

East Sussex County Councillor Shing
Report to Longman Annual Parish Council Parish Meeting 2025



Good evening everyone,

It's lovely to see so many of you here tonight.

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to speak to you again about my work over the past year, this marks my 24th year in service.

Let's rewind back to May, 24 years ago 2001. At that time, we were in the midst of the foot-and-mouth outbreak, and the county council election was postponed until June.

Coincidentally, this year our county council election has also been postponed, this time due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

East Sussex County Council, along with its five district and borough councils, Brighton and Hove, and West Sussex, have agreed to form a new Mayoral Unitary Authority

Interim plans were submitted to central government on 20 March, and responses were received on 7 May.

The details are currently under discussion and will soon be published on our council websites.

The LGR resident engagement began this past Monday, 12 May, and will run for six weeks. I encourage you all to take part and have your say.

The LGR white paper is not mentioned about the town and parish councils, therefore town and parish will continue to service our local community. In my opinion town and parish will play a more important role in the future.

Now, turning to the long-discussed proposal for a new two-lane Exceat Bridge.

After years of planning applications and consultations, East Sussex County Council has finally approved the construction of the new bridge, with an estimated cost of £22 million. This is partly funded by transferring £11 million from the Bus Improvements Fund.

The original project would have required 22 weeks of road closures and faced considerable objections. The new plan reduces that significantly, requiring just 19 days of road closures.

This week, a Public Inquiry was held regarding the Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) needed to acquire land for the bridge.

On Tuesday, the inquiry began with the four councils presenting their witnesses. On Wednesday, two objectors to the CPO and Side Road Orders attended, with one raising their concerns directly to the Inspector.

On Thursday, closing statements were made, after which the Inspector carried out a site visit.

The Inspector will now review all the evidence and prepare a report for the Secretary of State for Transport. A decision is not expected until the autumn.

If all goes to plan, construction is expected to begin in early 2026.

However, I must express my concern: the £22 million budget and 19 days of road closures are already high. In my experience, the county council has struggled to deliver large projects on time and within budget.

It will be a significant challenge for the council to complete the Exceat Bridge project on schedule and within the allocated budget—especially ahead of the transition to the new Mayoral Unitary Authority.

On other County Council matters:

Household Waste Site Booking System

The County Council has agreed to introduce a new Household Waste Site booking system, which could help achieve annual savings of £50,000. Five of us County Councillors disagreed with the proposal and called it in for scrutiny and debate. Unfortunately, the call-in was voted down.

The project involving the five large roundabouts in this area is progressing, although slowly.

The Alfriston 20mph scheme is scheduled to begin on 22 June.

The Polegate High Street 20mph scheme is progressing well, with an update meeting scheduled for June.

As for issues such as overgrown hedges, grass cutting, and potholes, Over the last year I believe we done well in our areas.

I want to thank everyone who has contacted me with your concerns about county council matters. Please continue to share your thoughts with me.

Lastly, I would like to extend my thanks for the strong working relationships I've had with your Parish Clerk, Jeanne Peterson, your Chairman, Councillor Tyler Butterworth, and all the parish councillors and PCSO.

Thank you.