

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Liberal Democrats spend “leap day” reporting potholes across Mid Sussex**

Mid Sussex Liberal Democrats made good use of the extra day afforded by the leap year by spending Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> February identifying and reporting potholes across the district, drawing attention to the poor state of the roads and the considerable public anger they cause. From Turners Hill and East Grinstead to Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks, Liberal Democrat councillors and members identified potholes that have been causing problems to residents and ensured that they were reported to West Sussex County Council so that they can be repaired as quickly as possible.

Liberal Democrat councillors regularly walk the streets of the district and proactively report issues before they become significant problems and Saturday’s efforts were part of their ongoing commitment to making life easier and journeys smoother for Mid Sussex residents. Many residents have reported that unrepaired potholes have caused damage to their cars this winter which is an expense, frustration and inconvenience shared this winter by two of Hassocks’ councillors.

Kirsty Lord, County Councillor for Hassocks and Burgess Hill South, said: “Residents contact me about potholes more than any other topic, but the levels of frustration with the state of the roads this year have been the highest I have seen. Last year the Conservative administration at West Sussex County Council spent £3.8m on pothole repairs<sup>1</sup>. This year they have been forced to pay £4m on compensation to Amey over their contested highways procurement process and had to dip into reserves to pay for this. That is taxpayers’ money which could have been better used to repair our roads properly.”

Alex Sparasci, District Councillor for Hassocks, said: “I lost a tyre this winter to a pothole in Crawley so know how expensive and frustrating the poor status of the roads can be for motorists. One section of the B2116 in Hassocks has been repaired twice since Christmas and is already breaking up again. Spending part of our extra day reporting potholes in our towns and villages to improve the roads for our local residents was time well spent.”

Stephanie Inglesfield, Chair of Mid Sussex Liberal Democrats and Haywards Heath Town Councillor, said: “Thanks to our members who spent their extra “leap” day taking time to report potholes, and to the many local residents who do the same on a regular basis. However, without proper funding from Conservative central government, the rate at which WSCC is able to resurface the roads means it would take over 41 years to completely renew the network<sup>2</sup>. Given WSCC is Conservative-led, that Mid Sussex has a Conservative MP, and there is a Conservative prime minister in Downing Street, the buck can only stop in one place. We need properly funded local councils who are able to provide for residents”

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**ENDS**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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**NOTES TO EDITOR:**

1. Source: [https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/13150/pothole\\_budgets\\_and\\_statistics.pdf](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/13150/pothole_budgets_and_statistics.pdf)  
[www.midsussexlibdems.org.uk/en/page/press-releases](http://www.midsussexlibdems.org.uk/en/page/press-releases)

2. Source, Number of miles of road resurfaced in 2018/19:  
<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/extra-repair-teams-deployed-across-the-county-to-tackle-potholes/>
3. Photographs attached:
  - a. Robert Eggleston, Leader of Burgess Hill Town Council and District Councillor for Burgess Hill Meeds, reporting potholes in Burgess Hill
  - b. Alison Bennett, District Councillor for Hurstpierpoint and Liberal Democrat Group Leader at Mid Sussex District Council, reporting potholes in Hurstpierpoint
  - c. One of the many Mid Sussex potholes reported by Liberal Democrats on 29<sup>th</sup> February