



FULL COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 9 JULY 2024

10.00 AM COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

Documents being circulated with the County Council agenda.

Document	Report in County Council agenda to which it is related
Council Monitoring - Corporate Summary - Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report) (Page 3)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring - Treasury Management Prudential Indicators - Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report) (Page 23)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring - Adult Social Care and Health - Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report) (Page 25)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring – Business Services - Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 4 of the Cabinet report) (Page 37)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring – Children’s Services – Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 5 of the Cabinet report) (Page 47)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring – Communities, Economy and Transport – Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 6 of the Cabinet report) (Page 59)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring – Governance Services – Q3 2023/24 (Appendix 7 of the Cabinet report) (Page 69)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Council Monitoring – Strategic Risk Register – Q4 2023/24 – Year End (Appendix 8 of the Cabinet report) (Page 79)	Cabinet report, paragraph 1
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) - State of the County 2024 (Appendix 9 of the Cabinet report) (Page 87)	Cabinet report, paragraph 2
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) - State of the County 2024 - National and Local Policy Outlook 2024 (Appendix 10 of the Cabinet report) (Page 189)	Cabinet report, paragraph 2
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) - State of the County 2024 - Priority and delivery outcomes (Appendix 11 of the Cabinet report) (Page 229)	Cabinet report, paragraph 2
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) - State of the County 2024 – Capital programme update (Appendix 12 of the Cabinet report) (Page 231)	Cabinet report, paragraph 2
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) - State of the County 2024 – ESCC Productivity Plan (Appendix 13 of the Cabinet report) (Page 239)	Cabinet report, paragraph 2

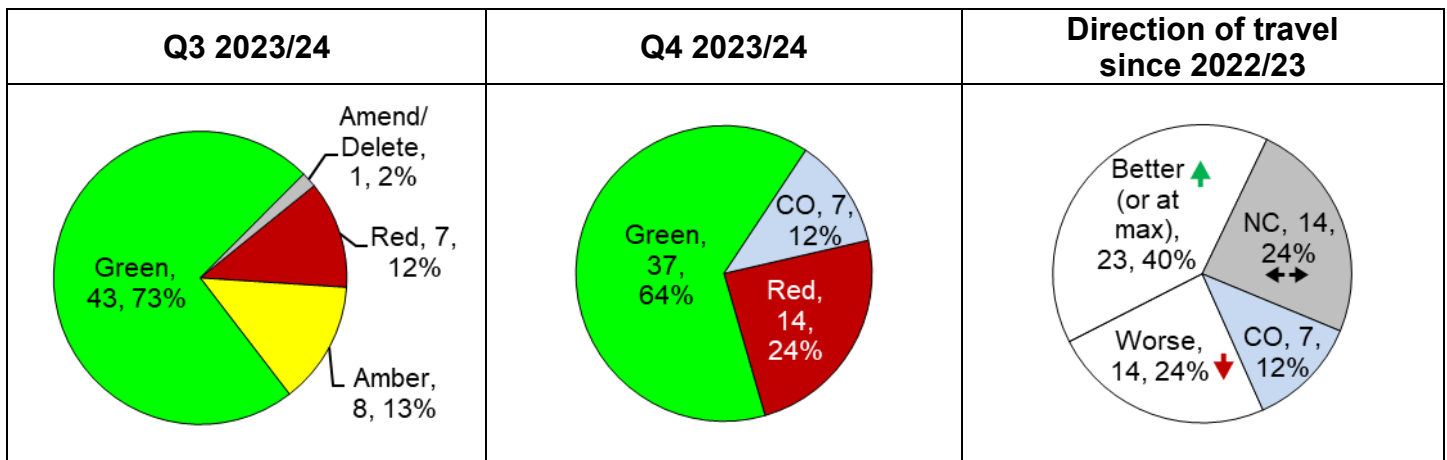
East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton and Hove Waste and Minerals Plan Review – Inspectors report (Appendix 14 of the Cabinet report) (Page 245)	Cabinet report, paragraph 3
East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton and Hove Waste and Minerals Plan Review – Revised Policies (Appendix 15 of the Cabinet report) (Page 271)	Cabinet report, paragraph 3
East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton and Hove Waste and Minerals Plan Review – Sustainability appraisal main modifications addendum (Appendix 16 of the Cabinet report) (Page 353)	Cabinet report, paragraph 3
Flexible Retirement Policy (Appendix 1 of the Governance Committee report) (Page 379)	Governance Committee report, paragraph 1
Amendment to Constitution - Scheme of delegation update (Appendix 2 of the Governance Committee report) (Page 385)	Governance Committee report, paragraph 2
Amendment to Constitution - Changes to the Employee Code of Conduct – Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy (Appendix 3 of the Governance Committee report) (Page 397)	Governance Committee report, paragraph 3

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive

Council Monitoring Corporate Summary – end of year 2023/24

Council Plan performance targets

Priority	Total	Red	Green	Carry Over
Driving sustainable economic growth	25	9	16	0
Keeping vulnerable people safe	12	2	6	4
Helping people help themselves	14	2	10	2
Making best use of resources now and for the future	7	1	5	1
Total	58	14	37	7



Direction of Travel key:

No Change: ↔, Not Comparable: NC, Carry Over: CO, Worse: ↓, Improved (or at maximum): ↑

Council Plan year end 2023/24 outturn summary all measures

58 Council Plan target outturns for the full year are reported below. Targets achieved are highlighted in green; targets not achieved are highlighted in red; and carry overs (CO) for reporting at Q1 2024/25 are highlighted in blue.

Detailed information for new exceptions at Q4 is contained in the departmental appendices and these exceptions are highlighted **in bold in the table below**. Details of previous exceptions can be found in the referenced appendices for Q1-Q3 monitoring.

Where available, performance improvement relative to 2022/23 is given under Direction of Travel. Measures marked NC (not comparable) do not have 2023/24 outturns, which are comparable with 2022/23 outturns.

Driving sustainable economic growth – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
BS	The percentage of Council procurement spend with local suppliers	66%	60%	64%	↓
BS	Economic, social, and environmental value committed through contracts, as a percentage of our spend with suppliers	57%	≥10.0%	31%	↓
BS	The Council's Apprenticeship Levy strategy supports the Council's workforce development and training plans	270 staff within the Council and schools currently undertaking an apprenticeship 115 staff enrolled on a new apprenticeship in 2022/23 Apprenticeships range from entry level to master's degree across 47 different types of apprenticeship. Apprenticeships continue to address skills shortages and offer existing staff a variety of progression routes	Where appropriate Standards exist, to ensure apprenticeship training is available and taken up (subject to the needs of the business), which addresses skills shortages in the Council	252 staff within the Council and schools currently undertaking an apprenticeship 117 staff enrolled on a new apprenticeship in 2023/24 Apprenticeships range from entry level to master's degree Over £275,000 annual levy spend passed onto small and medium employers throughout the county in 2023/24	↑
CET	Percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance	5%	4%	4%	↑
CET	Percentage of Non-Principal roads requiring maintenance	6%	4%	5%	↑
CET	Percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance	13%	14%	17%	↓
CET	The number of businesses and professionals receiving advice and support through training and bespoke advice provided by Trading Standards	379 (107 individual delegates trained; 272 businesses received bespoke advice)	350	653 (324 individual delegates trained; 329 businesses received bespoke advice)	↑

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CET	Deliver a range of Family Learning programmes across East Sussex to provide high quality learning opportunities for parents/carers and their children to develop English, maths and language skills and to support a culture of learning in the family (subject to external funding)	1,166 enrolments	500 enrolments across Family English, maths, and Language (FEML) and Wider Family Learning (WFL) programmes	2,051 enrolments	↑
CET	In partnership with funding organisations provide online learning (including skills for life and ICT courses) in libraries (subject to contract)	83 achievements	70 achievements	88 achievements	↑
CET	East Sussex Careers Hub	Schools supported to achieve an average of 5.36 national benchmarks; 46 Industry Champions recruited to support schools and colleges	East Sussex Careers Hub to support schools to achieve an average of 5 national benchmarks. 210 Industry Champions support schools and colleges in the county	Schools supported to achieve an average of 5.7 benchmarks; 234 Industry Champions in place	↑
CET	Deliver East Sussex Skills priorities for 2021-2026	6 action plans developed to address the 6 Skills East Sussex priorities	a) Adult Learning Network established b) Deliver six interventions that meet the Skills East Sussex priorities c) Deliver six embedded numeracy interventions	a) Adult Learning Network established b) 6 interventions delivered that meet the Skills East Sussex priorities c) 17 embedded numeracy interventions delivered	NC
CET	Deliver new economic strategy	N/A	Draft economic strategy developed	Draft economic strategy developed	NC
CET	Job creation from East Sussex Invest	N/A	27 jobs created	No jobs created from East Sussex Invest; Fund remains closed to new applications	NC

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CET	Create a pan-Sussex visitor economy group to re-start the leisure, hospitality, culture, retail, and tourism economy and enhance existing marketing vehicles	Sussex Tourism Leadership Group established	Develop a shared Sussex Story and assets to promote the region Develop a shared Sussex Meetings, Inceptive, Conferences and Events (MICE) initiative	Completion of shared Sussex Story and assets delayed until 2024/25; Shared Sussex Meetings, Inceptive, Conferences and Events (MICE) initiatives developed	NC
CET	Create a prioritised list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	List of cultural projects, ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k, launched	Maintain a list of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	Pipeline list published and maintained on ESCC website of cultural projects ready for and seeking funding over the value of £100k	↑
CS	The percentage of eligible 2 year olds who take up a place with an eligible early years provider	ESCC: 82% National Average: 72% (March 23)	Equal to or above the national average	ESCC: 84% (1,045 / 1,241) National Average: 73.9%	↑
CS	The percentage of pupils achieving a "good level of development" at the Early Years Foundation Stage	Ac Year 21/22: ESCC: 69.0% National Average: 65.2%	Ac Year 22/23: Equal to or above the national average	ESCC: 69.9% National Average: 67.2%	↑
CS	Average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools	N/A	Ac Year 22/23: 46.5	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 43.6	NC
CS	The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving at least the expected standard in each of reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	Ac Year 21/22: ESCC: 37.6% National Average: 42.7%	Ac Year 22/23: 37.7	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 39.2%	↑
CS	The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils	Ac Year 21/22: ESCC: 33.3 National Average: 37.7	Ac Year 22/23: 33.3	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 30.3	↓
CS	The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16	N/A	Below 4%	4.4%	NC
CS	The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 17	N/A	Below 6%	6%	NC

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CS	Average Attainment 8 score for Looked After Children (LAC)	N/A	Ac Year 22/23: 19	Ac Year 22/23 ESCC: 18.9	NC
CS	The percentage of LAC participating in education, training, or employment at academic age 16 (Year 12)	81% RPA (86% EET)	80%	EET: 84% (75 / 89)	↓
CS	The percentage of LAC participating in education, training, or employment at academic age 17 (Year 13)	67% RPA (80% EET)	70%	EET: 73% (77 / 105)	↓

Keeping vulnerable people safe – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
ASC	Percentage of Health and Social Care Connect referrals triaged and progressed to required services within 24 hours	87.34% (67,404/77,177)	95%	95.69% (74,375 / 77,724)	↑
ASC	Health and Social Care Connect – % of contacts that are appropriate and effective (i.e., lead to the provision of necessary additional services)	99.27% (78,641/79,219)	95%	99.17% (81,237 / 81,916)	↓
ASC	The % of people affected by domestic violence and abuse who have improved safety/support measures in place upon leaving the service	91.4% (360/394)	90%	CO	CO
ASC	When they leave the service the % of those affected by rape, sexual violence and abuse who have improved coping strategies	92.7% (544/ 587)	88%	CO	CO
ASC	The percentage of people who access additional support from our specialist commissioned domestic abuse service who are older	N/A	3%	CO	CO
ASC	Number of drug and alcohol related deaths in the county	N/A	74	Calendar year 2022: 77	NC
ASC	The number of people accessing treatment for opiate misuse	N/A	1,247	CO	CO
CET	The number of positive interventions for vulnerable people who have been or may be the target of rogue trading or financial abuse	530 positive interventions	200	2,669 positive interventions	↑
CS	Rate of children with a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000 children)	64.8 (691 children)	62 (661 children)	64.6 (688 children)	↑
CS	Rate (of 0-17 population) of referrals to children's social care services (per 10,000 children)	Rate: 377 (4,018)	≤ 556	Rate: 413 (4,400)	↓
CS	Rate (of 0-17 population) of assessments started by children's social care services (per 10,000 children)	Rate: 353 (3,764) assessments initiated	≤ 558	Rate: 399 (4,249)	↓

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CS	Rate of Looked After Children (per 10,000 children) <i>*Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children</i>	62.3 per 10,000 children (664 children) 55.5 (591 children excl. UASC*)	63.4 (676 children)	61.5 per 10,000 children (655 children) 54.6 (582 children excl. UASC*)	↑

Helping people help themselves – outturn summary

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
ASC	National outcome measure: Proportion of working age adults and older people receiving self-directed support	100% (4,792 clients)	100%	100% (5,181 clients)	↑
ASC	National outcome measure: Proportion of working age adults and older people receiving direct payments	31.9% (1,520 people)	>31.5%	28.1% (1,457 people)	↓
ASC	Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention	494	390	333	↓
ASC	Number of people receiving support through housing related floating support	7,946	7,000	8,178	↑
ASC	Percentage of respondents who strongly agree or agree that the professionals who are involved in organising and providing their care communicate well with each other and share information to make sure their support is the best it can be (Listening To You)	58.5% Clients: 64% (60/94) Carers: 53% (47/89)	>56%	61.6% Clients: 61.9% (130 / 210) Carers: 60.9% (67 / 110)	↑
ASC	The proportion of people who received short-term services during the year, where no further request was made for ongoing support	94.7% (1,292/1,364)	>90.5%	95.9% (1,678 / 1,749)	↔
ASC	National outcome measure: Achieve independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care	90.5% (801/885)	>90%	CO	CO
ASC	Through the Drug and Alcohol Funding streams, commission services that sustain the development of the recovery community in East Sussex	12 services commissioned	Commission services	7 services commissioned	↓
ASC	Recommission the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service (IHWS)	N/A	Recommission Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service	Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service recommissioned	NC
ASC	Improved targeting of NHS Health Checks	Cumulative uptake: 29.5% (5 year period 2018/19 – 2022/23 Q4)	10% of the eligible population in the 20% most deprived areas (IMD1) have received a health check	CO	CO

APPENDIX 1

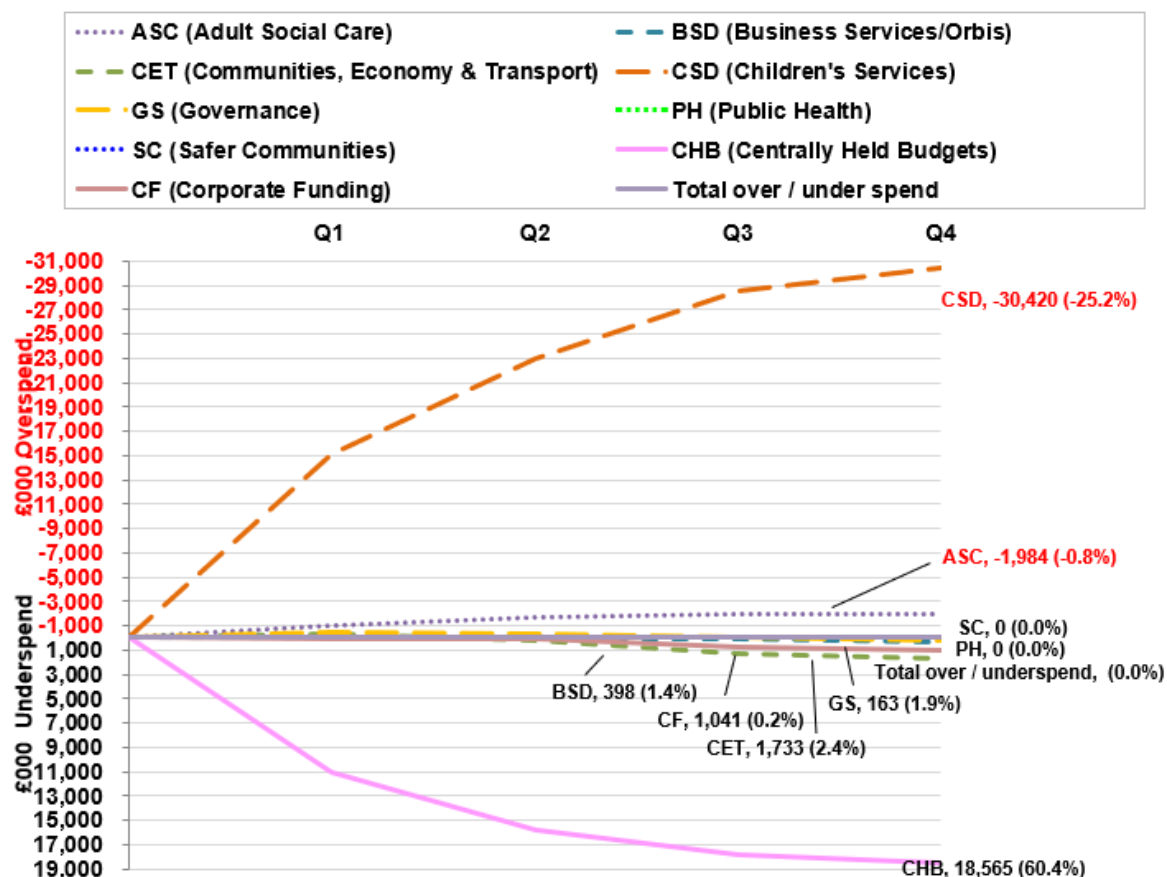
Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
CET	Road Safety: Deliver targeted cycle training activities to vulnerable road users	555 Bikeability Courses delivered to 4,354 individuals; 252 Wheels for All Courses delivered to 3,649 individuals	Deliver Bikeability Training to 4,000 individuals and 100 Wheels for All sessions	551 Bikeability Courses delivered to 4,428 individuals; 343 Wheels for All sessions delivered to 3,862 individuals	↑
CET	Road Safety: Implement infrastructure schemes on identified high risk sites/routes to improve road safety	17 Safety Schemes implemented	Implement 24 safety schemes	24 Safety Schemes implemented	↑
CS	Proportion of all new EHC Plans issued within 20 weeks (a) Including Exception Cases (b) Excluding Exception Cases	N/A	(a) 65% (b) 70%	(a) 76.3% (521 / 683) (b) 76.5% (521 / 681)	NC
CS	The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of getting targeted support from the 0 – 19 Early Help Service	Adult: 91% Young Person: 100% Average: 95.5%	80%	Adult: 86% (82 / 95) Young Person: 91% (29 / 32) Average: 87%	↓

