council](#)

Local Issues.

Charlton 20MPH Scheme - I'll update you at the meeting.

Singleton CH Scheme - hopefully this excellent scheme, proposed by the PC and implemented by WSCC Highways, is now complete. I know there were a few snagging details, but hopefully these have now been ironed out.

Southern Water - I'm delighted to see that work is now progressing down to Bankside.

Finally, please don't forget to keep an eye on our website, especially our news and campaigns page where you can keep up to date with all our latest news. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/news-and-campaigns/>

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Henry Potter

The Cabinet of the CDC have thrown themselves in with WSCC supporting the early application to be considered for "Fast Track" inclusion in the proposal to Devolve more Power to regions in the form of Unitary Authorities. This, you might note, was done with no consideration for the electorate nor any form of consultation. Democracy has gone out of the window. On top of that, these local Authorities are expected to present a report on their vision for our futures by 21st March, in 3 weeks! What chance will we, the Electorate, have when fuller details of Devolution are still being worked on. Our Councils are in the dark and are expected to forecast our futures??

The Full Council met on Tuesday 25th and the Agenda was essentially the Annual Budget setting for the forthcoming year '25/'26. The Net budget requirement was agreed at £20,366,000 and this represents an increase of £5.58 for a Band D taxpayer which, at 2.99% is well below the threshold when a referendum would be necessary. As the billing Authority, CDC collects the tax in its area for WSCC and the PCC (Sussex Police) who incidentally raised their precept to £15,937,996, an increase of 5.54% on the previous year! A Band D tax payer will contribute £266.91 towards the policing of our District. If only the service were to improve! For comparison, a Singleton Band D taxpayer will be paying £299.73 toward the District and Parish precepts, the Parish segment is £107.67. Band D is always quoted for guidance as it is midway between A and H. So, nothing too bad about this budget, imagine being in an Area where the Government have allowed the removal of the 5% cap on budgetary constraints.

At the same Budget meeting it was agreed to release sums of monies to support various projects through the coming year, £600,000 to assist WSCC Highways to remedy the hundreds of uneven

paving stones in the City, we noted there is nothing coming from the City Council! Money to improve the facilities at Westhampnett Services due to enlarging the refuse collection fleet, a further freighter is needed solely for waste food collections from food outlets, and the entire fleet will in future use Hydrogenated Diesel fuel which is “greener” but will up the fuel costs by £85,000 per annum. And there is to be further excavations in Priory Park following on from the recent excavations which revealed interesting artifacts.

The issue of the cost to us all of the changes to the charging on National Insurance contributions is now apparent. The cost to CDC will be £545,000 this coming year and the Government have awarded us £110,000 by way of compensation! BUT ONLY FOR THIS COMING YEAR! Thereafter your taxes will have to rise to meet this draconian increase. CDC have contained this increase for this year as have you, the Parish Council. It will be a different story next year! The cost to Boxgrove who pay the Clerk the statutory LGA rate is going to be £670.00 per annum, ultimately needing a rise in the annual precept. Further taxation by the ‘back door!’