

Reports for the Annual Parish Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday 3rd June 2026

Mark Rawlings-Smith

Chair's Annual Report 2025/26 — Singleton & Charlton Parish Council

*This report covers my time since taking on the Chair from **Deborah Harwood** in March of this year. Much of what follows reflects work led by Deborah, our Clerk, and the council collectively; I am reporting it on their behalf as much as my own.*

The council this year

- Deborah Harwood stood down in March 2026 after ten years of service as Chair to the PC. We also said thank you to many others who have volunteered their time and expertise including Graham Zacharias, Jeremy Rigby, Tony Marshall, Stuart Staples and Alan Higginson.
 - In May, we welcomed Jack Lovejoy as our new WSCC member for Chichester North division.
 - Today we have 7 of 9 councillor seats currently filled. Responsibilities have been reviewed and allocated, yet remain a challenge to cover alongside working lives and hours. With so many meaningful causes across the parish, volunteering is stretched and we start this period with a relatively new team.
 - The Co-option Policy was adopted at Full Council on 19 November 2025 — giving us a clear, fair procedure for filling casual vacancies.
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What we did — by theme

Four themes drawn from the council's working business plan: water and the Lavant; community resilience; village infrastructure and place; governance and finance.

Theme 1 — Water, the chalk aquifer and the Lavant

There is one topic which stands above the rest in terms of impact on parish life: the wastewater challenges. This winter brought significant difficulties — from sleepless nights to sewage issues, damage to the villages, and impacts on property access.

Karen Nash spent weeks fielding many issues, some urgent, and liaising with Southern Water. I'm sure the whole parish is grateful to her for constantly being "on call". It is easy to direct emotional concerns at Southern Water as the accountable agency; at the same time, the team there have been responsive and we have held a number of meetings since to further discuss:

- **Village "Clean-Up" Agreement** — repairs to verges and other works agreed, including agreement to survey the flint wall in Charlton which is showing many cracks.
- **Hosted Southern Water at Singleton, May 2026** — secured a bi-monthly engagement cadence through 2026; Singleton Relief upgrade confirmed ahead of winter 2026/27; Charlton field pump committed for next winter. Reviewing tanker location plans for Charlton in case needed. Further surveys and assessments of chambers and covers in progress.

- **Sewer-sealing programme** — East Dean (2024), Charlton (2025) and Singleton (2025) now sealed. West Dean in progress, expected to complete summer 2026. This represents the end of the funded sealing programme.

At the same time, we know the problem is not new; possibly 50+ years old. We also know that high groundwater events of the kind we saw this winter are increasing significantly in frequency; whilst we can plan for next winter, the pressure needs to be on the long term.

To assist with this, I am currently encouraging the formation of a **cross-parish water forum** with Southern Water, the parish councils of East Dean, West Dean, Lavant and Mid Lavant, the Western Sussex Rivers Trust, and Goodwood representation. At time of writing, full participation is yet to be confirmed but it is looking positive.

The forum simply acknowledges that the River Lavant, the aquifer and the wastewater system are linked — and that they cross parish boundaries. The goal is joined-up short-term mitigation (fewer tankers) and collaborative long-term planning. More to come.

Theme 2 — Community resilience

The **Community Resilience Plan** is substantially complete after a year of development, thanks to Jasmine Hathaway. This work is proposed to continue:

- **Vulnerable residents register** maintained — it needs a refresh.
- **Village Hall** as a possible community resilience hub, alongside the future-of-the-hall work. Whilst this is firmly in the hands of the Village Hall Trustees, there are joint intentions and benefits in collaboration here.