Making best use of resources now and for the future

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
BSD	Reduce the amount of CO2 arising from County Council operations	32% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions	43% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions (emissions not to exceed 7,139 tonnes CO2e)	CO	CO
BSD	Progress on implementation of Carbon reduction schemes	11 low energy lighting schemes completed; 8 solar PV schemes completed; 2 decarbonisation of heat schemes implemented	23 energy saving schemes implemented	25 energy saving schemes implemented	↑
BSD	Number of working days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employee due to sickness absence in non-school services	10.07	9.10	9.13	↑

Dept	Performance Measure	Outturn 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Outturn 2023/24	Direction of Travel
BSD	Review use of corporate buildings	Workstyles adaptations completed in 3 office hubs. Impact reviewed	Develop revised office strategy based on 2022/23 review	Office strategy revised and footprint reduced in Eastbourne and Hastings. Paper on options for County Hall produced. Plans for 2024/25 developed, including consideration of options for County Hall, finalisation of Eastbourne office moves, and further work to reduce the Hastings office footprint	NC
BSD	Deliver the Property Asset Investment Strategy	6 business cases completed	Outline Business cases brought forward against at least 2 priority projects	4 Outline Business cases brought forward against priority projects	↓
GS	Delivery of Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan actions planned for the year	N/A	Deliver the key actions within the action plan	Key actions delivered from action plan	NC
GS	Achievement of key milestones for the Workplace Adjustments Review	N/A	Completion of appropriate milestones that support the objectives of the Workplace Adjustments Review	Key milestones from the Workplace Adjustments Review achieved	NC

Revenue budget outturn (net £000)



Revenue budget summary (£000) 2023/24

Services:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Adult Social Care	379,603	(143,290)	236,313	423,204	(184,907)	238,297	(43,601)	41,617	(1,984)
Safer Communities	2,076	(909)	1,167	2,792	(1,625)	1,167	(716)	716	-
Public Health	36,778	(36,778)	-	35,672	(35,672)	-	1,106	(1,106)	-
Business Services / Orbis	56,038	(26,728)	29,310	67,250	(38,338)	28,912	(11,212)	11,610	398
Children's Services	402,521	(282,003)	120,518	441,651	(290,713)	150,938	(39,130)	8,710	(30,420)
Communities, Economy & Transport	159,757	(88,116)	71,641	156,743	(86,835)	69,908	3,014	(1,281)	1,733
Governance Services	9,202	(744)	8,458	9,256	(961)	8,295	(54)	217	163
Total Services	1,045,975	(578,568)	467,407	1,136,568	(639,051)	497,517	(90,593)	60,483	(30,110)

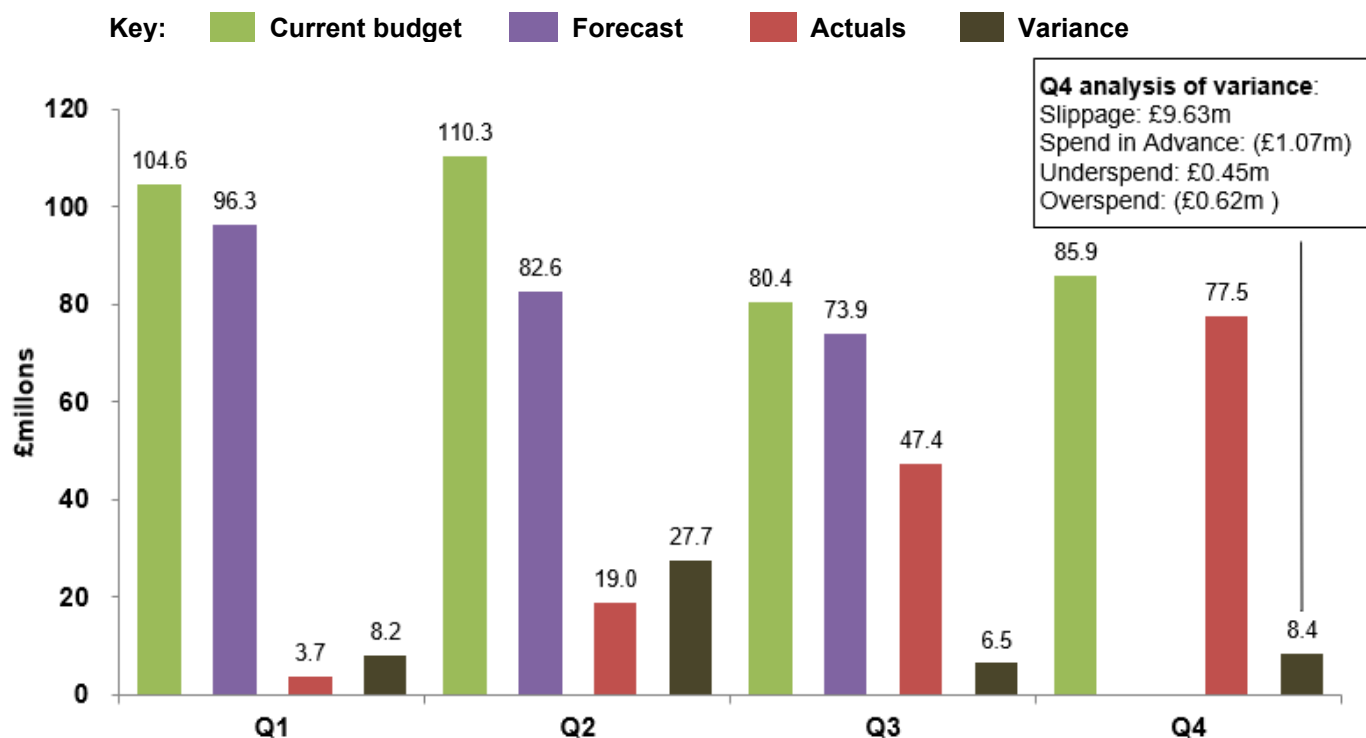
Centrally Held Budgets (CHB):

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Treasury Management	21,630	(7,700)	13,930	19,770	(14,053)	5,717	1,860	6,353	8,213
Capital Programme	2,314	-	2,314	1,787	(1,300)	487	527	1,300	1,827
Unfunded Pensions	5,202	-	5,202	4,622	-	4,622	580	-	580
General Contingency	4,880	-	4,880	-	-	-	4,880	-	4,880
Provision for Budgetary Risks	4,272	-	4,272	740	-	740	3,532	-	3,532
Apprenticeship Levy	772	-	772	794	-	794	(22)	-	(22)
Levies, Grants & Other	5,121	(5,779)	(658)	5,455	(6,270)	(815)	(334)	491	157
Debt Impairment	-	-	-	602	-	602	(602)	-	(602)
Total Centrally Held Budgets	44,191	(13,479)	30,712	33,770	(21,623)	12,147	10,421	8,144	18,565

Corporate Funding:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
Business Rates	-	(94,336)	(94,336)	-	(95,256)	(95,256)	-	920	920
Revenue Support Grant	-	(4,076)	(4,076)	-	(4,076)	(4,076)	-	-	-
Service Grant	-	(2,916)	(2,916)	-	(3,036)	(3,036)	-	120	120
Council Tax	-	(351,828)	(351,828)	-	(351,829)	(351,829)	-	1	1
Social Care Grant	-	(44,612)	(44,612)	-	(44,612)	(44,612)	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	-	(351)	(351)	-	(351)	(351)	-	-	-
Total Corporate Funding	-	(498,119)	(498,119)	-	(499,160)	(499,160)	-	1,041	1,041

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net
TOTAL	1,090,166	(1,090,166)	0	1,170,338	(1,159,834)	10,504	(80,172)	69,668	(10,504)
Use of COMF	-	-	-	-	(1,285)	(1,285)	-	1,285	1,285
Use of Covid Funding	-	-	-	-	(5,668)	(5,668)	-	5,668	5,668
Use of CT Surplus	-	-	-	-	(2,031)	(2,031)	-	2,031	2,031
Use of Financial Management Reserve	-	-	-	-	(1,520)	(1,520)	-	1,520	1,520
FINAL TOTAL	1,090,166	(1,090,166)	0	1,170,338	(1,170,338)	0	(80,172)	80,172	0

Capital Programme (gross £ millions) – approved projects**Capital Programme Summary 2023/24 (£'000)**

	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance
Adult Social Care	1,259	1,025	234	37	197	-
Business Services	25,360	23,402	1,958	367	2,098	(507)
Children's Services	1,868	1,881	(13)	(13)	-	-
Communities, Economy & Transport	57,393	51,184	6,209	(563)	7,336	(564)
Gross Expenditure (Planned Programme)	85,880	77,492	8,388	(172)	9,631	(1,071)
Section 106 and CIL	1,607	592	-	-	-	-
Other Specific Funding	10,710	8,085	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	817	817	-	-	-	-
Formula Grants	39,296	38,736	-	-	-	-
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	22,904	19,831	-	-	-	-
Borrowing	10,546	9,431	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	85,880	77,492	-	-	-	-

Treasury Management

The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), which provides the framework for managing the Council's cash balances and borrowing requirement, continues to reflect a policy of ensuring minimum risk, whilst aiming to deliver secure realistic investment income on the Council's cash balances.

The average level of Council funds available for investment purposes during Q4 was £223.16m. The total amount received in short term interest for Q4 was £2.999m at an average rate of 5.39%, compared to £3.646m at an average rate of 5.38% for Q3 2023/24. The average investment return for the year was 4.89% from the 4.45% assumed at budget setting and was based on the forecasts from our external treasury management advisors.

The Bank of England Base Rate was maintained in Q4 at 5.25%. The investment return outlook had improved during the latter part of the year however, the potential for increased interest rates into the future has ended, 5.25% is expected to be the peak and the latest forecasts suggest marginal decreases in the bank rate into 2024/25. Where possible a number of fixed term deposits with local authorities were placed for periods up to 1 year in Q4 at improved rates over bank deposits. These investments have been 'laddered' and will mature at different intervals in the next 12 months. This will take advantage of securing investment returns into 2024/25.

In seeking investment opportunities, as defined by the TMS, opportunities have been taken to invest in bank deposits that aligns to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In Q4, an average of £12m was in place during the quarter, opportunities to place additional funds will be explored into 2024/25.

No short-term borrowing was required in Q4. The majority of the Council's external debt, totalling £216.6m at Q4, is held as long-term loans. No long-term borrowing was undertaken in Q4, and no further cost-effective opportunities have arisen during Q4 to restructure the existing Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or wider debt portfolio.

The Treasury Management budget underspent by £8.2m. This is based on the position outlined above with regard to balances held and investment returns and slippage on the capital programme reducing the need to borrow externally in 2023/24.

The performance of the Council's treasury management activity, against benchmarks and the key indicators set in the Treasury Management Strategy, as approved by Full Council on 7 February 2023, are set out at Appendix 2.

Reserves and Balances 2023/24 (£000)

Reserve / Balance	Balance at 1 Apr 2023	Forecast net use at Q3	Outturn net use at Q4	Movt	Balance at 31 Mar 2024
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Statutorily ringfenced or held on behalf of others:

Balances held by schools	20,082	-	(1,824)	(1,824)	18,258
Public Health	7,812	(1,704)	(1,518)	186	6,294
Other	6,983	(867)	(230)	637	6,753
Subtotal	34,877	(2,571)	(3,572)	(1,001)	31,305

Service Reserves:

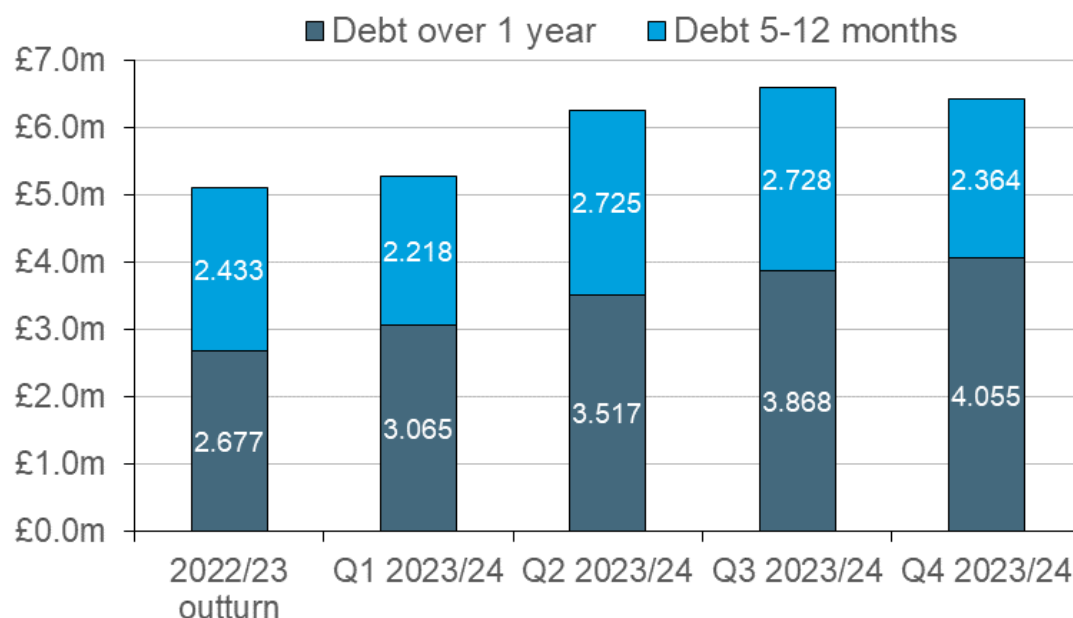
Corporate Waste	19,883	(440)	(397)	43	19,486
Capital Programme	13,425	(4,061)	(3,574)	487	9,851
Insurance	7,363	133	(4)	(137)	7,359
Adult Social Care	3,099	-	(65)	(65)	3,034
Subtotal	43,770	(4,368)	(4,040)	328	39,730

Strategic Reserves:

Priority / Transformation	17,398	(11,474)	(10,084)	1,390	7,314
Financial Management	41,880	(10,115)	(6,075)	4,040	35,805
Subtotal	59,278	(21,589)	(16,159)	5,430	43,119
Total Reserves	137,925	(28,528)	(23,771)	4,757	114,154
General Fund	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Total Reserves and Balances	147,925	(28,528)	(23,771)	4,757	124,154

Changes to Fees & Charges

There are no changes to Fees and Charges during quarter 4.

Outstanding debt analysis (£ millions)

The value of debt aged over 5 months at Quarter 4 has increased by £1.309m to £6.419m compared to the 2022/23 outturn position of £5.110m.

The value of aged debt over 5 months as a proportion of debt raised has increased from 3.22% in 2022/23 to 3.93% in 2023/24.

The majority £5.984m (93.22%) of all debt over 5 months old relates to Adult Social Care (ASC), which has increased by £1.769m compared with the 2022/23 outturn position of £4.215m.

The debt over 5 months related to income due to other departments has decreased by £0.460m to £0.435m, compared with the 2022/23 outturn position of £0.895m. £0.294m of the £0.435m due to other departments is income due from the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) and other Local Authorities and ongoing communications take place to facilitate repayment.

Debt recovery related to ASC client contributions can often take a long time due to circumstance of the debtors. For example, an ASC client may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves and an appointee, deputy or power of attorney therefore needs to be established, or the debt forms part of the administration of an estate.

Recovery of debt continues to be a high priority. As part of ongoing improvement work a Debt Recovery Project has been initiated to review and improve the ASC debt recovery model. The ASC Debt case panel continues to meet monthly to review complex and high value debt cases, ensuring the most appropriate next steps are taken to recover debt with sensitivity and consideration of the clients or families concerned and in accordance with the Care Act.

