

Update for Longman Parish Council

November 2023

Please accept my apologies that I am unable to join you at your upcoming meeting. I do however have the following updates for the parish.

Extension of £2 Bus Fare Cap

I applaud the government's decision to extend the £2 cap on bus fares until December 2024. This extension, funded by HS2 project savings, amounts to a £600 million investment in capping bus fares nationwide.

Introduced in January 2023, the £2 cap has made single bus journeys more affordable. During the COVID-19 pandemic, bus usage dropped to 10% of pre-pandemic levels, leading to government support of over £3.5 billion. With bus patronage now at 85-90% of pre-pandemic levels, the government continues to work closely with the sector on addressing changing travel patterns.

Virtual Ward Beds

I support the recent decision that will see the NHS extending virtual ward beds, allowing over 10,000 patients to receive hospital-level care at home. This initiative aligns with the government's goal to reduce waiting lists, offering patients safer and more convenient recovery options.

The government's commitment to healthcare includes a £1 billion allocation for an additional 5,000 hospital beds. Virtual ward beds complement the ongoing efforts to adapt to changing healthcare demands.

Day Travelcard

I am delighted as the Mayor of London, reversed his decision to scrap the Day Travelcard. This reversal of decision will prevent potential extra costs of up to £9.30 per day for residents of the Lewes constituency traveling to London.

In collaboration with fellow Sussex MPs, we successfully campaigned to save the Day Travelcard earlier this year, gathering support from hundreds of constituents who signed a petition. This news is a significant relief for residents and commuters, considering the Mayor's simultaneous efforts to raise transportation and driving costs through the ULEZ expansion.

Expansion of train services

I welcome the expansion of train services in the area. Starting December 10th, additional stops will be introduced at Newhaven Harbour, Glynde, and Berwick train stations. The Brighton to Seaford line will see weekday stops increased to create an hourly service, with half-hourly service during peak times. This development enhances accessibility for residents and bolsters connections with the ferry terminal. Furthermore, Glynde and Berwick stations will benefit from added stops on the last train from Brighton to Eastbourne, enabling travelers to stay in Brighton later into the evening. These improvements reflect my ongoing advocacy for better rail links in the constituency.