Theme 3 — Village infrastructure and place

- **Village gateways** at Charlton progressing with West Sussex County Council Highways (Gary Jannaway) — work continuing.
- **Planning consultations responded to this year:** The Parish Council has been active in planning consultations, including Singleton Oilfield BNG conditions (discharged November 2025); Centurion Way bridge; and Trundle telecoms masts. The council's aim is to respond to every application within the statutory consultation period.
- **Centurion Way** — a further **1km of path** is expected to open by September 2026 (Milk Halt to Wellhanger Copse, via a newly created woodland path); some weekday closures during works.
- **River Lavant restoration** — Goodwood Estate and the Rivers Trust have produced an options appraisal; the council has issued a letter of support and is tracking the CIL bid.
- **Goodwood Motor Circuit and Aerodrome Consultative Committees** — council representation maintained; noise, traffic and operational matters raised on residents' behalf.
- **Playground / Glebe Field corner safety** — winter flooding exposed a child-safety issue at the corner of the Glebe Field by the SSE substation; a temporary Heras fence was installed by a resident of East Dean as an emergency measure. Ownership of the area is disputed between several parties. The council's working position is that, if no other party will act, the council will pay to make the corner safe, explicitly without taking on long-term ownership. We also fought to resolve the ditch flooding caused by a blocked drainage pipe. Work continues to hold Hyde accountable to their duties to maintain the drainage ditch.
- **The Leys and Bankside parking** — onsite meeting with WSCC Highways and Hyde Housing confirmed for **14 July 2026** to discuss parking pressures.

Theme 4 — Council capacity, governance, finance and forward planning

- **Business Plan** is in the earliest stages of consideration, not least input from all at the APCM on 3rd June. We will focus on what is critical and achievable as a parish council.
 - **Precept 2026/27** — set by Full Council at 5%, this would move the Band D charge from £100.88 to £116.71.
 - **AGAR 2025/26** — internal audit completed clean on 10 May 2026. External return due to PSAA by 30 June 2026.
 - **Handover Procedure** drafted for responsibilities being handed to new councillors. Supports AGAR Assertion 10 (internal controls) and underpins the clerk handover. For adoption at Full Council.
 - **IT Policy** drafted and circulated to councillors; planned for adoption at the Annual Parish Council Meeting alongside the Credentials Procedure (together these close the council's AGAR Assertion 10 requirements).
 - **Recruitment** of parish councillors remains a concern with high turnover during the last 12 months. This will be a focus going forwards.
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Thanks and partners

- **Viv Nuttall**, our Clerk — for everything.
 - **Fellow councillors, past and present** — for the time, judgement and unglamorous work that keeps the council and parish running.
 - **County Councillor Jeremy Hunt** and **District Councillor Henry Potter** — for continuous day-to-day support.
 - **Goodwood Estate** — through the GMCCC and GACC, and as a partner on the River Lavant restoration work.
 - **SDNPA, CDC, WSCC, Southern Water and WSALC** — the institutional partners we rely on to do our work.
 - **Everyone in the parish** — for all the volunteering work, engagement and contributions across the Village Hall, Fete, Church, School and the many other organisations that make these villages special.
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The year ahead

Proposed priorities (to be debated and agreed at the next PC meeting) for 2026/27 are:

1. **Recruitment and succession planning**
2. **Establish a new Business Plan**
3. **Establish the cross-parish water forum** — short-term focus on “tanker prevention” this coming winter, and long-term resilience
4. **Complete and publish the Community Resilience Plan** in full

Three further items the council is actively engaged with that residents should know about:

- **Local Government Reorganisation** — the Government's modified proposal would place Chichester in a new inland unitary authority of around 566,000 residents alongside Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex (consultation closes 15 June 2026). The parish boundary itself is not affected, but the bodies we work with will change. The council has submitted a response **in favour of the modified inland proposal** — we

believe Chichester's rural character, dispersed settlements and service-delivery needs align more closely with Horsham and Mid Sussex than with the coastal districts.

- **SDNPA Local Plan 2024–2042** — SDNPA has published its Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan, with consultation **closing on 23 June 2026**. This is the most significant planning consultation the parish will engage with for the rest of the plan period — it will set the policy framework for development decisions across the parish until 2042. The council will respond and will share what it submits with residents.
- **National Planning Policy Framework revision** — the final revised NPPF is expected during summer 2026.