Revenue Savings Summary 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target for 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
ASC	-	-	-	-	-
BSD/Orbis	869	869	559	310	-
CS	-	-	-	-	-
CET	105	910	105	745	60
GS	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	974	1,779	664	1,055	60
ASC			-	-	-
BSD / Orbis			-	-	-
CS			-	-	-
CET			-	-	-
GS			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings & Permanent Changes	974	1,779	664	1,055	60

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
ASC	-	-	0
BSD / Orbis	210	100	310
CS	-	-	0
CET	745	60	805
GS	-	-	0
Total	955	160	1,115

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Adult Social Care – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2023/24	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total	0	0	0

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Business Services – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
IT&D: SEG wide area network operating costs	300	300	300	-	-
Property: Courier cost reduction based on reducing the frequency of pickups	24	24	24	-	-
Procurement: Identified income generation	100	100	0	100	-
Central Management: Resources for support	15	15	15	-	-
IT&D: Reduced printing costs	220	220	220	-	-
Property Assets (Offices): Co-location of St Mary's & St Marks and reduced usage of County Hall	210	210	-	210	-
Total Savings	869	869	559	310	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	869	869	559	310	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
Property Assets (Offices)	210	-	210
Procurement	-	100	100
Total	210	100	310

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Children's Services – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2023/24	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total	0	0	0

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Communities, Economy & Transport – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
Parking: Increase on-street parking charges where possible. Surpluses to be used for transport related funding.	-	745	-	745	-
Libraries: improving the cost efficiency of provision and/or relocating back office functions/libraries. In addition, we'll achieve further efficiencies in ICT through the implementation of a new contract for self-service facilities in libraries.	105	105	105	-	-
Environmental Services: Income generation through traded services.	-	60	-	-	60
Total Savings	105	910	105	745	60
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	105	910	105	745	60

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
Parking - one-off funding for 2023/24	745	-	745
Environmental Services - part of reported variance	-	60	60
Total	745	60	805

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Governance Services – Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved
There are no targeted savings in 2023/24	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Total	0	0	0

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators – Q4 2023/24

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy published the revised Treasury and Prudential codes in 2021, which now requires quarterly reporting of performance against forward looking prudential indicators. The performance of the Council's treasury management activity, against benchmarks and the key indicators in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, as approved by Full Council at its meeting of 7 February 2023, are set out below.

Investments

The average investment return over Q4 was 5.39% performing above the benchmark rate by 19 basis points (or 0.19 percentage points). Performance has improved as a result of reinvesting maturing investments in a duration matched to a peak in the forecast Bank of England (BoE) bank interest rate.

Quarter	Average Investment Balance £m	Average Investment return	Average Benchmark Rate*	Difference
Q1	295.687	4.19%	4.34%	(0.15%)
Q2	293.169	4.82%	5.09%	(0.27%)
Q3	269.102	5.38%	5.19%	0.19%
Q4	223.163	5.39%	5.20%	0.19%

**the Benchmark rate used is the Standard Overnight Index Average (SONIA); a rate administered by the Bank of England based on actual transactions of overnight borrowing by financial institutions.*

During Q4 we have monitored the security of the Council's investment, to assess the risk of those investments losing their value. These risks were assessed using the financial standing of the groups invested in, the length of each investment, and the historic default rates. Our investment strategy sets an allowable risk level of 0.050% (i.e. that there is a 99.95% probability that the Council will get its investments back). The actual indicator ranged between 0.005% and 0.007%, reflecting the high proportion of investments held in highly secure and/or very liquid investments.

Investment Risk benchmark	0.050%
Maximum investment risk experienced Q4	0.009%

Borrowing

The table below shows the Council's total external borrowing and average rate as at 31 March 2024:

	Balance as at 31 March 2024 £m	Average Rate
PWLB	210.142	4.53%
Market Loans	6.450	4.25%
Total borrowing	216.592	4.52%

The table below shows the outturn position of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) compared to the forecast position within the 2023/24 strategy approved in February 2023. The closing CFR showed an under-borrowed position of £59.084m, compared to the original estimate of £83.932m under-borrowed. The strategy throughout the year forecast that the level of reserves and balances in the medium term allowed for internal borrowing of up to £50.000m, and therefore it could be expected that external borrowing of £9.084m may have been required during the 2023/24 year to support the capital programme. However, in the current economic environment delaying that external borrowing decision is a prudent Treasury Management action as the cost of borrowing is high and cash balances remain sufficient to delay that external borrowing in the short to medium term.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (Underlying Borrowing Need)	Original Estimate 2023/24 £m	Outturn Position 2023/24 £m
Opening CFR	274.367	271.822
Borrowing Need	34.904	12.100
Minimum Revenue Provision	(7.429)	(8.246)
Closing CFR	301.842	275.676
External Borrowing as at 31 March 2024		216.592
Forecast Under-borrowing (if no action taken)		59.084

The table below shows that the Council is operating within the Operational Boundary and Authorised Borrowing Limits set within the Treasury Management strategy and has sufficient headroom to cover the borrowing need arising from the year's capital programme.

Borrowing Limits	Operational Boundary £m	Authorised Borrowing Limit £m
Limit set for 2023/24	376.000	396.000
Less: PFI & Leases	65.000	65.000
Limit for Underlying Borrowing	311.000	331.000
Actual External Borrowing at 31 December	216.592	216.592
Headroom*	94.408	114.408

**Authorised Borrowing headroom cannot be less than zero*

The maturity profile of the Authority's borrowing is within the limits set within the strategy.

Maturity Structure of borrowing	Lower Limit set	Upper Limit set	Actual as at 31 March 2024
Under 12 Months	0%	25%	2%
12 months to 2 years	0%	40%	2%
2 years to 5 years	0%	60%	7%
5 years to 10 years	0%	70%	20%
Over 10 years	0%	90%	68%

Adult Social Care and Health – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Adult Social Care (ASC)

Health and Social Care integration

A five-year [Shared Delivery Plan](#) was developed and agreed by all health and care partners in Sussex in June 2023, to support the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy ‘Improving Lives Together’ and the [East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy](#). A key priority within the Shared Delivery Plan is developing Integrated Community Teams (ICTs), which will be made up of professionals working together as a ‘team of teams’ across health, social care, housing and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners to improve integrated neighbourhood delivery. In 2023/24 we agreed our ICT footprints which align with borough and district boundaries and developed a pan-Sussex core offer for ICTs focussed on proactive care for the most complex and vulnerable patients, and population health improvement. Alongside this, ICTs will also address local priorities based on intelligence and insight: [data and insight packs](#) have been produced for each area to help further understand and address local health and care needs and inequalities.

Building on our progress with integrated care in East Sussex, Hastings is our ‘community frontrunner’ area for developing the ICT model. A local leadership planning meeting took place in November 2023, followed by an initial workshop with 28 people from frontline teams and services to understand the concept, share ideas about how the ICT can add value in the local context, and develop action plans. Similar meetings are planned for Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother and Wealden in the first half of 2024/25. To prepare, over the next few months each area will identify specific challenges to test how the ICT approach can help.

Adults are able to take control of the support they receive

The number of people in receipt of Direct Payments is now showing a decrease from 1,520 at 31 March 2023 to 1,457 at 31 March 2024. This number has also decreased as a proportion, to 28.1% due to an increased number of people receiving community based long term support (the denominator), meaning this remains below our target of >31.5%. Despite this, the Council's performance is still good compared to national benchmarks. Based on current national data, performance would fall within the upper-middle quartile. It is important to note that this measure is a snapshot at the end of each reporting period, so performance can fluctuate.

Reabling people to maximise their level of independence

Reablement services are provided to help people to regain mobility and daily living skills, especially after a hospital stay. Data shows that our reablement services are having a positive impact on the ongoing support needs of our residents and enable people to stay in their own homes after a stay in hospital. In particular:

- During 2023/24, 95.9% of people who received short-term services did not request any further support, above the target of >90.5%.
- Between April and December 2023 (reported a quarter in arrears), 92% of older people discharged from hospital to reablement / rehabilitation services were at home 91 days after their discharge from hospital. Based on current national data, this performance would fall within the upper quartile.

Homes for Ukraine

As of 31 March 2024, 1,831 guests had arrived in East Sussex under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, sponsored and hosted by 833 sponsors. A significant number (672) have successfully moved from hosted accommodation into independent private sector accommodation.

Third Sector support

During Q4, we continued to co-develop the Community Network Support Programme, engaging with 66 Network representatives, and over 60 representatives from groups and organisations that connect with or support Networks. This engagement has resulted in insight on the successes and challenges faced by Networks and will be used to develop a menu of support measures for Networks that will be tested during 2024/25.

The Council has partnered with the Tribe Project to help make finding a voluntary role easier, and to increase community engagement. Tribe is a free app and online platform, which connects people interested in volunteering with local organisations and their volunteering opportunities. In Q4, there was a total of 434 listings on Tribe from 141 organisations: [323 volunteering opportunities](#) and [111 activities for people to take part in](#). In February 2024, the Council and Tribe created a campaign to promote Tribe that reached over 50,000 residents, encouraging volunteering across East Sussex. During Q4, Tribe and East Sussex Community Information Service (ESCIS) worked together to ensure that activities on ESCIS could also be seen on Tribe.

Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention

The number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention (**ref i**) in 2023/24 was 333 against a target of 390. The service relies on receiving referrals direct from carers or through other organisations. There is evidence that carers do not identify themselves as having a caring role, and being in need of support. We will look in more detail at reasons for the drop in referrals and explore with the provider solutions to increase referrals to the service at the next Performance Review Meeting.

Safer Communities

Drug and alcohol related deaths

The latest figures for deaths (from 2022) resulting from drug or alcohol misuse have been released. These show 77 people died as a result of drug or alcohol misuse. Within that total there was a significant decrease in the number of people who died as a result of drug misuse compared to previous years. Every death is a tragedy, and we continue to work hard to reduce the number of deaths every year, including by working with partners to ensure people receive support as early as possible.

Treatment for opiate misuse

At the end of Q3 (reported a quarter in arrears), there were 1,060 individuals in treatment for opiate use which was a slight increase but remained below our target. Of those in treatment for opiate use, 57% in East Sussex are showing substantial treatment progress, compared to 46% in England.

Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse Services

In Q4, the Safer Communities Team supported commissioned refuge provider Clarion to open four self-contained units at Phoenix House. These units have expanded the available options for safe accommodation in East Sussex, especially for those where communal refuges may not be always appropriate or suitable (such as male or transgender victims/survivors). At the end of Q4, two male victims/survivors were resident at Phoenix House.

The Council is trialling a MARAC ([Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference](#)) Triage Pilot, until the end of March 2025. This was in recognition of the increasing number of cases being discussed at MARAC and the fact that while all high-risk cases require a multi-agency response to implementing a safety plan, not all require a discussion at MARAC to implement this.

The Safer Communities Team has delivered and participated in various awareness-raising and community engagement events throughout the year, particularly in quarters 3 and 4. This included: a social media campaign for 16 Days of Activism 2023, a Council staff White Ribbon awareness day in November 2023, Safer Hastings Partnership's 'Blue Light' community event in November 2023, an online joint webinar with West Sussex County Council in December 2023, a Domestic Homicide Review training session with refuge staff in January 2024, and Hastings' Women's Voice 'Hear Me Roar More' festival for International Women's Day 2024.

The Council's application to become White Ribbon (re)accredited was accepted in Q4; the Safer Communities team will submit a three-year action plan to White Ribbon UK in Q2 2024/2025.

Fraud and Scams

During Q4, Get Safe Online (GSO) and the Council promoted campaigns around 'Ticket Fraud' and 'Your Child and Online Gaming' to residents. The Safer East Sussex Team and GSO also delivered online training to teaching staff, and promoted monthly campaigns, including tips on how to stay safe when online shopping, safeguarding children online, de-mystifying Artificial Intelligence, and information on how to make sure smart devices are used safely.

The team and GSO delivered Digital Ambassador training to frontline staff and supported the Eastbourne 999 Festival delivering internet safety advice to the public in June 2023. The event attracted thousands of people from across the region.

Preventing Violent Extremism

In Q4, the team delivered 33 awareness raising sessions to East Sussex organisations. Approximately 2,360 students and staff have benefitted. The team also delivered a conference with partners in West Sussex County Council, increasing knowledge and understanding of Prevent among the 135 community and VCSE partners who attended.

Serious Violence

During Q4 the team produced four place-based community safety profiles (funded by a Home Office Grant) in different districts and boroughs to understand the nature and causes of crime and anti-social behaviour in these areas. The profiles will be used alongside community engagement activities to develop holistic action plans to tackle violent crime.

During 2023/24 the East Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership have developed an East Sussex Serious Violence Reduction Strategy Action Plan and commenced a two-year project in hyper-local areas with higher volumes of serious violent crime in each district and borough area.

Positive achievements generated in year one of the project include:

- Increased data and information sharing.
- Identification of 'at risk' groups, crime types and exploitation factors in each area based on analysis of Sussex Police data – with this information used to inform targeted police patrols and youth outreach interventions.
- Use of Sussex Police data to support two new contextual safeguarding assessments in Hastings and Rother.
- Mapping of community assets and community development activities.

Devonshire Safer Streets Project

In 2023 the Safer Communities team secured Safer Streets funding for a 12-month project in the Devonshire area of Eastbourne, to tackle neighbourhood crime, anti-social behaviour, violence against women and girls, and improving public safety for all.

The project and survey findings have influenced an action plan for sustainable longer-term activity including continuation of the Devonshire Community Safety Forum (open to all residents) and the Grassroots Network (attended by over 25 community-based agencies working together to improve safety outcomes for the Devonshire area).

Substance Misuse

Throughout 2023/24, there has been increased investment into drug and alcohol treatment and recovery interventions by Government. An extensive public consultation and equalities impact exercise was conducted in Q3 and Q4. The findings from these will inform future commissioning processes in 2024/25.

Throughout 2023/24, work has been monitored by the Harm to Hope Board has focused on ensuring a whole system approach to address the aims of the Government's Drug Strategy. This has improved the support pathways for a range of specific groups, including those with co-occurring conditions and those leaving prison. Due to this work, stronger links have been made with HMP Lewes resulting in an increase in the rate of individuals leaving prison and entering community treatment. A specialist pathway for those with respiratory conditions has been implemented, and a joint working protocol for those with a co-occurring mental health condition is also in development.

Public Health

NHS Health Checks

The aim of this target is to ensure that the NHS Health Checks programme is accessible to those living in the most deprived areas. At Q3 (reported a quarter in arrears), 1,532 NHS Health Checks were delivered to those living in IMD1 (the top 20% most deprived) areas (66% of the target). Overall activity levels for NHS Health Checks decreased over the winter due to competing priorities in primary care such as flu jab services. Although activity was expected to increase during Q4 due to suspension of Sussex Integrated Care Systems (ICS) locally commissioned services, provisional data shows 2,067 checks have been delivered to those living in an IMD1 area against a target of 2,300 (90% achievement). Data will be confirmed at Q1, but it is unlikely that the target will be achieved.

Successes

Research shows that life expectancy for men in Hastings and St Leonards is significantly lower than the national average. The 'Mr Hastings and St Leonards' project aims to put men at the heart of decision making within strong, supportive, and well-connected communities to support happier, healthier, and longer lives. A logo has been co-designed with a local graphic designer and a group of local men. A regular [podcast](#) is in place hosted by local men and featuring local organisations, such as Grumpy Cook and Project Rewild. The film premiere of 'Men Don't Talk?', produced by a local film maker and filmed at a local barber's, shares stories from local men about their own mental health and wellbeing. A sofa on wheels has been upcycled together with portable 'murals' including infographics and panoramic views of Hastings and St Leonards to generate conversations and make connections with local men.

The Men in Mind programme focuses on increasing participants knowledge and confidence to discuss matters around mental health and suicide prevention. To date over 70 local businesses within Eastbourne and Hailsham (the initial prioritised areas for the programme) have signed up to receive information on the programme and over 100 people have booked onto training courses.

A Real Time Surveillance Dashboard for suspected suicides has been developed and is providing valuable information to partners across Sussex, including public health, the Police, mental health

trust and ICS. The Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategy 2024-27 and Action Plan was endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Boards in West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

Over 600 warm home checks were completed during 2023/24 and the 'keep warm and well' helpline (and linked services) provided brief advice to over 8,000 residents. Between 2022/23 and 2023/24 major home energy efficiency improvements were installed for fuel poor households valued at over £2m.

Every year tens of thousands of people across the UK die from conditions that can be linked to exposure to cold weather. Cold Alert is a free service providing free severe cold weather warnings for individuals with respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, parents of young children, carers and healthcare professionals. Latest figures (November 2023 to January 2024) show there are 2,804 subscribers to the Cold Alert service in East Sussex, an increase of 213 (7.6%) subscriptions.

The 'Making it Happen' programme continues to help to build the confidence and capability of people to come together in their neighbourhoods to make change for themselves and create positive health outcomes. The grants awarded to groups of residents and community groups show a great deal of interest in projects relating to arts, culture and creativity. Making it Happen has been working with Latest TV to create a TV series showcasing some of the amazing things that communities are doing. Previous Phenomenal Happenings episodes are available through [Making it Happen](#). Future episodes will continue to be aired on Latest TV. There is increasing interest in the programme outside the county.

Our digital sexual health service has improved the accessibility of face-to-face delivery and our method of service delivery has attracted interest from other local authorities. Both the online and postal sexually transmitted infection self-sampling and condom distribution scheme are reaching residents who are from deprived communities, have different sexual partners and belong to diverse ethnic groups. The reach of our digital health service was presented at the STI and HIV World Congress in July 2023 in Chicago.

Roma Children and Young People designed and delivered a blacksmithing project focussing on traditional Roma crafts, concepts of home, community, physical and mental health and wellbeing. The art work will be toured to schools and libraries across the county to enable workshops tackling stigma and discrimination through dialogue and understanding of the different ideas associated with the concept of home and health and community.

The second annual Wellbeing at Work event presented 36 awards to 31 East Sussex employers. This included the first Gold Awarded organisations to both Affinity Select Insurance and Servomex. The event was well attended by employers already registered with the scheme, prospective organisations and local service providers with excellent feedback about the networking opportunities and guest speakers (Mind Brighton & Hove, Sussex MSK Partnership). The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) noted the increase in organisations adopting a stand-alone wellbeing policy. This is great progress for programmes such as Wellbeing at Work.

A [case study](#) outlining Public Health work that promotes creativity as key to our prevention approach has been published on the [National Creative Health Review](#) website and highlighted as an example of good practice.

The Public Health 'Healthy Places Team' was highlighted as one of the three best practice case studies across England in a report by the Quality-of-Life Foundation. The report focuses on work done to help embed health in planning decisions through our collaborative relationships with partners.

