

Update for Longman Parish Council

Dec 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.

Launch of East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

I am pleased to share exciting news regarding the commencement of the consultation phase for the draft East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which began this week. I invite you to contribute your views to this important statutory document that outlines the transport policy and strategy framework for the area.

The LTP4 Strategy, Implementation Plan, and supporting documents are available on the County Council's consultation hub <http://eastsussex.gov.uk/DraftLTP4> from November 27, 2023, to February 25, 2024. I encourage you to review these documents and share your views.

Please take the time to share your views on the LTP4 Strategy and its implementation plan. Your input will help shape the future of transportation in our area.

For any questions or to arrange a meeting with officers, please contact the Council via email at LocalTransportPlan@eastsussex.gov.uk or call the ESCC Switchboard on 0345 608 0190.

Income boosting measures for Lewes residents

I'm delighted to welcome the income-boosting measures announced by Chancellor Jeremy Hunt in the Autumn Statement. The continued commitment to the pensions triple lock is particularly noteworthy, resulting in an 8.5% increase in the full new state pension, potentially providing an additional £900 annually. I'm pleased to see benefits increasing by 6.7%, along with a substantial rise of up to £800 per year in the Local Housing Allowance. The National Living Wage's increase to £11.44 per hour will be significant for the lowest-paid, potentially boosting their income by £1,800 annually. Self-employed individuals stand

to gain from tax cuts, including the abolition of Class 2 National Insurance contributions and a reduction in Class 4 contributions to 8%, resulting in an average saving of £350 annually. Employees will also benefit from a National Insurance contribution reduction from 12% to 10%, potentially saving over £450 annually for someone on the average salary of £35,000. I believe these measures will significantly alleviate the cost of living for residents in our constituency.

An Update on Royal Mail Delays

I am pleased to share that Ofcom has imposed a £5.6 million fine on Royal Mail for failing to meet its First and Second Class delivery targets in the 2022/23 financial year. According to Ofcom's regulations, Royal Mail is obligated to achieve a 93% on-time delivery rate for First Class mail within one working day and a 98.5% on-time delivery rate for Second Class mail within three working days, completing 99.9% of delivery routes for each required day. In the past financial year, Royal Mail's reported performance fell short, with only 73.7% of First Class mail and 90.7% of Second Class mail delivered on time. I have received numerous messages from frustrated local residents experiencing delays, some even witnessing deliveries reduced to once per week. In response I have visited a local sorting office where I spoke to postmen and women, and confronted Royal Mail managers about staffing challenges. Recently I have made the decision to write to the Minister responsible for postal services to express my frustration with the lack of cooperation I have received from Royal Mail in our efforts to effectively address the situation.

Encouraging local bids for £1 Million Defibrillator Fund

I am delighted to encourage local organisations to apply for the £1 million Community Automated External Defibrillators Fund, an initiative aimed at increasing the presence of AEDs in critical public locations to save lives. As the MP for Lewes and a Minister in the Department for Health and Social Care, I have advocated for improved defibrillator accessibility, even introducing a bill in Parliament to mandate their installation in public buildings like schools and leisure centres. Through collective efforts with groups like the British Heart Foundation, the government committed to placing a defibrillator in every state-funded school last year. Defibrillation is crucial in treating cardiac arrest, and the DHSC's £1 million fund will contribute to deploying an additional 2000 publicly accessible defibrillators nationwide, furthering our mission to make defibrillators readily available in

life-threatening situations. Organisations can apply for funding at <https://www.defibrant.co.uk/>

Train Ticket Office Update

I am pleased to share the news that the government has instructed train operating companies to retract their plans for closing ticket offices, a decision that aligns with my ongoing advocacy for enhanced public transport services in Lewes. In response to the summer consultation on reforming railway station ticket offices, where over 750,000 individuals nationwide participated, I received numerous concerns from local residents, especially those with accessibility needs. Having been a vocal supporter of improved public transport provisions since my election in 2015, I made representations to both the government and rail companies expressing the community's worries about potential closures. I am delighted that the government's directive ensures the continued operation of ticket offices, preserving accessibility for residents across the constituency.