Karen Nash

Southern Water Activity

On the 16th of April myself, Mark, Danny Sole and David Thompson met with SW for a village walkabout and showed them all areas that needed repairing. They said they would send a team out to survey the damage W/C 18/5 – still waiting for an update. Since this meeting damage has been reported to the flint wall where the tankers have parked, SW will send out a structural engineer to inspect the damage – I am still waiting for a date for when this will be done.

Southern Water Meeting

Myself, Mark, Viv and Jasmine met with SW on the 13th of May for a progress report and to discuss plans for next Autumn/Winter.

Lee & his team confirmed as Mark and I had previously requested that they had completed a survey on all the chambers from East Dean to Singleton, to see which if any were letting in ground water.

At the meeting Lee and his team confirmed they will discuss the survey and report with Glenn's team to sync up to agree what's already been done and what else needs to be done. They will send us updates by email or discuss at our next bi-monthly meeting.

They confirmed that works in West Dean are progressing and expected to complete in the next couple of months. Currently there is no further funding for sealing beyond West Dean (towards Lavant). It's unclear to us whether downstream unsealed system is an issue or not.

They admitted that the Singleton Relief system experienced some flow rate issues over the recent winter. However, upgrades to the system are planned in advance of next winter.

We discussed contingency plans to avoid any tankers being in the valley next Autumn/Winter as this was deemed unacceptable by Parish in Charlton.

It was agreed that the over pipe in the water meadow and pump will be put in place for next winter - dates to be confirmed. Lee and Floyd will explore options for next winter and will update at our next meeting.

Wetlands were discussed as a natural way to prevent flooding/pumping, however this is a long-term proposal which is currently facing regulatory challenges. Glenn proposed a call to explore the details further and to invite Joff Edevane their Pathfinder Delivery Lead for wetlands and harbours to our next meeting which Mark requested ideally before 12th June if possible. We agreed to hold bi-monthly updates certainly through this year. We are waiting confirmation for the next date.

Charlton and East Dean Gates

I met with Gary Jannaway the Assistant Area Highways Manager for Arun and Lavant on the 24th of March to look at the position of the new gates and sizes etc for Charlton and East Dean Gates.

The Charlton gates will be approx 55-60 metres away from the entrance to Charlton Mill Way, one either side of the road to be approx 1.2-1.3 metres wide.

Regarding the East Dean sign, Gary suggested that we remove the existing 'Charlton' sign which is just in front of the Fox Goes free car park sign which you can see in the photo and make safe the area, and put just one new gate in front of the 20mph sign post. This sign is to be approx 1.5 metres wide. Gary recommended to use 100mm capital letters, and to get a design made first to check all the letters fit and clearly visible.

Gary and Mike will check with Olly King if the signs will be located on highways boundary or if the land belongs to Goodwood. They will then put in for a 28-day consultation and will send me signs to put up in both areas to check for no objections.

After our meeting Gary confirmed the following; -

- * Gateway should be set a minimum of 450mm from edge of carriageway
- * Gateway should not impede visibility from any junction, access including field / farm access etc.
- * Any signage will need to be compliant with the Traffic Regulations with regards to design specification wording font etc.
- * Gateway should be passively safe in roads subject to speed limits of 40mph or above Although this will not be applicable in your situation.
- * You would need to consult with the Southdown's National Park who would need to approve the proposal and specification
- * The gateway would need to be covered under the Parish Councils public liability insurance which is set @ £10,000,000

Viv is currently looking into quotes etc.

Jasmine Hathaway LGR Consultation

I submitted a response on the behalf of the Parish Council for the amended consultation questionnaire regarding LGR, after consulting with the parish councillors.

On the behalf of our parish council, I selected the *strongly agree* option and wrote the following text.....

Singleton and Charlton Parish Council believe that Chichester District would be best served by joining the northern unitary authority with Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex under Option B2.

Chichester shares important characteristics with Horsham and Mid Sussex, including extensive rural areas, market towns, dispersed settlements, environmental constraints and the higher costs of delivering services across large rural geographies. These factors create common challenges and priorities that differ significantly from the more urban and coastal profiles of Arun, Adur and Worthing.