The Public Health 'Infection Control' team received a Silver Award from the Infection Prevention Society for Nurturing Infection Prevention and Control Talent 2023. The award recognised the work of the team in 2023/24 with the wider remit of groups such as unpaid and informal carers, day services and volunteers working in the community and people's homes.

Revenue Budget Summary

ASC

The net ASC budget of £236.313m includes a 10% inflationary uplift of £25.797m to support the care market across the Independent Sector. This uplift is in addition to £4.546m to fund growth and demographic pressures, with the costs of the increases being partially funded by £6.635m raised through the 2% ASC Care Precept. In July 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care announced an additional £3.932m Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund, which has been fully invested to support the market.

The ASC outturn for 2023/24 is £238.297m. This gives an overspend of £1.984m, a decrease of £0.001m since Q3. The movement in Q4 comprises a decrease in the overspend of £0.026m on Independent Sector care provision (£2.917m total overspend), offset by a decrease in the underspend of £0.025m in Directly Provided Services (£0.933m total underspend). The overspend on the Independent Sector is due to a combination of factors with the most material being increasing complexity of need, and pressures arising from demand and demographic growth returning to pre-pandemic levels. The underspend in Directly Provided Services is due to staffing vacancies and reflects the difficulties in recruitment.

Safer Communities

The net budget of £1.167m has been fully spent in 2023/24.

Public Health

The Public Health (PH) budget of £36.778m comprises of the PH grant allocation of £29.804m, additional income and grants of £4.350m, a planned draw from PH ring-fenced reserves £2.058m for reserve projects and £0.566m drawn to support in year spending.

At 31 March 2024 the PH outturn against budget was an overall underspend of £1.106m. This comprises underspends of £1.706m on the PH Reserve projects and £0.140m general PH programme, offset by an overspend of £0.740m on the Health Visiting programme, which is used to support Children's Early Years.

COVID-19 related funding streams

ASC continues to incur expenditure relating to schemes initiated during the national COVID-19 response. £0.413m will be spent in 2024/25 on corporately approved schemes before the 30 September 2024 deadline for this spend.

Grant	Funding brought forward £'000	Planned Usage £'000	Balance Remaining £'000
Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF)	2,695	2,282	413
CEV Grant (support to CEV individuals)	1,539	1,539	-
Omicron Support Fund	42	42	-
Total	4,276	3,863	413

Homes for Ukraine

ASC continues to lead on the programme of services to support Ukrainian guests to settle in East Sussex. Actual expenditure in 2023/24 was £5.447m against funding of £12.657m, with the

remaining budget allocated for the subsequent years of support required under statutory guidance. In addition, ASC passed £1.245m to districts and boroughs to fund payments to hosts, in line with guidance.

HFU Grant Funding	Total Funding £'000	Actual Expenditure £'000	Balance Remaining £'000
Funding for guests	12,657	5,447	7,210
Host Payments	1,245	1,245	-
Total	13,902	6,692	7,210

Capital Programme Summary

The ASC Capital programme budget for 2023/24 was £1.259m. Actual expenditure for the programme in 2023/24 was £1.025m. There has been slippage on the Supported Living project of £0.188m due to the previous contractor going into administration. This contract has been novated to a new contractor and work on the scheme has restarted, with expenditure £0.112m higher than forecast at Q3. Phase 1 is on track to be completed by mid-September 2024. There has also been an underspend of £0.037m on House Adaptations and slippage of £0.009m on Greenacres.

Performance exceptions (see How to read this report for definition)

Priority – Keeping vulnerable people safe

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
The number of people accessing treatment for opiate misuse	New measure 2023/24	1,247	G	G	A	CO	Reported a quarter in arrears. Q3: 1,060	
The % of people affected by domestic violence and abuse who have improved safety/support measures in place upon leaving the service	91.4%	90%	G	G	G	CO	91.8% (Q3)	
When they leave the service the % of those affected by rape, sexual violence and abuse who have improved coping strategies	92.7%	88%	G	G	G	CO	90% (Q3)	
The percentage of people who access additional support from our specialist commissioned domestic abuse service who are older	New measure 2023/24	3%	G	G	G	CO	3.13% (Q3)	

Priority – Helping people help themselves

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Number of carers supported through short-term crisis intervention	494	390	G	A	G	R	333	i
Improved targeting of NHS Health Checks	Cumulative uptake: 29.5% (5 year period 2018/19–2022/23 Q4)	10% of the eligible population in the 20% most deprived areas (IMD1) have received a health check	R	A	G	CO	Reported a quarter in arrears. Q3: 1,532 / 2,300 NHS Health Checks delivered (66% of target)	
Achieve independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care	90.5%	>90%	G	G	G	CO	92.0% (Q3)	

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
Total	0	0	0	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)**Adult Social Care – Independent Sector:**

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
IS - Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support for Memory & Cognition	167,651	(99,949)	67,702	190,354	(120,577)	69,777	(22,703)	20,628	(2,075)	
IS - Learning Disability Support	86,281	(5,863)	80,418	89,967	(9,130)	80,837	(3,686)	3,267	(419)	
IS - Mental Health Support	31,294	(16,409)	14,885	31,695	(16,387)	15,308	(401)	(22)	(423)	
Subtotal	285,226	(122,221)	163,005	312,016	(146,094)	165,922	(26,790)	23,873	(2,917)	

Adult Social Care – Directly Provided Services & Assessment and Care Management:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support for Memory & Cognition	17,315	(5,121)	12,194	16,392	(5,668)	10,724	923	547	1,470	
Learning Disability Support	8,791	(592)	8,199	8,797	(545)	8,252	(6)	(47)	(53)	
Mental Health Support	4,322	(4,199)	123	4,587	(4,235)	352	(265)	36	(229)	
Substance Misuse Support	477	-	477	476	-	476	1	-	1	
Equipment & Assistive Technology	7,414	(3,782)	3,632	7,985	(4,351)	3,634	(571)	569	(2)	
Other	130	-	130	110	-	110	20	-	20	
Supporting People	6,144	(310)	5,834	5,934	(100)	5,834	210	(210)	-	
Assessment and Care Management	30,601	(2,202)	28,399	34,469	(4,972)	29,497	(3,868)	2,770	(1,098)	
Carers	3,639	(2,930)	709	3,029	(2,321)	708	610	(609)	1	
Management and Support	14,896	(1,735)	13,161	19,193	(7,478)	11,715	(4,297)	5,743	1,446	
Service Strategy	648	(198)	450	10,216	(9,143)	1,073	(9,568)	8,945	(623)	
Subtotal	94,377	(21,069)	73,308	111,188	(38,813)	72,375	(16,811)	17,744	933	

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Total Adult Social Care	379,603	(143,290)	236,313	423,204	(184,907)	238,297	(43,601)	41,617	(1,984)	

Safer Communities:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Safer Communities	2,076	(909)	1,167	2,792	(1,625)	1,167	(716)	716	-	
Total Safer Communities	2,076	(909)	1,167	2,792	(1,625)	1,167	(716)	716	0	

Public Health – Core Services:

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note Ref
Mental Health & Best Start	12,422	-	12,422	12,678	-	12,678	(256)	-	(256)	
Risky Behaviours and Threats to Health	13,699	-	13,699	13,364	-	13,364	335	-	335	
Health Systems	3,616	-	3,616	3,253	-	3,253	363	-	363	
Communities	925	-	925	1,047	-	1,047	(122)	-	(122)	
Central Support	3,600	-	3,600	4,595	-	4,595	(995)	-	(995)	
Recovery & Renewal	458	-	458	383	-	383	75	-	75	
Public Health Grant Income	-	(29,804)	(29,804)	-	(29,804)	(29,804)	-	-	-	
Other Grants and Income	-	(4,350)	(4,350)	-	(4,350)	(4,350)	-	-	-	
Draw from General Reserves	-	(566)	(566)	-	(426)	(426)	-	(140)	(140)	
Draw from Health Visiting Reserves	-	-	-	-	(740)	(740)	-	740	740	
Project Board Reserves	2,058	(2,058)	-	352	(352)	-	1,706	(1,706)	-	
Total Public Health	36,778	(36,778)	0	35,672	(35,672)	0	1,106	(1,106)	0	

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
Supported Living Projects	6,421	6,421	1,200	1,012	188	-	188	-	
Greenacres	2,598	2,598	9	-	9	-	9	-	
House Adaptations for People with Disabilities	2,719	2,682	50	13	37	37	-	-	
Total ASC Gross	11,738	11,701	1,259	1,025	234	37	197	0	

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Business Services – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Key cross cutting programmes

Carbon

In line with our current Climate Action Plan, further progress was made in Q4 on the delivery of energy efficiency projects. A further 9 projects were completed in Q4 making a total of 25 completed projects in 2023/24, against a target of 23 (**ref ii**).

Schemes completed throughout 2023/24 were:

- 5 LED lighting energy saving projects at Milton Grange Residential Home plus Frant, Hankham, Chiddingly and Catsfield Primary Schools.
- 10 solar PV energy generation projects at The Keep, the Phoenix Centre, St. Nicolas Centre, Hailsham Library, Bexhill Library, Newhaven Library, and Bodiam, Chiddingly, Plumpton, and Rocks Park Primary Schools.
- 5 building insulation projects to cut heat loss: triple glazing at Greenwood and Grovelands Primary Schools and loft, doors and wall insulation at Hellingly, Rocks Park and Rotherfield Primary Schools.
- 3 decarbonisation of heat projects to transition from oil boilers to air source heat pumps at Bodiam, Chiddingly and Plumpton Primary Schools.
- 2 large asset rationalisation projects ensuring more modern facilities with reduced carbon emissions. These are the Ropemaker Park to Alder Close project and the move from Ocean House to Cavendish House, Hastings

The Property team hosted a further energy saving workshop for managers / school caretakers in Q4, with a focus on heat cost savings. The annual target to train 40 site managers has been exceeded, with 95 trained at 5 events.

A pilot scheme for the Site Heating Control Interventions Initiative was successfully completed in Q4, targeting 10 sites with low heating efficiency arising from poor control. A consultant visited sites to review and optimise heating controls and provide training for site managers to support improvements being sustained in the longer term. A summary report on the cost-benefit of the interventions across all 10 sites will be completed in Q1 2024/25 and will be used to determine whether the return on investment is sufficient to consider roll out to further sites later in the year.

Total energy consumption (buildings, streetlighting and servers) in Q3 (reported a quarter in arrears) was down 8% compared with the same period last year and down 25% on the baseline year 2019/20. Building energy use in Q3 was down 8% compared with the same period last year and down 28% on the baseline year 2019/20.

As there is now only one quarter of 2023/24 remaining for the reporting of energy consumption, the forecast outturn does become more reliable. However, the final outturn can still be impacted by the weather, as Q4 has the potential for the largest heating demand of the year. If consumption for Q4 this year is the same as Q4 last year our Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions would reduce by 2% in 2023/24 compared with 2022/23, against the target of 16% required to keep within the 5-year carbon budget. This is an improvement from Q2 where a 0.39% decrease in emissions was forecast and would result in a 33% reduction on the 2019/20 baseline, against a cumulative target of 43% (**ref i**).

Carbon emissions from the Council's electricity consumption increased during 2023/24, despite a fall in the amount of electricity consumed by the Council. This was due to changes in the carbon emission factor, which is the figure used to convert electricity consumption from the national grid into equivalent carbon emissions. Carbon emission factors are produced by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. They are updated every year and applied widely in the UK. The UK

grid carbon emission factor changes from year to year as the fuel mix consumed in UK power stations changes (i.e. between renewables, nuclear, natural gas, oil and coal) and as the proportion of imported electricity also changes. The carbon emission factors used for reporting in 2023/24 are based on the fuel mix used in 2021, due to the time it takes to collate and analyse the data (more information can be found here).

The carbon emission factors for electricity fell by over 24% between 2019/20 and 2022/23 as renewables increasingly replaced coal in the generation mix. However, for 2023/24, this trend reversed and the carbon emissions factor increased. This was due to a post-covid increase in national electricity demand and a relatively poor year for wind generation in 2021 (see above on timing delay). We continue to see the benefit of energy efficiency projects, which have helped reduce our overall energy consumption and utility bills. Without these projects, we would have missed the carbon target by a greater margin.

Modernising Systems

The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) Programme was established to deliver the replacement of the Council's core finance and Human Resources systems, to support further developments to increase agile and digital working. The programme will enable the Council to move off the SAP system, which is due to go out of support in 2027. Following the decision not to go live in 2023, the external programme support was significantly reduced, and an independent review was commissioned to complete an assurance exercise of the system and programme. The first phase of the review gave a number of recommendations and confirmed that Oracle remains a suitable product for the Council.

Human Resources and Organisational Development (HROD)

Successes and achievements during 2023/24 include:

- Successful organisational wide engagement on the refresh of the 2024-2027 People Strategy.
- Delivery of 'single sign-on' for access to the Council's Attendance Management System, GoodShape. GoodShape accounts are now automatically linked with Council network accounts, which improves security and ease of access when using the portal. This is expected to increase Return to Work Interview compliance, as it will reduce the reason 'manager unable to log on to GoodShape' for not completing a Return to Work Interview.
- Delivery of a series of 'masterclasses' for Heads of Service in areas of key strategic importance, with positive feedback received.
- Review and re-design of the process and provision for workplace adjustments, including strengthening support for neurodiversity.

Attendance Management and Wellbeing

The 2023/24 year end sickness absence figure for the whole authority (excluding schools) is 9.13 days lost per Full Time Equivalent role (FTE), a decrease of 9.3% since last year. Despite this, the 2023/24 target of 9.10 days/FTE has narrowly been missed (**ref iii**). The main reason for the decrease in absence rates is a fall in COVID-19 related absences.

We have continued to see a significant decrease in musculoskeletal absence of 1,182 working days compared to 2022/23. This indicates that preventive measures are having a positive impact in reducing sickness absence for this reason. In addition, we are running a dedicated pilot within Adult Social Care and Health with the University of Brighton to explore how our musculoskeletal offer can be further improved to reduce absence and retain staff.

However, mental health absence has increased by 772 days compared to last year. Benchmarking data from GoodShape suggests this is a common theme across local authorities and our absence rates are below the average for other authorities. Set against this background, we are continuing to provide support to staff by:

- The HR Attendance Management Team proactively contact all line managers during the first week an employee reports a stress related absence. This ensures timely and practical guidance on supporting the employee back to work is given. The results over the last 3 months have shown a 34% decrease, equating to a reduction of 9 days per absence.
- Improving the Wellness Plan and Stress Risk Assessment, which were successfully launched during Q3, and are being promoted in line with key awareness days and in team meetings and employee sessions.
- Providing enhanced tools and guidance for workplace adjustments specifically in relation to supporting performance and mental health.
- Offering employees additional support when they report an absence due to Mental Health to GoodShape. The aim is to reduce absence length and the risk of further mental health absence taking place in the future.
- Our growing Mental Health First Aid network continues to pro-actively support staff and promote wellbeing resources within teams.

Procurement

Savings achieved through procurement, contract and supplier management activities

The Council has spent £311m with local suppliers over the past 12 months. This equates to 64% of our total procurement spend, compared to a target of 60%. 847 local suppliers were used. The Procurement team continues to promote our contract opportunities to local suppliers, as well as building local supply chain opportunities into our tenders where possible.

Social Value

Several contracts with significant social value commitment were secured this year, including:

- Soft Facilities Management (FM) Services for the Council's corporate and schools estate. The successful suppliers for the various FM services committed to a Social Value offer of £1.46m (29% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: apprenticeship opportunities for local people; job opportunities for local people in priority groups; volunteering for the local community; work experience and professional development opportunities offered to local people.
- Solar PV for Schools. The successful supplier has committed to a Social Value offer of £450k (35% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: apprenticeship and job opportunities for local people; training opportunities to aid green skills growth in the construction sector; school talks to educate pupils on the importance of renewable energy and environmental sustainability; and community volunteering.
- Start' and 'Specialise' Business Support. The 2 successful suppliers committed to a Social Value offer of £255k (57% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: spend with locally based businesses; training on environmental awareness; job opportunities for local people; and volunteering for local charities.
- Youth Employability Service (YES). The successful supplier has committed to a social value offer of £171k (17% of contract spend). Social Value benefits include: 2 apprenticeships offered to local people; professional development opportunities offered to local people; and a local job opportunity for a priority group.

In Q4, a total of 21 contracts commenced, of which 10 were out of scope of the Social Value Measurement Charter, which quantifies the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the procurement, as they accessed an existing pre-approved list of suppliers (Frameworks) with predefined contractual terms. The in-scope contracts for Q4 had a total contract value of £18.11m and secured £5.79m in Social Value commitment, which equates to an outturn of 32% against a target of 10%. This brings the final outturn figure for 2023/24 to 31%.

The Social Value secured through our Property Frameworks used for the Planned Maintenance Programme in 2023/24 has been reported in Q4. Contracts with a combined value of £11.24m were awarded and secured £3.51m in Social Value, which equates to 31%. The Social Value consists of a number of different measures, including targeted spend with local sub-contracted suppliers and contractors, which is an important contributor to economic growth, and various employment and skills initiatives.

The Place Scrutiny Committee's report of Procurement: Social Value and Buying Local was agreed at full Council in May 2023. The 9 recommendations included a 12-month trial of a new qualitative approach to social value within the Adult Social Care and Health service which is now underway. Place Scrutiny Committee considered an update of the implementation of the recommendations Action Plan in March 2024 and were pleased with the progress that has been made implementing the recommendations from the review, in particular the Social Value trial. The Place Scrutiny Committee will consider a further update report at the Place Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2024.

