

Budgets done and dusted for another year and already we work on the coming year. I can't emphasize enough the amount of time and work that goes into keeping the budget balanced and not cutting our Services. It is not easy as you will see around the Country by the amount of Councils having to ask Government for extra money to balance their books, but, we did it and lots of thanks go to the excellent Staff that we have at County Hall.

My biggest problems at the moment as you may guess are roads and rights of way.

Yes, of course the weather has made everything ten times worse but the best I can do is keep reporting every issue and hope that they are able to catch up. Potholes we all know about but my big worry about rights of way at the moment is the amount of Bridges that need attention some missing altogether and in particular to along the Petworth Brook to Byworth. One is mendable but the other one needs some capital expenditure to make it safe.

Brewhurst Bridge still has no despite all the safety concerns and again I don't think this weather has helped the situation. There other Bridges that need attention and it's so important now that more and more are exercising with walking in our beautiful countryside.

Although our Childrens homes are doing so very well we are still looking for more and more Foster parents. If you know any that are keen to look into doing the valuable job please point them to the website for County Council. It would be much appreciated and of course there is a process applicants have to go through but in the end it's something really worth doing.

In my division although I have 6 Primary Schools I don't actually have Secondary and my Schools on the whole go to the Weald at Billingshurst or Rother College in Midhurst, both excellent Schools but a bit short on places. The Weald is very full and Rother college in Midhurst has only minimal places but would be prepared to talk about taking more pupils if it was necessary. Don't worry every child will be catered for I'm just giving you the information so that you can see the problems because it's very important that we make sure all the children have the opportunity of a good education.

Trading Standards are still doing a good job in trying to keep us safe from rogue traders and shops selling illicit goods. They have had several big successes recently.

Fire and Rescue has just purchased several new medium sized Tenders and everything is going well in that department except of course for ever needing more retained Firefighters. I always make this plea so please if you know anyone who would be interested again, tell them to check the website. So important in this area when our local Fire Stations are all retained and they can get to emergency's quicker in our area. Just a quick note on the Fire Tenders. We have managed to get 12 new Engines for £4.8million

I don't think there is much useful to add but hope to see you.

Janet Duncton

County Councillor Petworth division

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