Alignment within an inland authority would provide a stronger and more coherent basis for policy making, strategic planning and service delivery, particularly in areas such as rural affordable housing, transport accessibility and supporting dispersed communities. A northern unitary would also better reflect Chichester's functional geography, economic relationships and

rural identity. Taken together, this arrangement would enable services and investment to be designed around shared needs and deliver more effective outcomes for residents and businesses.

WSALC Report

WSALC will be meeting to discuss a response to the second consultation on LGR in West Sussex. A short survey was sent out to all Parish Councils on the 18th May 2026 and one response per parish council was needed by the 25th May in time for the WSALC meeting on the 28th May.

Our parish council response was that we '**strongly agree**' to the potential modification to the two unitary proposal.

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Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and Devolution

West Sussex is currently undergoing a major programme of local government reorganisation (LGR), aimed at creating a simpler and more efficient system of local governance. The proposed changes would replace the existing county, district, and borough councils with new unitary authorities responsible for delivering all local services. This forms part of the biggest restructuring of local government in more than 50 years.

A second phase of public consultation began on 12 May 2026 and will continue until 15 June 2026. During this period, residents, businesses, and community organisations are encouraged to share their views on the proposed structure and how local services should operate in the future.

Current proposals suggest the creation of two unitary councils across West Sussex. The first would cover Chichester, Crawley, Horsham, and Mid Sussex, serving an estimated population of around 566,000 people. The second would include Arun, Adur, and Worthing, with an estimated population of approximately 349,000.

The final proposals are expected to be submitted by September 2025, with a government decision anticipated in spring 2026. Further public engagement will then

take place to finalise arrangements. The overall aim is to create a more responsive, streamlined, and financially sustainable local government structure for West Sussex communities.

Sussex Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation are two significant processes currently shaping the governance structure in Sussex, aiming to improve local decision making, economic growth and public services across Sussex.

While they are interconnected, they serve different purposes.

Devolution allows greater powers and funding to be transferred from central government to local authorities, enabling decisions to be made closer to local communities. This can support better transport, housing, healthcare, education, and environmental policies tailored to the needs of Sussex residents.

Local Government Reorganisation focuses on simplifying council structures to create more efficient and cost-effective services. By reducing duplication between councils and encouraging cooperation, local authorities can improve accountability and deliver services more effectively. In Sussex, reorganisation may strengthen regional planning and encourage investment and development.

Together, Devolution and Reorganisation can give Sussex a stronger voice in national politics, increase local democracy and help communities respond more effectively to social and economic challenges while improving the quality of life for residents.

CDALC AGM 19.05.2026,

The group discussed financial matters, confirming continued operations through WSALC which now manages the organization's finances. A significant portion of the meeting focused on governance restructuring, including devolution plans, formation of a new strategic authority, and upcoming decisions by the WSALC Board on May 28.

Participants expressed scepticism about consultation processes and the political will behind proposed regional reorganisations. The discussion turned to collaboration among parish councils, with proposals for shared clerking, joint committees, and pooled resources to reduce duplication and workload.

Concerns about developer contributions, infrastructure funding, especially for A27 improvements and traffic safety issues such as bypass damage and lack of enforcement were raised. The council also discussed meeting logistics, annual subscriptions, and future planning, encouraging ongoing dialogue among clerks and councils.

CDALC report on SDNP

Alun Alesbury has provided an update on recent developments affecting the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). Recent local elections brought major political changes to county councils in West Sussex, East Sussex and Hampshire, all of which appoint members to the SDNPA. While the Authority operates on a non-party political basis, these changes may still affect its future composition and governance.

Concerns were also raised about Government proposals for wider local government reorganisation and uncertainty over how future unitary or mayoral authorities will interact with National Park Authorities. In particular, questions remain about representation for parish and town councils.

More positively, the SDNPA has published its new Local Plan, which will guide development over the next 20 years. The Plan focuses on affordable housing, climate action, nature recovery and thriving rural communities, with consultation open until 23 June 2026.