Procurement's Policy Team continues to build on the success of achieving publication of the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy (ESPP) in 2022. Extensive guidance for the Procurement Team on how to utilise the policy has been published on our new Procurement Intranet site. The policy received minor updates in March 2024 to reflect enhanced approaches to biodiversity, waste hierarchy and explicit reference to government policy, namely Carbon Reduction Plans. The Senior Policy Lead for Supply Chain Decarbonisation has developed a broad Carbon Reduction Strategy for the Authority (presented to Climate Emergency Board in September 2023) and is working with Services and Procurement colleagues to develop focused strategies in the 5 prioritised spend areas. The Procurement Policy Team continues to make good progress against the 4 related actions in the Climate Emergency Plan and is steadily increasing the number of suppliers reporting and reducing carbon emissions through procurement and contract management activity.

Internal Audit

Through the delivery of sufficient audit coverage in Q4, the Chief Internal Auditor continues to be able to provide assurance over the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control for the Council.

Internal Audit have continued to focus on delivery of the Annual Internal Audit Plan and were able to complete 91.2% of the plan to draft report stage by the end of Q4, against an annual target of 90%.

All high priority actions agreed with management as part of individual audit reviews are subject to action tracking, whereby we seek written confirmation from services that these have been implemented. 9/9 (100%) of the agreed high-risk actions due to be implemented on a 12-month rolling basis have been actioned.

Property

Work has continued through Q4 on an options paper for the County Hall campus, with additional technical support being provided by external specialists. The paper is expected to be completed in Q1 2024/25.

The delivery plan to consolidate our Eastbourne offices into one main base has begun its implementation phase in Q4 and will continue in Q1 2024/25.

The re-procurement of facilities management services for the corporate and schools estate has completed and mobilisation of the services began in Q4, with full service implementation in Spring 2024.

Working across the workstreams in the Council's Asset Management Plan 2020-2025, progress throughout 2023/24 includes:

- Relocating teams from Ocean House to their new Hastings bases at Cavendish House and Muriel Matters House, with ongoing support for teams as they settle in. The move has reduced the Council's carbon footprint for corporate premises in Hastings by 43% (when compared to Ocean House)
- Completion of the sale of the former Etchingham School Site and 1 Southview Close, Crowborough.
- The sale of Hindslands, Polegate, is progressing through the legal process, with conditional contracts now expected to be signed in Q1 2024/25. The capital receipt is dependent on the purchaser securing planning consent which will need to be approved by Wealden District Council.
- The sale of Hye House Farm, Crowhurst is progressing through the legal process, with 3 purchasers identified for 4 separate transactions. It is anticipated these sales will proceed in Q1 / Q2 2024/25.
- Temporary school buildings were completed on schedule and a nursery extension in Wadhurst was completed.
- Planning permissions for two new youth facilities were secured, at Heathfield and The Joff, Peacehaven, and have begun as projects. Both are funded through the Youth Investment Fund from central Government.

IT & Digital

Interest in artificial intelligence (AI) has increased considerably during Q4 and exploratory work has started to understand the implications of this technology and explore how it could be used safely, responsibly and effectively to enable efficiencies. Work has focused on understanding the types of AI available and the risks and benefits associated with each type which include free to use tools such as ChatGPT, vendor specific licenced tools such as Microsoft Co-pilot and AI capability built into line of business applications. This activity will be overseen by the Corporate Digital Board which will facilitate the sharing of learning across the Council.

The migration of services to the new South East Grid (SEG) network on behalf of the Link Consortium has continued during Q4 and is nearing completion. Hosted by the Council, the network allows the Council and other public sector organisations in the South East to access higher speed digital infrastructure connections and contributes to the provision of ultra-fast data network connectivity throughout East Sussex.

The Wi-Fi service has now been replaced and upgraded to a next new generation Wi-Fi capability across Council sites. The new service provides higher bandwidth and will improve performance and enhance security. It will also be an enabler of newer technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) likely to be used in the future for a range of activities such as energy and intelligent buildings management.

Work to replace the core telephony solution paired with a dedicated contact centre solution has progressed in Q4, with the contract now signed. The change from landline-based telephony builds on existing technology investment and provides a sustainable solution, reducing the carbon footprint (removing handsets and on-premises equipment) and removing building dependency, thereby supporting a reduction in office space.

Following successful procurement activity, a supplier for the Device Refresh Project has been appointed. Periodically refreshing our IT equipment is vital so that it stays up to date and safe to use to best support and enable a digital workforce. The scale at which this is done (across three councils through the Orbis Partnership) has many benefits and in this case, a saving of 18% per device has been achieved through this joint procurement. New devices will be rolled out with a new operating system as Windows 10 reaches the end of its supportable life. Hence, a Windows 11 Readiness Project has been underway in parallel to ensure that all Council business applications continue to work in the updated environment.

In addition to the above, work has continued throughout Q4 to move all Council SharePoint sites into the Microsoft 365 cloud service where there is increased functionality that will help people to collaborate effectively, this project is nearing completion.

External Funding

In Q4, the External Funding team helped 15 organisations bring £501,850 into the county. This included small to medium sized applications from organisations such as Warming Up the Homeless in Bexhill, Northiam Village Hall in Rye, and Holding Space in Eastbourne, to continue offering parent and carer peer support to families whose children are struggling with their mental health.

The team responded to 56 funding enquiries from not-for-profit organisations, primarily for community and health and wellbeing work. During Q4 the service provided one-to-one support to 6 organisations, prioritising and aligning funds to projects and discussing steps to take before applying.

Throughout 2023/24 the team supported 77 Council colleagues and 200 organisations including new and existing groups, charities, and social enterprises across a wide range of causes (many overlapping) – health and wellbeing, community, environment, arts, culture and heritage, economy. Needs included adapting or expanding services in response to the impact of the cost of living to both services and residents, making improvements to community facilities. Funding needs ranged from startup and first year's costs, project costs and notably core running costs and multi-year funding.

The Team provided:

Resources

- Funding News, a monthly electronic publication about forthcoming funding opportunities (11,300 subscribers).
- East Sussex 4 Community, a free to use database of funders.

One to one support

- 283 funding searches tailored to organisations' needs.
- Bid readiness – talking through practicalities and steps to take before applying. The team met with 71 organisations and 24 council colleagues to discuss their specific requirements.
- Reviewing grant applications, vetting proposals for strengths and weaknesses. We carried out 15 quality checks and delivered 10 applying for funding sessions attended by 382 people.

Partnership working

- Participating on wider strategic and cross sector work such as Partnership Plus, and Multi-Agency Financial steering group.
- Participating on the Healthy Activities and Food Fund (HAF) panel.
- Working with key stakeholders, discussing trends and sharing best practice.

By facilitating resources and connections between groups and colleagues, the team helped bring in £891,211 to East Sussex, through 44 grants ranging from £500 to £450,000. These projects mostly covered communities, (29 projects) health and wellbeing (8 projects).

Revenue Budget Summary

The 2023/24 Business Services net revenue budget is £29.310m. There are £0.869m planned savings in BSD this financial year, of which £0.210m (**ref iv**) relating to the consolidation of the Eastbourne hubs will not be achieved but will be offset by underspending elsewhere. These unachieved savings are included within the current outturn forecast, which is a net £0.398m underspend (**ref viii**). The underspend has increased by £0.329m since Q3. Finance and

Business Administration has a net underspend of £0.248m (**ref v**) an increase of £0.186m from Q3 due to higher staff recharges to Orbis, higher than expected Ukraine funding plus lower consultancy and Audit fees. IT & Digital has an underspend of £0.151m (**ref vi**) an increase of £0.262m since Q3 and is due to higher recharges for project managers and higher than anticipated licence recharges. The Procurement income target of £0.100m (**ref vii**) set for East Sussex was not achieved due to certain income streams not materialising. However, the service did exceed its income budget by £0.030m across the Orbis partnership representing a £0.009m contribution for East Sussex.

Capital Programme Summary

The 2023/24 capital budget is £25,360m with a £1.958m net underspend variance at the end of the financial year. The Salix underspend of £0.294m (**ref ix**) will be offset by a reprofile of the total SALIX programme budget. The Youth Investment Fund slippage of £0.889m (**ref x**) relates to delays as the project is value engineered to stay within budget. The spend in advance of £0.238m (**ref xi**) on Corporate Buildings Improvements relates to a number of projects which commenced in 2023/24 that were originally planned to start in 2024/25. This includes the heating project at Greenwood and the building maintenance spend on fabric works (windows external insulation/rendering) and an emergency boiler replacement. The Core Programme – Capital Building Improvements Schools spend in advance of £0.201m (**ref xii**) was as a result of milder, drier weather enabling greater progress to be made on several projects than had been expected. Core Programme – IT & Digital Strategy Implementation variation of £0.683m (**ref xiii**) relates to slippage in Laptop deployment and telephony projects and an underspend on the TechForge implementation. Core Programme – IT & Digital Strategy Implementation MBOS slippage of £0.442m (**ref xiv**) arising from delays in the programme which means that some of the work initially planned for 2023/24 will be carried out in 2024/25.

Performance exceptions (Q4 – See How to read this report for definition)**Priority – Making best use of resources now and for the future**

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Reduce the amount of CO2 arising from County Council operations	32% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions	43% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions (emissions not to exceed 7,139 tonnes CO2e)	R	R	R	CO	Emissions reported a quarter in arrears Estimate for 2023/24: 33% reduction on baseline year (2019/20) emissions	i
Progress on implementation of Carbon reduction schemes	11 low energy lighting schemes completed; 8 solar PV schemes completed; 2 decarbonisation of heat schemes implemented	23 energy saving schemes implemented	A	A	A	G	25 energy saving schemes implemented	ii
Number of working days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employee due to sickness absence in non-school services	10.07	9.10	G	G	G	R	9.13	iii

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
Planned savings - BSD	869	869	559	310	-	
Planned savings - Orbis	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	869	869	559	310	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	869	869	559	310	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
Property: consolidation of Eastbourne hubs	210	-	210	
Procurement	-	100	100	vii
	-	-	-	
Total	210	100	310	iv

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Finance & Bus Admin	11,660	(5,753)	5,907	13,523	(7,864)	5,659	(1,863)	2,111	248	v
HR & OD	3,353	(1,160)	2,192	3,587	(1,396)	2,191	(234)	235	1	
IT & Digital	12,135	(3,671)	8,464	17,075	(8,762)	8,313	(4,940)	5,091	151	vi
Procurement	-	(100)	(100)	-	-	-	-	(100)	(100)	vii
Property	25,144	(16,044)	9,100	29,319	(20,317)	9,002	(4,175)	4,273	98	
Contribution to Orbis Partnership	3,747	-	3,747	3,747	-	3,747	-	-	-	
Total BSD	56,038	(26,728)	29,310	67,250	(38,338)	28,911	(11,212)	11,610	398	viii

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
SALIX Contract	700	700	350	56	294	294	-	-	ix
Lansdowne Unit (CSD)	75	75	65	26	39	-	39	-	
Youth Investment Fund	7,624	7,624	1,510	621	889	-	889	-	x
Special Educational Needs	3,198	3,198	1,114	1,029	85	-	85	-	
Special Educational Needs - Grove Park	19,179	19,179	150	172	(22)	-	-	(22)	
Disabled Children's Homes	786	786	716	743	(27)	(27)	-	-	
14 Westfield Lane	721	721	53	36	17	-	17	-	
Core Programme - Schools Basic Need	98,444	98,444	2,066	2,093	(27)	-	19	(46)	
Core Programme - Capital Building Improvements Corporate	44,749	44,749	3,509	3,747	(238)	-	-	(238)	xi
Core Programme - Capital Building Improvements Schools	42,049	42,049	4,218	4,419	(201)	-	-	(201)	xii
Core Programme - IT & Digital Strategy Implementation	72,956	72,956	4,055	3,372	683	100	583	-	xiii
Core Programme - IT & Digital Strategy Implementation MBOS	13,125	16,514	7,530	7,088	442	-	442	-	xiv
IT & Digital - Utilising Automation	24	24	24	-	24	-	24	-	
Total BSD Gross	303,630	307,019	25,360	23,402	1,958	367	2098	(507)	

Children's Services – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Early Help and Social Care

Inspection of East Sussex Children's Services

The inspection of the Council Local Authority Children's Services by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) took place from 11 – 15 December 2023. This was a short inspection. Ofsted published the inspection report 6 February 2024, and Children's Services was awarded an overall effectiveness grading of Good with the experiences and progress of children in care graded as Outstanding. The report notes that '*Children in East Sussex continue to receive consistently strong and effective support*' and '*Social workers know the children they support exceptionally well*'. An action plan addressing the issues identified has been submitted to Ofsted.

Review of modelling and placements

In 2023 Children's Services worked with IMPOWER to focus on placement sufficiency and enhancing our ability to secure the right care for the right child for the right length of time. Very ambitious targets are in place to achieve reduced spend, but only by meeting children's needs more appropriately. We continue to embed Valuing Care, which we developed in 2023 with support from IMPOWER. We have focused on:

- implementation of the Valuing Care model
- enhancing our in house foster carer offer
- placement sufficiency to improve our market management and ability to secure the right care for the right child for the right length of time

We have developed a reunification framework to support children to return home where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Valuing Care aligns well with our Connected Practice approach, and we have already seen some significant positive results in terms of good outcomes for children whose plans have been reviewed using the Valuing Care approach. Since the practice started last year, we've had 9 children either step down in the level of care needed or reunify with parents/carers, resulting in a calculated 12-month cost avoidance of £1.1m. An additional £3.2m cost avoidance has been identified based on a further 8 child moves.

Rate of Looked After Children (LAC) (per 10,000 children) and children on a Child Protection plan (CP Plan)

We have seen a further reduction in the rate of LAC (**ref vi**) to 61.5 (655 children) at Q4 from 63.0 (671 children) at Q3. This meets our target rate of 63.4 (676 children) and is below the 2022/23 outturn of 62.3 (664 children). The decrease is the result of a focus on reunification work with children and their birth families, and discharges from care into Special Guardianship, Adoption and Child Arrangement Orders.

The rate of children with a CP Plan at Q4 was 64.6 (688 children) which is above the target of 62.0 (661 children). However, this is a reduction from 70.6 (753 children) at Q3 and is just below the 2022/23 outturn of 64.8 (691 children). There has been significant scrutiny and activity around the safe reduction of CP Plans. There has been a greater focus on thresholds for ending a plan and mid-way review activity on all cases approaching second review. The focus has been on what needs to change for the plan to end. A recent audit of CP Plans in place for 18 months or longer found in some cases improvements could be made to SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) planning with more regular reviews and some cases drifting due to delays in service provision such as awaiting a SWIFT (Specialist Family Service) assessment. The locality team and safeguarding unit have reviewed planning to ensure pace and purpose of all CP Plan cases over 16 months and Children in Need (CIN) cases over 9 months. The work of

Connected Families is expected to have a positive impact on our rate of CP Plans as enhanced support to parents/carers enables improvements to be made and risks safely reduced.

Connected Families Service

We formally launched Connected Families Intervention Practitioners in January 2024. The team are adult facing specialist practitioners, delivering support and interventions with parents/carers of children on CIN or CP Plans, who are experiencing domestic abuse, problematic mental health and/or problematic drug and alcohol use. The new team are actively working with parents across the county. The aim is to provide dedicated support for parents to address their personal issues to support families to stay together and improve the wellbeing and life chances of children. Since the launch we have supported 177 parents with 155 parents currently open to the service across the teams. We have received consistently positive feedback from parents, social workers, social care managers and child protection advisers regarding the support that the service is offering. We have seen an 8.7% reduction in CP Plans across the county in the 4 weeks to 12 April 2024.

Connected Coaches

Connected Families works with young people (aged 11+) who are identified as being on the edge of care or are being supported back into the care of their family. This work is informed by multidisciplinary planning and intensive support delivered by a team of connected coaches. Alongside an allocated Social Worker, the team plan and deliver interventions that support the young person, address parent/carers needs and wider systemic issues. The aim is to reduce risk, increase stability and promote the care of young people within their family. Over the last 12 months 60% (38/63) of young people supported have been enabled to stay living safely at home with their families, with some no longer needing a Social Worker. Those who have remained open to Children's Services are stable on their current care plan or have stepped down the continuum of need (from CP to CIN).

Checks for sustainable change, for young people closed to the service, shows that 86% (24/28) have remained at home once the Connected Coach has ended their involvement. Where young people have needed to enter into care, having a Connected Coach involved has supported placement matching and planned transitions. There is a large proportion of young people with complex needs who are actively engaged with the service (53 young people currently open to the team). This allows them to remain within their family network, avoiding foster care, hospital admissions or residential care. As at Q4, £4.6m of estimated cost avoidance has been achieved in 2023/24 as a result of Connected Coaches' interventions within families.

Foundations

The Foundations Project is part of our preventative work. It provides support for people who have had children previously removed. The service helps them to make positive changes to their circumstances and to reduce the likelihood of future care proceedings. 95% of the women who have engaged with Foundations have not gone on to have subsequent children removed in the last four years (based on the 2020/21 cohort).

Lansdowne Secure Children's Home

In February 2024, we reopened Lansdowne Secure Children's Home. Lansdowne has been remodelled over the past 12 months to create a sustainable service. Lansdowne has a more resilient workforce structure including a new multi-disciplinary team. It will expand provision for some of the country's most vulnerable children throughout 2024/25.

Children in Care Council

In February 2024, the Children in Care Council met with members of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP). They discussed a range of issues from how decisions are made regarding access to gaming/social media when you live in foster care, to working with schools and helping them understand the specific needs of children in care. The councillors from the Corporate Parenting Panel praised the young people, whose ongoing commitment to engaging with and supporting

other children in care is so important. Their views and ideas are critical in developing our Corporate Parenting Strategy which includes enhancing wider participation opportunities for children in care and care experienced young people and engagement with the wider Council.