*Report from information provided by
Alun Alesbury
West Sussex Parishes Member (with Andrew Shaxson)
of the
South Downs National Park Authority*

SDNPA Report

There are a number of key plans and documents being developed by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/key-documents/>

Local Plan and Public Spaces Study

The South Downs National Park Authority Local Plan is an important policy document that guides development and land use across the entire South Downs National Park.

Introduced to protect the park's natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage, the plan sets out rules for housing, transport, tourism, farming, and environmental conservation.

It aims to balance sustainable development with the need to preserve the landscape for future generations. Local councils, businesses, and residents must follow the policies when proposing new developments within the park boundaries.

The plan also supports local communities by encouraging affordable housing, protecting historic sites, and promoting green spaces and public access. Covering all areas of the National Park, the Local Plan ensures that decisions are made consistently and responsibly.

Overall, it plays a vital role in maintaining the character, biodiversity, and economic sustainability of the South Downs while meeting the needs of people who live and work there.

The Regulation 19 public consultation for the Proposed Submission South Downs Local Plan is open until 23 June 2026. To support Policy SDG3 on public open space, sports and recreational facilities, the South Downs National Park Authority has prepared a draft Open Space Study and interactive map. These have been informed by data from Neighbourhood Plans, Parish Priorities Statements, local authority shapefiles, and submissions from town and parish councils.

The Authority is inviting stakeholders to review and verify the identified open spaces and play spaces within their areas. Feedback will help refine the study and map before the Local Plan is submitted for independent examination later this year.

Partnership Plan 2026-2031

The National Park Authority has launched an ambitious 2026–2031 Partnership Plan aimed at protecting and improving the natural environment. The strategy focuses on nature recovery, climate action, cleaner rivers, biodiversity restoration, public access, and youth education. A major target is the restoration or creation of over 3,300 hectares of wildlife habitat by 2031.

In addition, large-scale biodiversity projects are already underway, including extensive tree planting, pollinator habitat creation, and disease-resistant elm restoration. The “ReNature Through Planning” initiatives will further strengthen ecological resilience across the National Park. Overall, the plan demonstrates a strong commitment to creating a healthier and more sustainable environment for future generations.

Richard Arnold

South Downs National Park / Planning

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) has published its Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan. The plan, covering the period from 2024 to 2042, is open for public consultation until June 23, 2026.

Centurion Way

It is hoped that by September, an extra 1km of path will be open from the Milk Halt up to Wellhanger Copse, just south of Littleton Farm. The track will deviate from the old railway line and run through a newly created woodland path. This is resulting in some weekday closures of the northern section for the safety of the public.

Emily Lerwill

Singleton School Liaison

I've been liaising with school about the new mesh fencing that will be going up shortly along the left hand side of school next to the footpath up to Levin Down.

This is being constructed for safeguarding reasons, as currently only has a small Pickett fence.

The Shepherd's Hut has received full planning and the school hope to have this extra classroom and learning space up and running on the school ground by the end of the year.

School/Parish Event – Singlefest

Saturday 13th June, 12-3pm at Singleton Primary School. Please see leaflets which will be on tables for residents to view and take home.

Sarah Pain

Western Sussex River Trust

Kate Whitton is visiting Singleton to view the weed growth on 1st June.

Emergency/Resilience Plan

I have met with Jasmine to discuss the plan and am due to arrange another meeting with her to help move this forward.

Vivien Nuttall

Finance Report

Balance at Year End 31/03/26 - £16,369.91 of which £4,933.92 held in the reserves.

Reserves – Playground Maintenance – £2,392.68, General Maintenance £1,384.37, Funds from Youth Club - £1,156.87

Balance in Current Account (28/05/26) - £26,546.58

Balance in Savings Account (28/05/26) - £7284.84

2026/27 Reserves to date:

Playground Maintenance – £4,392.68, General Maintenance £404.57,

Funds from Youth Club - £1,156.87

Funds Received since 31/03/26 – Precept £16,064.50, VAT Reclaim £1,401.89, Refund from Village Hall for cancelled Booking £30.00.

Payments for Approval – Clerk Holiday Pay for Holiday Allowance Not Taken - £152.21, Donation to Friends of Singleton School Association - £250.00.

Jack Lovejoy

A rather long report due to a lot happening this month. I would like to start by once again thanking everyone who voted for me in the election, and I hope that I will be able to live up to everyone's expectations of the responsibility they have placed on me to represent the community where I was born and raised.

I have thus far attended four of my division's parish councils (Boxgrove, Lavant, Chichester and West Dean) and attempted to attend Westhampnett, but I arrived too late due to it being on at the same time as Boxgrove. I did manage to meet the chair and another couple of members in the car park afterwards and at least managed to introduce myself and discuss a couple of local issues.

At Chichester's Mayor Making (the city's equivalent of the Annual General Meeting) I attended a presentation by the Place Team from WSCC who were talking about the resurfacing of North and East Streets (a program started by the previous administration after extensive financial contributions made by the District and City councils) to remove the bricks and reset the stone slabs to finally make the city centre level and safe, improving access for everyone, but especially people with disabilities and the elderly. They also spoke of a separate project to bring reliable mobile phone signal to the city centre at long last. The project to repave the streets is due to begin next summer and hopefully will be finished by the summer after, while the mobile signal issue is to be resolved much sooner. The City Council unanimously agreed to release £400,000 of CIL money to aid the repaving project to fund street furniture and more trees (which would be lovely to have given the recent weather). I hope that the work will improve the footfall in the city centre and improve the position of the retail local businesses and I will be keeping a close eye on how it develops.

At West Dean's parish council meeting I attended a presentation by Southern Water about the work they are doing to prevent groundwater infiltration into the sewers in the Upper Lavant Valley in the hopes of ending the need for tankers to pump the wastewater away. It was a very interesting, frank and well put together presentation with a high level of technical detail about how the lining of the pipes is done and how they seal the joins between the pipes. I will of course be working with the parish councils to ensure that Southern Water are as good as their word and hopefully the communities can be free of the dreaded tankers. We were told that the

work to seal the pipes was about halfway completed and they hope to have it done by the end of the year.

On Wednesday 13th May I attended the planning committee of Chichester District Council and spoke in opposition to a contentious application for three warehouses to be built near the Temple Bar flyover between Boxgrove and Westhampnett. I spoke to how it's not in the local plan, how it contradicts the national policy planning framework, how the proposal to put traffic lights at the junction on the A285 would increase rat running through Boxgrove and how the Temple Bar junction already has three developments ongoing (Maudlin Farm housing development, the Tangmere Strategic housing development and the Rolls Royce Expansion). The agent for the application spoke in favour. The councillors afterwards discussed the matter and raised concerns that the planners at CDC had also raised about flooding, dark sky corridors for bats, potential increased traffic on top of the Rolls Royce traffic that brings the village to a standstill at 2pm every day and the lack of sufficient parking for the size of the warehousing. The committee unanimously rejected the application. Whether they seek to appeal is yet to be seen, but hopefully they understand why it was rejected and that's the last of that.

On Thursday 14th May I was in County Hall to meet my fellow councillors, complete our documentation and have our pictures taken for the website (I have always disliked every picture of me ever taken, and unfortunately this one is no exception). We were given a well-run induction by the staff and then held our first group meetings as negotiations to form an administration were underway.

On Friday 22nd of May I attended the first full council meeting of the current term, where Cllr Donna Johnson (Local Alliance – Selsey) was appointed as Chair and father of the house Nigel Dennis (LD – Horsham Hurst) was made Vice-Chair, there were no objections to either. The outgoing Chair Pieter Montyn (C-The Witterings) returned to the chambers (as he retired as a councillor at the last election) to do the honours of handing over the seat and chain to Cllr Johnson. We also have formed an administration with Jay Mercer (LD – Horsham East) becoming Leader of the Council with the support of the Greens (who have the cabinet members for the Environment, and Public Health), Labour (who have been given some cabinet advisory roles) and Cllr Donna Johnson. At the insistence of the previous leader of the council, the leader was subject to a vote, where Cllr Mercer was voted in with a number of Reform party councillors voting in favour, hopefully due to them understanding that a stable and collaborative administration is better than the chaos that unfolded in Kirklees in Yorkshire (who had to end the meeting without a leader after one of the group leaders admitted to not knowing what they were doing). No councillors voted against with all opposition councillors who did not wish to support Cllr Mercer deciding to abstain. The final vote was 46 in favour, 17 abstaining and none against. Two members were absent, and Cllr Johnson did not vote due to it not being a tied vote. Four members did not vote in any direction. I recommend watching the webcast of Cllr Mercer's speech about the importance of collaboration for the good of our residents because I thought it was very well put and I wish to add the comment that we will collaborate with all who wish to have good faith discussions because we understand that we do not have a monopoly on good ideas.