The CPP members have been instrumental in engaging the wider Council in a range of developments such as:

- fostering recruitment
- the care to work programme
- increasing the fostering allowance for carers

This is already showing early signs of success with 16 new applicants currently being processed at the end of March 2024.

Children in Care achievement celebration

Our annual celebration of the achievements of the younger children in our care took place at Bedes School in March 2024. The event included the presentation of certificates to recognise significant progress, attainment and achievement.

The Early Intervention Partnership Strategy

The Early Intervention Partnership Strategy was published in Q4. This strategy is based on the understanding that investing in early intervention is the best way to support families. This strategy builds upon the very strong partnerships and services already in place. Principles and key deliverables have been collectively identified through broad system engagement and form the foundation for the delivery of this whole system early intervention offer. Our ambition is to collectively achieve the very best outcomes for children and their families. We will do this by using our joint resources as efficiently as possible to equip our combined workforce to deliver outstanding relational and compassionate services, which are based on what we know works. We believe that early intervention works as a 'system' rather than one service, a community of services that is a way of working. We want to develop and invest in this system to achieve the very best for our children and families in East Sussex. In addition, we will be working with colleagues in Adult Social Care who are currently developing their whole system prevention strategy to make sure there is good alignment.

Children and families' feedback

The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of getting targeted support from the 0 – 19 Early Help Service was 87% at Q4. This is above the target of 80% for 2023/24.

Family Hubs

In 2023/24 we opened 11 family hubs. Family hubs provide support and advice from midwives, health visitors, early communications support workers, early years practitioners and more. Activity sessions give children, parents and carers the chance to socialise and support their children's needs and development.

Youth Investment Funding for Youth Centres

We have been successful in securing more than £7m in funding through the Government's Youth Investment Fund to significantly improve youth centres in Heathfield and Peacehaven by December 2024. Planning permission has been granted with plans to extend, improve accessibility and increase energy efficiency. The funding is part of a £300m commitment by the Government to transform and level up the out-of-school youth sector in levelling up priority areas.

Education

Early Years

For the spring funding period 1,045 two-year-olds accessed a funded early years place in East Sussex. This is an 84% take-up against the Department for Education published list of 1,242 eligible two-year-olds. The target for the year was to equal or exceed the national average which is 73.9%.

69.9% of pupils achieved a good level of development at the early years foundation stage in academic year 2022/23. This is 2.6 percentage points above the national average, meaning we have met our target to be at or above the national average.

Supporting childminders in East Sussex

On Saturday 16 March 2024, we hosted our second annual childminder conference. This is part of our drive for diverse and sustainable Early Years provision in East Sussex. The theme of the event was “The wonders of wellbeing.” The event is part of our work on the sufficiency of Early Years places, and preparation for the expansion of Early Years places. There are challenges with meeting the numbers of Early Years places required in September 2024 both locally and nationally.

The Therapeutic Thinking team and the Early Years Funding team delivered sessions at the conference. Delegates networked, and Council colleagues were available throughout the day to offer support and advice. We are planning further opportunities to support and enable childminders to share their practice.

Allocation of primary and secondary school places for 2024/25

The allocation of places for secondary schools took place in March 2024 and for primary schools in April 2024.

- 94.2% of East Sussex residents who applied on time for a secondary school place have been allocated a place at one of their preferred schools. 83.3% were offered their first preference.
- 93.7% of East Sussex residents who applied on time for a primary school place were offered their first preference, and 98.8% were offered one of their preferences.

Improving school attendance

Attendance is a key priority for children’s services and our partners. We are committed to identifying and exploring key drivers around attendance in East Sussex. This was the key focus of our first Annual Attendance event in January 2024. Staff from 132 schools, including senior leaders, health colleagues and the Department for Education took part. The event provided an opportunity for schools, key support services, and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) youth ambassadors to develop good practice together.

Insights from the event informed our Attendance Delivery Plan 2024-25, which launched in February 2024. The plan provides education settings with tools to help improve attendance for our most vulnerable young people. We consulted widely on the plan, which aligns with national policy on attendance. Between September 2023 and March 2024:

- overall attendance, for all schools, was 92.12% compared to the national rate of 93%
- primary attendance improved by 0.28 percentage points to 94.09% with overall absence at 5.91%
- secondary attendance was been more challenging and fell by 0.91 percentage points to 89.43% with overall absence at 10.57%
- special school attendance fell by 0.59 percentage points to 84.87% with overall absence at 15.13%

Our Early Help offer has been further enhanced by a significant corporate investment in our Early Help Level 2 keywork team. The team work in collaboration with education colleagues to ensure a joined up approach to improving attendance. 91 families were open to Level 2 Early Help as at 19 March.

Transition activities to support attendance

In the summer holidays (Q2), we funded positive activities to support young people with low attendance at primary school. It supported their transition to secondary school. 313 young people participated, with 1,125 individual sessions attended. The sessions enabled the attendees to:

- make new friends
- meet staff at their new school
- familiarise themselves with the new site

It also provided fun and engaging holiday activities. As part of the programme, providers delivered sessions to address young people's concerns about school and identify barriers to attendance.

77% of the young people who took part made an improvement in attendance. The average improvement in the rate of attendance was 7.46%

Proportion of new Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans issued within 20 weeks

In 2023/24 76.3% (521 out of 683) of all new EHC Plans including exceptions and 76.5% (521 out of 681) excluding exceptions were issued within the statutory timescale of 20 weeks. The targets for these measures were 65% and 70%.

The latest national published data (published June 2023) shows 49.2% of new EHC plans excluding exceptions were issued within 20 weeks while for those including exceptions it was 47.7%.

In Q4 we successfully met this year's statutory deadline for completing the Phase Transfers for children and young people with EHC plans across early years, primary, secondary and Post 16.

SEND children and families' feedback

The proportion of respondents to the feedback surveys who agree that things have changed for the better as a result of SEND Services was 87% at Q4.

SEND Governance Board and the National SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Change Partnership Programme

We welcomed the new facilitator of the East Sussex SEND Governance Board in January 2024. The Board oversees the East Sussex SEND strategy and drives efforts to embed coproduction across our SEND system. We are at the midway point of our strategy, which launched in November 2022. Our strategy sets the strategic direction for children and young people with SEND and their families. It represents a joint approach to service provision and commissioning across education, health, and social care. The Board oversees East Sussex's participation in the area pilot for the National SEND and AP Change Partnership Programme. In Q4, we reviewed our SEND Governance arrangements in light of these developments.

Alternative Provision Directory

We launched an [Alternative Provision Directory](#) in Q1. The Directory lists education providers that offer provision for children and young people at school in East Sussex. Schools started to use the Directory in September 2023 to commission providers for children who are struggling to engage with a full time school curriculum.

iCan Careers fair

The iCan careers fair is a bespoke annual event for young people with SEND. We held the seventh event in Eastbourne in March 2024, and brought together 40 local employers, education,

and training providers, and 450 young people from 29 schools and settings. It empowers young people to prepare for their future education and employment pathways.

Education East Sussex

Our restructured education division, Education East Sussex, was launched in Q2. The new division will help the Council to deliver its core roles more effectively in leading the local education system and championing vulnerable children including children with SEND.

Average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools, the average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils and the average Attainment 8 score for LAC

- The average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools (**ref i**) in academic year 2022/23 was 43.6. This is below our target of 46.5 and below the national average of 46.4.
- The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils (**ref ii**) in academic year 2022/23 was 30.3. This is below our target of 33.3 and below the national average of 35.1.
- The average Attainment 8 score for LAC (**ref iii**) in academic year 2022/23 was 18.9. This is just below our target of 19 and the national average of 19.4.

Improvement is needed in Hastings and Bexhill where four academies are judged by Ofsted as Requires Improvement. Their underperformance impacts significantly on the overall outturn for East Sussex. The young people attending these schools account for approximately one fifth of all secondary pupils in year 11.

Our programme of support focuses on enabling school led improvements with a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. It includes providing every secondary school tailored support, through our External Advisers. We also provide subject continuing professional development for middle leaders in secondary schools. Attendance is a critical factor when considering attainment and progress outcomes for all key stages and pupil groups.

The cohort of LAC students is small and they experience a range of barriers, which can impact on the overall results. For our LAC students we offer high quality academic intervention with a focus on our year 11 students. In addition, this year we have funded a series of 20 lessons over two weeks during the Easter holidays, aimed at securing a level 4 or a level 5 in their GCSE this summer.

The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16 and academic age 17

The percentage of young people who are in NEET at academic age 16 (year 12) (**ref iv**) is 4.4% against a target of below 4%. For academic age 17 (year 13) (**ref v**), 6% of young people are NEET against a target of below 6%.

The proportion of academic age 16 (year 12) and academic age 17 (year 13) pupils whose Education, Employment or Training (EET) situation is not known in East Sussex was only 1.0%. This is well below the South East average at 4.0% and national average at 2.2%. We are effective at finding and confirming where all our young people are. This means we can provide young people with support, where needed. However, this means we identify higher numbers of NEET young people.

We have been successful in a bid for Education and Skills Funding Agency funding to increase the vocational offer for young people in 2024/25.

Communication, Planning and Performance

East Sussex Youth Cabinet

In February, young people from the Youth Cabinet met with East Sussex Members of Parliament (MPs). They discussed the Council's youth service offer and wider opportunities for young people's activities. The MPs fed back that they found it very helpful.

In March 2024, the new Youth Cabinet was elected. There are now 16 young people who were selected by their peers in schools and other youth group settings.

6,251 children and young people across the county have voted to choose the issues that the East Sussex Youth Cabinet will address in 2024/25.

- Health and Wellbeing received 1,109 votes
- Jobs, The Economy, and Benefits 995 votes
- Culture, Media and Sport 826 votes

The new Youth Cabinet will work with other children and young people's groups and develop campaigns on the top two issues. They will promote current strategies and inform and influence decision-makers to develop new ones.

Climate Change Summit

In January 2024, we held Our Chance to Change, a climate change summit for education settings with the Youth Cabinet. The event brought together nearly 50 schools with 60 children and young people. Several schools showcased the work they are currently doing around climate change. At the event the East Sussex Climate Change Charter was launched to help support schools in creating and developing their own action plan. The day included workshops around behaviour change, funding opportunities, waste and nature.

Children and Young People's Partnership Trust

The East Sussex Children and Young People's Trust held an event with partners in November 2023. Partners heard from children and young people on the issues that matter to them. The event then focused on three key areas:

- climate change
- poverty proofing
- early help through social prescribing

The Children and Young People's Plan sets out how we will work together to improve outcomes for children and young people particularly those who are vulnerable to poor outcomes.

Revenue Budget Summary

The Department's net revenue budget was £120.517m and at financial year-end, the spend was £150.937m. This was an overspend of £30.42m and in an increase of £1.944m from the Q3 forecast (**ref xi**).

The biggest area of overspend was £29.82m within Early Help & Social Care. This has increased by £1.896m from the Q3 forecast (**ref viii**).

Central Resources underspent by £0.081m, an increase of £0.005m from Q3 (**ref vii**).

Education underspent by £0.585m this year, which was a decrease of £0.088m from Q3 (**ref ix**).

Communication, Planning and Performance overspent by £1.266m, which was an increase of £0.141m from Q3 (**ref x**).

Central Resources increase in underspend of £0.005m to £0.081 (ref vii)

This outturn includes an in-year transfer of £0.5m from Central Resources to Early Help and Social Care to contribute to the increase in the National Minimum Allowances for foster carers and Special Guardianship Orders.

The small movement in Q4 was due to increased legal fees offset by funding received from South East Sector Led Improvement Partnership contributing to senior management salary costs.

Early Help and Social Care increased overspend of £1.896m to £29.82m (ref viii)

Funds are still outstanding from the Home Office relating to Asylum Seekers. Grant claims have been submitted which haven't been confirmed. The estimated income has been included in year-end calculations and this resulted in an increased spend of £0.078m and an overspend of £0.054m.

The Connected Families service ended the year on budget with an agreed reserves drawdown of £1.049m. Reductions in staff costs have been achieved plus there was a contribution from Supporting Families income which brought spend in line with the budget.

The Early Help 0-19 service ended the year £1.487m under budget. This was a reduction in spend of £0.753m from Q3. The service carried a large number of vacancies all year within its teams. The expectation was for Early Help to expand its staffing within Family Hubs using the grant funding available but there were significant issues in recruiting to these posts owing to the fixed term nature of the contracts. This meant that a greater proportion of Early Help existing posts were funded by the grant, freeing up core underspend. There were also delays in recruitment within the Level 2 Keywork team and 10% of the posts within the Keyworker teams were vacant at year-end.

There was an overspend of £0.186m within the Social Work & Education team (an increase of £0.004m from Q3) relating to 3 roles in the recruitment team and 1 role in the Connected Practice team.

Youth Justice ended the year with a £0.105m underspend, which was a decrease of £0.116m from Q3. Expected costs from a placement within Secure Remand didn't materialise, plus there was additional income of £0.057m received within Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Keywork.

Looked After Children finished the year with an additional overspend of £1.946m, bringing its total overspend to £26.639m. Additional pressures materialised within:

- Children's Homes, where an additional overspend of £0.074m was incurred for agency wraparound costs.
- Lansdowne increased by £0.409m in Q4. It is now open, but the planned opening was delayed by the Ofsted registration. This meant that the income reduced from its estimated figure by £0.518m. In March, there was a £0.074m charge from Wealden District Council for revalued national non-domestic rates dating back to 2021/22. This will be appealed by the Council Property team in 2024/25. These pressures were partially offset by some staff vacancies and a revised CSD management charge.
- The Placements spend worsened by £1.835m in Q4.
 - £1.829m of this was related solely to Agency Residential placements, continuing the trend demonstrated this year of a small number of children placing high pressure on the budget. The Looked After Children (LAC) numbers in general plateaued within the year, but within Q4 there were: 14 agency residential placements with increased fees, 18 new placements (11 of which were completely new to LAC), 2 new wraparound support packages agreed, and 10 agency support packages extended.
 - Additionally, an increased spend of £0.521m in Q4 was identified relating to prior year invoices for agency residential LAC. These should have been paid in previous financial years, but the correct accounting adjustments weren't made. Significant progress with the LAC data has been made within 2023/24 and there is a high level of assurance that this won't occur again in 2024/25.
 - Agency Fostering spend increased by £0.046m due to 2 new support packages, 10 wraparound support extensions, and 2 Education support package increases. These were offset by reductions in 2 support packages.
 - In-house Fostering improved by £0.04m with various minor placement changes.

These new LAC pressures were partially mitigated by:

- £0.248m credit notes within Careleavers Housing
- £0.068m various minor improvements within Adoption Services
- £0.055m additional staffing costs being coded to Unaccompanied Aylum Seeking Children within the Through Care Team

Localities ended the year with an additional £0.233m of overspend, bringing them to £3.843m over budget. There were significant pressures within:

- Section 17 Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (ISEND) children - £0.313m for increased family support and accommodation
- Wealden Family Support Team - £0.132m for increased travel for foster care contact, kinship care, and playgroups
- Locality Legal East / West - £0.135m with new cases and higher family court proceeding fees.

Mitigations within Localities included:

- Family / Friends Allowances - £0.345m for lower Special Guardianship Order payments
- Disability Long-Term Agency Placements - £0.274m reduced agency placement costs
- St Leonards Family Support Team South - £0.209m for correct recharges to the LAC budget.

Finally, Specialist Services worsened by £0.572m within Q4, with a year-end overspend of £0.530m. Income was less than previously projected and expenditure on Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust was higher.

Education increased underspend of £0.088m to £0.585m (ref ix)

Education underspent by £0.585m this year due to challenges with recruitment, which was a favourable movement of £0.088m from Q3.

£0.425m was also drawn down from the School Improvement Grant reserve to offset staff expenditure.

Communication, Planning and Performance (including Home to School Transport) increased overspend of £0.141m to £1.266m (ref x)

Buzz Active worsened by £0.038m in Q4 due to receipts for equipment not received. This meant an overspend of £0.049m.

Additional grant income was received within Safeguarding of £0.022m but this was offset by agency staff extensions to the end of March and a small reduction in training income. The service was £0.149m over budget at year-end.

The Home to School Transport spend worsened by £0.156m within Q4 and ended the year at a £1.187m overspend. There has been an increase in pupil numbers qualifying for transport and contract costs have also increased for the new academic year cohort, where they couldn't be added to existing routes.

The Music, Equalities and Participation, Organisational Development, and E Business services all ended the year with small underspends.

Capital Programme Summary

The Capital Programme for 2023/24 was £1.884m expenditure against a budget of £1.868m (**ref xiii**). The additional spend is the Council's contribution towards housing adaptations for disabled children's carers' homes (**ref xii**). These projects are funded by the disabled facilities grant managed by the districts and boroughs. The overspend will be funded from Capital reserves.

Performance exceptions (See How to read this report for definition)**Priority – Driving sustainable economic growth**

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Average Attainment 8 score for state funded schools, and the average	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 46.5 Nat Av: 48.9	Ac Year 2022/23 46.5	G	A	A	R	Ac Year 2022/23 ESCC: 43.6 Nat Av: 46.4	i
Average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils	Ac Year 2021/22 ESCC: 33.3 Nat Av: 37.7	Ac Year 2022/23 33.3	G	A	A	R	Ac Year 2022/23 ESCC: 30.3 Nat Av: 35.1	ii
Attainment 8 score for Looked after Children (LAC)	AC Year 2021/22 ESCC: 23.9 NAT AV: 20.3	Ac Year 22/23 19	G	A	A	R	Ac Year 2022/23 18.9 Nat Av: 19.4	iii
The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 16	New Measure	Less than 4%	G	G	A	R	4.4%	iv
The percentage of young people who are in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at academic age 17	New Measure	Less than 6%	G	G	A	R	6%	v

Priority – Keeping vulnerable people safe

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Rate of Looked After Children (LAC) (per 10,000 children)	62.3 664 children	63.4 676 children	A	R	A	G	61.5 655 children	vi

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
Total	0	0	0	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Central Resources	2,268	(1,332)	936	2,187	(1,332)	855	81	-	81	vii
Early Help and Social Care	102,575	(17,476)	85,099	134,001	(19,082)	114,919	(31,426)	1,606	(29,820)	viii
Education and ISEND	112,475	(8,207)	104,268	115,391	(11,708)	103,683	(2,916)	3,501	585	ix
Communication, Planning and Performance	31,255	(4,310)	26,945	36,124	(7,913)	28,211	(4,869)	3,603	(1,266)	x
DSG non Schools	-	(96,730)	(96,730)	-	(96,730)	(96,730)	-	-	-	
Schools	153,948	(153,948)	-	153,948	(153,948)	-	-	-	-	
Total CSD	402,521	(282,003)	120,518	441,651	(290,713)	150,938	(39,130)	8,710	(30,420)	xi

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
House Adaptations for Disabled Children's Carers	1,090	1,118	50	78	(28)	(28)	-	-	xii
Schools Delegated Capital	30,326	30,326	1,803	1,803	-	-	-	-	
Conquest Centre redevelopment	356	341	15	-	15	15	-	-	
Total CSD	31,772	31,785	1,868	1,881	(13)	(13)	0	0	xiii

Communities, Economy & Transport – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Economy and environment

Levelling Up Partnerships

As part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda, the Levelling Up Partnerships programme was announced in March 2023. Hastings and Rother were each allocated £20m capital funding to be spent by March 2025 to deliver a tailored approach to place-based regeneration. Over the last year, the Council has worked with other partners and Government officials in preparing a package of proposals for Ministerial sign-off, which were announced on 25 March 2024. The Council directly secured over £7m of funding for five projects, including: Queensway Gateway Road; Hollington youth facility and family hub; and other family and youth support services, and a combined skills capital pot for both areas.

Long Term Plan for Towns

As part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda, the Long Term Plans for Towns programme was launched in October 2023. Hastings, Bexhill and Eastbourne have been allocated £20m each under this programme. The grant funding is to be awarded as an endowment fund to be spent over a 10-year period (with 75% capital and 25% revenue). The priority investment themes to support the regeneration of the towns include safety and security (community safety); high streets, heritage and regeneration; and transport and connectivity.

Employability and Skills

Over 950 people have been supported to improve their numeracy skills in 2023/24 as part of the Multiply programme. 17 numeracy interventions were delivered in partnership with local training and community organisations. These programmes have included maths for managing finance, maths in catering, and maths in railway engineering.

The Employment and Skills Team have delivered two programmes in 2023/24, Moving on Up and Support into Work, that have supported over 265 homeless and refugee residents into work. The team also secured £250,000 of Government funding to support people in the construction sector to gain new retrofit skills. This will help boost the local economy, while also reducing carbon emissions in the county. The Careers Hub secured funding in 2023/24 to undertake a Steps to Success pilot programme to try to prevent young people becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), through bespoke work experience and one to one support.

234 Industry Champions were supporting schools and colleges at the end of 2023/24, exceeding the target of 210. 1,113 pupils attended Open Doors visits in Q4 alone, providing young people with experiences of the workplace.

Apprenticeships

117 staff enrolled on a new apprenticeship during 2023/24. A wide range of apprenticeships are offered covering the vast majority of the roles at the Council. We also expect to see an increase in uptake from Schools when the undergraduate Teaching apprenticeship is introduced in 2024/25.

In total, we now have 252 staff undertaking an apprenticeship. These range from entry level through to degree level and the focus of the team this year has been on the growth of corporate apprenticeships. There has been an increased uptake in the various management apprenticeships offered, as these are applicable to all departments. These apprenticeships also feed directly into other management development initiatives such as the Ladder to Leadership programme.

Almost all the 25% annual levy spend that can be passed onto small and medium employers throughout the county has now been allocated. This totals over £275K in 2023/24. The Government has recently announced that with effect from April 2024, the 25% will be increased to 50%. The existing framework of the Transform project means that the Council is in a strong position to benefit from this change and increase our levy spend accordingly.

Cultural investment and recovery

The Sussex Story work has been delayed due to performance management issues needing to be addressed on the overall contract awarded to the consultants (**ref i**). As a result, the Council, as the lead contractor on behalf of partners, severed the contract and withheld 25% of the contract fee. A new supplier will be identified to complete the work in 2024/25, with the cost for the outstanding work to be met by the remaining 25% budget. The subsequent second phase of the work will follow once the first stage of the work is completed satisfactorily.

Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) work has continued in Q4, in partnership with Local Visitor Economy Partnership members and Visit England. A MICE education session for businesses, in partnership with Visit England, is being planned, and the team are also booked to present at two more exhibits in the summer and autumn.

Broadband

The Broadband Project has completed its final build and is moving into formal contract closure. The Broadband Team is continuing to engage with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) on its centrally run Project Gigabit programme. The contract for East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove has been let by BDUK to CityFibre. We understand that the Gigabit Voucher scheme run by BDUK is currently closed in East Sussex and we have no indication of future plans. The Broadband Team is continuing to push BDUK for details of how they plan to cover the very hardest to reach properties in the county.

Job creation

East Sussex Invest provides loans and grants to local businesses to help create local jobs and support businesses to become environmentally responsible. As part of a wider corporate approach, applications for funding through the scheme were suspended in Q2, while an independent Strategic and Operational Review of the scheme was undertaken. The review was completed in Q4, and options for the future of the fund are now being developed.

Environment and climate change

We have continued to work together with partners to develop and deliver carbon reduction and climate change adaptation work. In 2023/24 this included:

- securing funding from the South East Net Zero Hub for a feasibility study for a potential solar farm on a former landfill site, the study has now begun
- securing £245,000 from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to develop a plan to provide people with the skills to enable the retrofit of domestic properties to reduce their carbon emissions
- assisting 44 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to measure their carbon footprint, and awarding grants to 21 SMEs to improve energy efficiency and install renewable energy systems, which will reduce their energy bills
- identifying Council fleet vehicles potentially suitable for EV transition at the end of their current leasing periods and starting work on cost analysis
- starting a county-wide assessment of climate risks and vulnerabilities to inform our climate adaptation work

Planning

100% of County Matter applications were determined with the statutory determination period in 2023/24, against a target of 70%. 100% of County Council development applications were also determined within 8 weeks or within an agreed extension of time during 2023/24, against a target of 70%.

Highways, transport and waste

Highways improvements and road condition

Work continued in Q4 using the additional funding for highways approved by the Council. 183 patches across 116 sites were completed bringing the total completed in 2023/24 to 564 patches across 337 sites. This has had a significant impact on the condition of the network and has enabled us to carry out works above and beyond our usual programmes. 102 signs have been replaced in 2023/24 with a further 427 signs scheduled to be replaced in 2024/25. This work will focus on the repair and replacement of damaged or missing signs. Further work has begun cleaning signs and clearing vegetation or obstructions around signs where necessary.

The focus for the additional drainage spend has been on delivering schemes that are quick and simple to design and will address the most urgent drainage issues. Around 180 schemes have been delivered in 2023/24, including replacing gully covers and clearing significant blockages. 53 larger schemes have been identified and will be delivered in 2024/25. The remaining budget for the refresh of road markings has now been fully allocated and will include renewing the lining along the A22 Hailsham bypass and around 600 further sites across the county. However, due to high levels of rainfall in the winter, the majority of these works will not be delivered until Q1 2024/25.

9,691 potholes were repaired in Q4, with 8,579 of these being carriageway potholes, the remainder were primarily footway potholes. Amongst the carriageway potholes, 70% of these were completed within the required timescales. 29,357 potholes were repaired in 2023/24, with 24,411 of these being carriageway potholes, the remainder were primarily footway potholes. 117 road improvement schemes were completed in 2023/24 to improve the condition of the roads. 100 larger scale schemes were also delivered across the county, including schemes such as Diplocks Way in Hailsham and Bunny Lane in Frant.

The road condition outturns (where a lower figure indicates better road condition), were published in Q3. These figures are only available at one point each year and are based on specialist laser surveys undertaken in summer 2023. The outturns refer to the percentage of road length across the entire county, and all roads are likely to have a mixture of green, amber and red road condition sections. The surveys measure road condition in 10m sections. The road condition outturns reported here are the percentage of 10m sections that should be considered for maintenance. So, for example, a proportion of 5% indicates that 5% of all 10m sections surveyed of that road type should be considered for maintenance. The percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance was 4%, against a target of 4%. The percentage of Non-Principal roads requiring maintenance was 5% against a target of 4%. The percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance was 17%, against a target of 14%.

Road safety

24 road safety infrastructure schemes were completed in 2023/24 on identified high risk sites/routes to improve road safety, against a target of 24. During 2023/24, 551 Bikeability courses were delivered to 4,428 individuals. 343 'Wheels for All' sessions were delivered to 3,862 attendees. The targets for the year were to deliver Bikeability training to 4,000 people and to also deliver 100 'Wheels for All' sessions.

Transport and parking

Improvements have been implemented in 2023/24 using the £41.4m of funding assigned to East Sussex as part of the Government's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) including:

- £13m of bus service improvements, including the Flexibus, Digital Demand Responsive Transport service covering over 90% of East Sussex. The service has seen continued passenger growth due to continued marketing and improvements to the service
- £5m for reduced fares in the county which are scheduled to run until April 2025
- improvements have been made to the bus stop Infrastructure, including the installation of 2,560 QR code plates, new hard standing areas and the installation of new Real Time Information signs at a number of stops
- 32 traffic light junctions have been identified for bus priority improvements and these schemes are due to commence in 2024/25

Following the approval of a business plan and draft contract submitted in November 2023, the Council has now received 90% of the £4.441m allocated to East Sussex from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund. The remaining 10% will be paid once the final contract has been approved. The funding will support the delivery of on street electric vehicle chargepoints in the county. It is expected that procurement of the contract will begin in Q2 2024/25, and that initial work to deliver chargepoints will follow in Q4 2024/25.

A Hastings Parking review made several recommended changes to parking restrictions in the town and the majority of these have now been implemented, with the final changes expected to be in place by May 2024. A review of parking in Rother was considered by the Planning Committee in July 2023, and all the agreed changes have now been implemented.

The Home to School Transport Team successfully arranged transport for over 5,000 children at the start of the new school year in September 2023. The team have also completed several projects to improve the efficiency of the service and help mitigate cost increases. The Team worked with Children's Services to review possible mitigations to pressures in the service. The review identified opportunities to increase efficiency, strengthen the transport market and avoid costs. Improvements have also been made to the service, following the implementation of Pax, the new client and contract database. The integration with QRoutes, a route optimisation tool, has delivered efficiencies in the processing of applications and route allocation.

Waste

Changes were made to the chargeable waste service in January 2024, allowing residents to bring small amounts of DIY waste for free to all of our Household Waste and Recycling Sites (HWRS). Hard plastic recycling was introduced at Seaford and Eastbourne HWRS, meaning half the sites in the county now offer this. The recycling of hard plastics, rather than sending them to the Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility, has reduced our carbon impact by an estimated 125.5 tonnes in 2023/24. Eastbourne HWRS began to open early as part of a trial to help residents recycle more and reduce queues at the site in 2023/24. The trial proved a success and early opening has continued, allowing residents access 30 minutes earlier than previously on Monday to Friday. Recycling containers for vapes were added to all East Sussex HWRS in 2023/24.

The projected 2023/24 outturn for the amount of waste re-used, recycled or composted or used beneficially is 56.0%, based on the outturn at the end of December 2023 (reported in arrears). Residual waste and kerbside recycling rates are slightly lower than forecast. This might be partly due to cost-of-living increases. However, green waste and waste sent for beneficial use are higher than forecast, which has helped to maintain the rate.

Rights of Way (RoW) and Countryside Sites

Due to the very wet winter weather, the Rights of Way Team have managed several significant flooding, landslide and cliff fall events around East Sussex in recent months. These have affected public access and are typically longer-term issues which may require a diversion or closure of the affected path. Funding from High Wealth National Landscape (HWNL) has enabled the team to set up a 'free gates for stiles' scheme. Once complete, this will see 120 stiles replaced with gates in the HWNL area. The funding has also provided several new benches for the Forest Way County Park. The team have also begun to install Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) bridges in appropriate locations on the path network. Glass Reinforced Plastic is stronger and has a longer lifespan than timber, so will improve the longevity of the larger bridges we manage.

We completed 95% of high priority maintenance work on schedule in 2023/24, against a target of 80%. Due to continued wet weather in Q4, rangers undertook both reactive and planned work, particularly at countryside sites, where access was possible.

Communities

Trading Standards

79 businesses and individuals received training and advice from Trading Standards in Q4. During 2023/24 a total of 653 businesses and individuals received training and advice, against a target of 350. Trading Standards made 886 positive interventions to protect vulnerable people in Q4. During 2023/24 Trading Standards made 2,669 positive interventions in total, against a target of 200, which included installing call blockers to protect vulnerable people from scammers.

Libraries

7,198 children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge during summer 2023, against a target of 5,100, the highest total since 2018. The challenge aims to encourage primary school children to read books during the summer holidays. 4,258 participants completed the challenge, a 23% increase compared to 2022.

The Libraries team have worked with colleagues across the Council and schools to reintroduce work experience placements at libraries across the county. 65 young people started placements in libraries during 2023/24.

387 people enrolled on Family Learning Programmes at East Sussex libraries in Q4. 197 of these were in Family Learning, English, Maths and Language programmes. 190 were in Wider Family Learning programmes. Throughout 2023/24, 2,051 people enrolled, against a target of 500, with 1,008 of these in Family Learning, English, Maths and Language programmes and 1,043 in Wider Family Learning programmes.

28 people passed online learning courses, including in IT, English and Maths in our libraries in Q4. In total during 2023/24, 88 people passed courses, against a target of 70.

Revenue Budget Summary

The CET revenue budget is £71.641m and has underspent by £1.733m. The largest underspend is in Transport and Operations where current market prices mean that electricity and recycling income exceeded budget in the Waste Service and the budgeted draw down of £2.335m was not required (**ref vi**). The underspend in Communities is mostly due to staff vacancies in Trading Standards and Road Safety with additional income from Emergency Planning training (**ref v**). Customer and Libraries have underspent due to staff costs and additional income in libraries, and slippage in maintenance at the Keep (**ref iv**). The largest overspend is in Highways and is due to the estimated increased cost of electricity for streetlighting (**ref vii**). The overspend in Planning and Environment is mostly within the Transport Development Control budget and can be attributed to the lack of up-to-date Local Plans in the county, which has led to an increase in speculative planning applications for

residential developments, which often have challenging transport issues that need addressing. Consequentially, we have seen a rise in the number of applications that have required specialist input (e.g. transport modelling) and/or have become subject to planning appeals, which are particularly resource intensive and have often required short-term consultancy support (**ref ix**). The overspend in Economy is mostly due to the cost of consultants engaged to help transition South East Local Enterprise Partnership funded projects back into Council control (**ref viii**). The Parking saving was not achieved this year and is covered by a one-year budget increase (**ref ii**). The Environmental Services saving was not achieved and will be addressed going forward (**ref iii**).

Capital Programme Summary

The CET capital programme has a gross budget of £57.393m and there is slippage of £7.317m, overspend of £566k, and spend in advance of £542k. The slippage is mostly in the Highways Structural Maintenance programme where design work must be completed on larger drainage schemes before construction which will now take place in 2024/25 (**ref xv**). There have been delays in progressing project briefs which has delayed construction on Other Integrated Transport Schemes (**ref xiii**). Slippage in the Bridge Strengthening programme is due to wet weather and delays in securing Environment Agency permits (**ref xvii**). Exceat Bridge has slipped due to outstanding project design, discharging planning conditions and ongoing land acquisitions (**ref xiv**). The prioritisation of gangs onto carriageway patching works along with high levels of rainfall has caused slippage in road signage and marking schemes (**ref xvi**). The phase three Broadband contract has now ended however the accrual for the final settlement was overestimated resulting in a negative spend this year (**ref x**). Slippage in the Bus Service Improvement Plan Bus Priority scheme is due to a public consultation review which may require a rescoping of works in the new year (**ref xii**). The Bexhill to Hastings Link Road overspend is due to the outstanding archaeology, ecology, and Part 1 compensation claims (**ref xi**). There are additional schemes with smaller variations to their budgets.