I was also approved as the chair of the Planning and Right of Way Committee at the AGM. This is not the planning committee that allows new buildings but is instead responsible for mineral and quarrying planning, planning related to waste disposal, planning proposals made by WSCC and reviving and extinguishing rights of way (i.e. footpaths and bridleways). I will also be sitting on the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee (which I think is self explanatory from the name).

We also received a brief update on the state of the local government reorganisation from Leigh Whitehouse (the CEO of the County Council), who discussed how the government's opening of a new consultation on a proposal that had been previously rejected by WSCC did not make economic sense at the time they submitted their original proposal, but they are re-running the economic modelling due to a change in how funding is allocated to local government since the original economic modelling was run and we will know the results of that in due course.

My personal opinion on LGR is mixed. From a purely selfish standpoint it would obviously be better for me politically to have the government proposal (which would include the entire Liberal Democrat group) and economically it would be better for Chichester due to being with the Gatwick diamond area (Leigh stated that as a council this area would have a huge surplus under even the adjusted local government funding allocation) and not being with the more deprived areas on the coast. With that said, we have strong economic and cultural links to the western side of the Arun district (particularly Bognor, The Six Villages and Arundel) and allowing a council to be formed that would be bankrupt from day one would be deeply irresponsible of our duties to all residents of the county. I am staunchly opposed to the single West Sussex unitary that was the official policy of the previous administration, which I believe would be too large to be responsive to the local needs of the population. This single county authority would see a councillor doing the job of one county councillor plus the jobs of four district councillors (for the Chichester North Division that would be the two in Chichester North, one in Goodwood and the Lavant parish half of the Lavant ward, plus approximately a quarter councillor each of Chichester West (East Broyle) and Chichester Central (Priory Park)). As councillors are only paid as a part time job, I do not think that would be a sustainable situation to avoid burning out local councillors who are not either independently wealthy or retired, unless how councillors work is radically overhauled. I could not support something that would exclude working people from having our voices heard in the council chamber.

Potholes remain a perpetual bugbear of just about everyone. I have been reporting potholes where I can (I did 20 on Sunday 24th alone), but I can't be everywhere at once. We are hoping to repair an even greater number of potholes this year and we ask that all members of the public report potholes they find here <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/road-and-cycle-path-faults-including-potholes/> so that we can get them fixed. If you can take a few minutes to take a walk in your area to report any local potholes, then we can get them repaired because we can't repair what we don't know about.

On a final note for this month, I have unfortunately not been given a handover from my predecessor (I am hoping he is just letting me get settled in first), if there's any ongoing matters he was dealing with or monitoring then I would appreciate it if I could be sent an email laying them out so I can pick up where he left off.

Looking forward to next month, I have a large amount of training with the county council to get me ready for my new role. I also have my first committee meetings for both the Children and Young People's Social Service Committee and the Planning and Right of Way Committee, along with a trip to the Drayton Highways Depot to meet the Highways team. In addition to my work at County Hall, I have parish council meetings scheduled for Boxgrove, Westhampnett, Lavant, and Singleton and Charlton, along with the East Broyle Residents Association AGM, a meeting of the Summersdale Residents Association and the Chichester North ward meeting (n.b. this is the city council ward, not the county division). There are also the Sussex Day festivities on 14th June, I will be attending SussexFest outside the cathedral and then heading up to Singleton to go to the Midsummer Celebrations at the Weald and Downland.