Performance exceptions (Q4 – See How to read this report for definition)

Priority – Driving sustainable economic growth

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
Create a pan-Sussex visitor economy group to re-start the leisure, hospitality, culture, retail and tourism economy and enhance existing marketing vehicles	Sussex Tourism Leadership Group established	Develop a shared Sussex Story and assets to promote the region. Develop a shared Sussex Meetings, Inceptive, Conferences and Events (MICE) initiative	G	G	G	R	Completion of shared Sussex Story and assets delayed until 2024/25	i

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
Parking	-	745	-	745	-	ii
Libraries	105	105	105	-	-	
Environmental Services	-	60	-	-	60	iii
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	105	910	105	745	60	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	105	910	105	745	60	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
Parking	745	-	745	
Environmental Services	-	60	60	
Total	745	60	805	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Management and Support	6,214	(4,804)	1,410	4,180	(2,768)	1,412	2,034	(2,036)	(2)	
Customer, Library and Registration	9,986	(4,501)	5,485	9,764	(4,573)	5,191	222	72	294	iv
Communities	3,279	(877)	2,402	3,478	(1,473)	2,005	(199)	596	397	v
Transport & Operational Services	111,471	(69,533)	41,938	107,119	(67,226)	39,893	4,352	(2,307)	2,045	vi
Highways	21,127	(3,578)	17,549	23,492	(5,363)	18,129	(2,365)	1,785	(580)	vii
Economy	3,297	(1,581)	1,716	3,404	(1,548)	1,856	(107)	(33)	(140)	viii
Planning and Environment	4,383	(3,242)	1,141	5,306	(3,884)	1,422	(923)	642	(281)	ix
Total CET	159,757	(88,116)	71,641	156,743	(86,835)	69,908	3,014	(1,281)	1,733	

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
The Keep	1,096	1,096	228	-	228	-	228	-	
Peacehaven Refurbishment and Conversion	70	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Libraries	5,139	5,139	580	442	138	-	138	-	
Broadband	33,800	33,800	160	(269)	429	-	429	-	x
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road	126,247	128,347	-	566	(566)	(566)	-	-	xi
BHLR Complementary Measures	1,800	1,800	100	48	52	-	52	-	
Economic Intervention Fund	8,884	8,884	75	72	3	-	3	-	
Economic Intervention Fund Loans	3,000	3,000	80	53	27	-	27	-	
Stalled Sites Fund	916	916	13	13	-	-	-	-	
EDS Upgrading Empty Commercial Properties	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Community Focused Road Safety Interventions	750	750	206	175	31	-	31	-	
Climate Emergency Works	9,929	9,929	3,005	2,831	174	-	174	-	
Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme	963	963	905	1,135	(230)	-	-	(230)	
Flood Management SuDS	420	420	190	202	(12)	-	-	(12)	
SALIX Decarbonisation - Ninfield School	145	145	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SALIX Decarbonisation	369	369	-	12	(12)	-	-	(12)	
Newhaven Port Access Road	23,271	23,271	28	(36)	64	-	64	-	
Real Time Passenger Information	3,181	3,181	155	132	23	-	23	-	
Bus Service Improvement Plan	18,500	18,500	500	188	312	-	312	-	xii
BSIP Passenger Transport	3,815	3,815	2,045	2,174	(129)	-	-	(129)	
Replacement Lewes Road Bus Station	100	100	4	4	-	-	-	-	
PAX Software System	37	37	26	21	5	-	5	-	
Hastings and Bexhill Movement & Access Package	9,583	9,583	(79)	(125)	46	-	46	-	
Eastbourne/South Wealden Walking & Cycling Package	6,936	6,936	79	89	(10)	-	-	(10)	
Hailsham /Polegate/ Eastbourne Movement & Access Corridor	2,251	2,251	350	260	90	-	90	-	

APPENDIX 6

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
Eastbourne Town Centre Movement & Access Package A	6,936	6,936	800	521	279	-	279	-	
Eastbourne Town Centre Movement & Access Package B	5,454	5,454	100	78	22	-	22	-	
Other Integrated Transport Schemes	66,753	66,753	2,695	1,639	1,056	-	1,056	-	xiii
A22 Corridor Package	1,143	1,143	207	207	-	-	-	-	
Community Match Fund	780	780	95	29	66	-	66	-	
Area-wide traffic management scheme – Schools Streets	200	200	175	169	6	-	6	-	
Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2	1,456	1,456	-	(3)	3	3	-	-	
ATF Eastbourne Liveable Town Centre	274	274	37	58	(21)	-	-	(21)	
Hastings Town Centre Public Realm and Green Connections	9,689	9,689	574	359	215	-	215	-	
Exceat Bridge	10,591	10,591	1,259	632	627	-	627	-	xiv
Queensway Depot Development	1,956	1,956	104	(16)	120	-	120	-	
Core Programme - Highways Structural Maintenance	498,675	498,675	35,893	33,877	2,016	-	2,016	-	xv
Visibly Better Roads	5,800	5,800	1,293	789	504	-	504	-	xvi
Core Programme - Bridge Assessment Strengthening	38,785	38,785	2,740	1,955	785	-	785	-	xvii
Core Programme - Street Lighting - Life Expired Equipment	39,561	39,561	2,000	2,150	(150)	-	-	(150)	
Core Programme - Street Lighting - SALIX scheme	2,961	2,961	219	219	-	-	-	-	
Core- Rights of Way Surface Repairs and Bridge Replacement Programme	10,417	10,417	552	534	18	-	18	-	
Total CET Gross (Planned Programme)	963,133	965,233	57,393	51,184	6,209	(563)	7,336	(564)	

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Governance Services – end of year 2023/24

Summary of progress on Council Priorities, issues arising, and achievements

Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Planning for 2024/25 and beyond, culminated with the agreement of the budget and the Council Plan by County Council in February 2024. The plan and budget were informed by engagement events with strategic partners, young people, business representatives and Trade Unions as well as input from scrutiny committees and a survey of local people. The Council Plan and Portfolio Plans 2024/25, which set out our priority and delivery outcomes for the coming year and our plans for delivering them, have been published online. The plans and budget reflect the increasingly challenging financial position facing the Council. This is due to the growth in need for statutory, demand-led, services for vulnerable children and adults, an escalation of costs, and national support and funding not meeting the new costs facing the authority. For the first time, the 2024/25 budget relies on making a significant withdrawal from our limited reserves to bridge the shortfall in funding. This is not a sustainable position, and the forecast for the forthcoming years shows that our reserves would be exhausted within 2 years if we remain reliant on using these to keep our core services running. We will continue to work with our local, regional and national partners to highlight the specific needs of East Sussex, and to press for fair and sustainable allocation of funding that enables us to continue to meet the needs of our residents. In light of the financial position the Council will also need to instigate work to identify a range of actions that it will need to take to set a balanced budget for 2025/26, without the need to draw on reserves.

Our integrated planning process, RPPR, has allowed us to continue to focus and protect our spending where it will deliver our priority objectives most effectively. Through the process we have ensured that we have the demographic trends and performance information to monitor progress through the year, as well as the evidence we need to support lobbying at a local, regional and national level. We began the planning process for 2025/26 in Q4 in preparation for State of the County and are continuing to review our processes to ensure that we are maximising the value for money that we deliver.

Transport for the South East (TfSE)

Regional Centre of Excellence

TfSE has begun delivery of its Centre of Excellence website. Steering groups have been created to shape and inform its development. Seventy local transport authority officers are already registered and there will be an in-person event to launch the work.

We are engaging with professional institutes, partner organisations, national agencies and constituent authorities to understand what resources, tools, knowledge and expertise are desired and can be hosted on the platform.

We are capturing the priorities of local transport authority officers through our capability and capacity survey, which closed on the 22 April 2024. Then, working with our partners, we will develop a pipeline of content to best meet these needs. This data will also be shared with the Department for Transport to support them in their programme of work to boost capacity and capability nationally.

Active Travel

Work on the TfSE Regional [Active Travel](#) Strategy is progressing with the draft strategy due to be completed in summer 2024. The Regional Active Travel Steering Group has met 5 times since the project commenced and their input has been integral to shaping the development of the strategy.

Stage 3 included developing a methodology to identify a strategic active travel network for the region, taking account of input from the project team and Steering Group. The second Technical Report (Strategic Network Identification) has been produced and reviewed by the Steering Group members, and feedback is now being addressed for the final version. The next steps will be to

finalise the strategic network and apply the prioritisation framework developed with Steering Group members to the network.

Freight Forum

England's Economic Heartland (EEH), Transport East (TE), and Transport for the South East (TfSE) have established a Wider South East Freight Forum, which brings together freight and logistics industry representatives such as Logistics UK, the Road Haulage Association, local authorities, business representatives, and ports and airports.

The Forum met for the first time in December 2023. The second meeting in April 2024 focused on the associated with the provision of additional lorry parking and driver welfare facilities. The third meeting in June 2024 will focus on the decarbonisation of the freight and logistics sector.

Delivering the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)

Our Strategic Prioritisation Framework and Methodology was approved by the Partnership Board in January 2024. A key role for Sub-National Transport Bodies (STBs) is to provide advice to Government on transport investment priorities in their areas and this tool provides a robust evidence-led process through which we can respond to such requests.

Corporate Lobbying

Throughout 2023/24 corporate lobbying work focussed on using our partnerships and networks at the local, regional, and national level to influence policy development in a range of areas, including investment in highways and children's services, as well as local authority funding more generally. During Q4, we took the opportunity to outline to East Sussex MPs the severe financial pressures the council is under, and to ask for their support in lobbying ministers to increase the funding provided in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) 2024/25. This successfully resulted in a number of local MPs signing a letter organised by the County Councils' Network that called for more funding in the LGFS and an additional £600m of national funding for social care subsequently being made available in that settlement.

The Leader and Chief Executive have continued to raise issues and priorities for the county with our local MPs, including through specific updates on our Council Plan and the final budget position for 2024/25. In Q4, ahead of a debate in the House of Commons, the Director of Children's Services provided a written briefing to MPs on pressures in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system, which included proposed solutions to address these pressures. This briefing was mentioned during the debate and a copy provided to the Minister for consideration. Chief Officers also continue to influence service specific national policy developments through national professional associations and networks. The Chief Executive has contributed to national policy development throughout 2023/24 as representative for the South East region on a national grouping of local authority Chief Executives. In Q4, this work included discussions on community cohesion, local government performance, productivity and audit and preparations for delivering forthcoming elections.

Supporting democracy

During 2023/24 we supported 159 meetings (40 in Q4) including: 4 County Council meetings (1 in Q4); 8 Cabinet meetings (2 in Q4); 48 Lead Member meetings (11 in Q4); 54 Scrutiny Committees and Review Boards (15 in Q4); and 45 other committees and panels (12 in Q4). We also despatched agendas for a further 24 meetings (7 in Q4). We supported 3 Whole Council Forums (1 in Q4). The webcasts of Council meetings were viewed 7,686 times (2,229 times in Q4). The most viewed meetings were the Planning Committee meeting in July 2023, which was watched 582 times and the Full Council meeting in February 2024, which was watched 573 times, either by live view or as a recording.

The Member Training and Development Programme delivered a wide range of training and briefing sessions to Members throughout 2023/24 (a total of 16 sessions were delivered). Courses included sessions on the role of public health in local government, a climate change update, the

fiduciary duties of the Council, member interests and the code of conduct, race equality in East Sussex and training to support scrutiny committee members in their scrutiny role. To help ensure courses continue to meet the needs of Members, a survey of training needs will be undertaken in Q1. Feedback from the survey will inform the development of a fresh training offer for Members for 2024/25. To help make participation as easy as possible, most training sessions will continue to be delivered remotely with resources, such as slides from training sessions, being saved to the Councillors' area of the intranet for future reference. The Member Reference Group also met on 4 occasions and discussed a range of issues including, for example, a draft social media guidance for councillors.

The Council's scrutiny committees delivered varied work programmes during 2023/24, including a range of scrutiny reviews, reference groups and committee meetings, all of which have provided additional scrutiny and constructive challenge to the work of the Council and partners. In Q4, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee completed a review of changes to paediatric services at Eastbourne District General Hospital. Two scrutiny reviews were completed during Q4 on School Exclusions, and Pothole Management. Scrutiny comments were reported to Cabinet and Council as part of budget and Council Plan setting for 2024/25, following the Place and People Scrutiny RPPR Boards held in December.

During 2023/24 the Place Scrutiny Committee completed its scrutiny work on a draft corporate carbon offset framework and an updated corporate Environment Policy and provided input on the development of a new Economic Growth Strategy for East Sussex. It also continued with scrutiny work on the Local Transport Plan 4. The People Scrutiny Committee completed a scrutiny review of Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care, and continued its scrutiny work on the Health and Social Care Integration Programme and Prevention in Children's Services. The committee also engaged with work on the Adult Social Care Strategy and a Local Government Association peer review of Adult Social Care. In Q4, the People Scrutiny Committee held its annual meeting to review Educational Attainment and Performance.

The Health and Wellbeing Board met on 5 March 2024. The Board considered an update report on the delivery of the East Sussex Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) programme. The Board also received reports on School Attendance as a Public Health Outcome, a focus report on Men's Mental Health projects in East Sussex, and the Rye Listening Tour carried out by Healthwatch East Sussex. During 2023/24, the Board also considered annual reports from the Director of Public Health, Healthwatch, Sussex learning from lives and deaths report, the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board. It also considered reports on Sussex and East Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategies, public health work with planning and creative health, and an update report on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

The East Sussex School Appeal Service received 48 in-year appeals from families during Q4, which resulted in 8 virtual appeal hearing sessions taking place (at each hearing session a number of appeals are usually considered, with parents able to attend in-person if that is their preference). Of the appeals submitted during Q4, 6 were successful, 12 were dismissed by an Independent Appeal Panel, a further 15 were either withdrawn by the families or were not needed because a place became available at their preferred school before the hearing. The remaining 15 appeals are set to be heard in Q1 2024/25. A total of 262 appeals have been received for the September 2024 secondary school intake. These appeals will also be heard in Q1 2024/25.

The service successfully recruited and trained 4 new school appeal clerks. New volunteer Independent Appeal Panel members were also appointed, with training delivered early in Q4.

Also in Q4, an Independent Review Panel (IRP) was convened to review the permanent exclusion of 2 children from a school in East Sussex. The decision of the IRP was to recommend that the Governing Board reconsider the reinstatement of both children to the school.

Across the whole of 2023/24, a total of 615 school admission appeals were received and 52 appeal hearings conducted. A total of 6 school exclusion review requests were also heard by Independent Review Panels.

Legal Services

During Q4, Legal Services assisted Trading Standards to secure a confiscation order of £60,000 following a successful conviction for possession for sale of counterfeit footwear. The money, secured to repay the victims, include £22,500 payable to the Council in respect of the prosecution.

The Service advised in relation to 2 judicial review applications issued against the Council during 2023/24. The first claim was withdrawn following a settlement being agreed. The application for permission to apply, in relations to the second claim, was refused in March 2024; however, the application has been renewed and this is yet to be determined.

During 2023/24 the Service advised in relation to 268 Court of Protection cases and 84 matters involving safeguarding vulnerable adults (compared to 273 and 79 in 2022/23) and in relation to 232 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications in the Court of Protection (up from 191 in 2022/23).

The Service continues to work closely with Children's Services, providing advice and representation, including in pre-proceedings and court applications for care proceedings. Our priority is to keep children within their family when it is safe to do so, and for public law applications to be a necessary and proportionate response to achieve the best outcome for the child. At the end of 2023/24 there were 52 families open in pre-proceedings compared to 48 at the end of 2022/23. In 2023/24 the Service applied for care proceedings in respect of 72 families compared to 71 in 2022/23. At the end of Q4, there were a total of 59 ongoing care proceedings compared to 68 proceedings in Q4 2022/23. In 2023/24 we concluded 81 sets of care proceedings compared to 63 in Q4 2022/23. Of the concluded proceedings 43% were placed in the care of family under special guardianship or child arrangements orders. Concluded proceedings in East Sussex in 2023/24 took on average 47 weeks per child, this is 6 weeks less than in 2022/23. The Service has also continued to provide training and legal advice to Children's Services, including on court work for newly qualified social workers and on policy and operational instructions.

During 2023/24, the Service completed agreements to secure financial contributions to the Council of over £4m, together with the delivery of additions and improvements to the highway network across the county. The Service also advised on 187 new property matters compared to 129 in 2022/23. In addition, the Service advised on 241 new contract and procurement matters compared to 230 in 2022/23.

During Q4, the Service assisted Income Recovery in securing the recovery and repayment of debts totalling £74,671, compared to £39,007 in Q4 2022/23.

Coroner Services

During Q4 2023/24, 585 deaths were reported to the Coroner (compared with 627 in Q4 2022/23), averaging 195 deaths per month. Of those deaths, 46% (269) went on to have a post mortem (compared to 47% in Q4 2022/23). 85 Inquests were opened during Q4, a slight increase on 80 inquests that were opened during Q4 2022/23. 66 Inquests were closed in Q4 2023/24, lower than 125 closed in Q4 2022/23.

In total during 2023/24, 2,211 deaths were reported compared to 2,470 in 2022/23. This averages 184 deaths per month. 46% (1,026) required a post mortem. This is an increase in the percentage for 2022/23 of 42% (1,034), meaning marginally fewer examinations were carried out and averaging 86 postmortems per month. A total of 338 Inquest were opened and 266 Inquests concluded in 2023/24. In 2022/23, 352 inquests were opened and 290 concluded.

7 Inquests were held in 2023/24 with Juries. These are usually held between 1 day and 2 weeks and require additional planning/resources. 112 Inquests were held in writing which do not require court bookings. There are currently 311 open Inquests compared to 242 at the end of 2022/23.

During Q4 the Senior Coroner retired and Fiona King was appointed as Acting Senior Coroner.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

During Q3, Trading Standards reported on an existing Directed Surveillance Authority (DSA), which had commenced in November 2023. The DSA was set to run for a maximum of three months until February 2024. The Authority allowed officers to undertake covert observations on number of retail outlets in East Sussex, where illegal tobacco was on sale. For operational reasons, the DSA was reviewed and cancelled on the 18 January 2024, when it was assessed as no longer required.

Local Government Ombudsman complaints

The Ombudsman issued 22 decisions in Q4. 16 cases were closed before a full investigation for a variety of reasons. These reasons included insufficient evidence of fault, complaints being out of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction because the complaint had not been through our internal complaint process, or an appropriate remedy had already been applied, of which 4 were recorded as upheld.

Of the 6 cases that were fully investigated, 3 cases related to Adult Social Care (ASC) and 3 to Children's Services (CS). All 6 were closed with the complaint partly or fully upheld as follows:

ASC – The client complained that the Council charged her for care, which she thought was free and did not agree to pay for. She said the Council did not assess her finances correctly, as it only looked at incomings and not outgoings such as Disability Related Expenses (DRE).

The Ombudsman found the Council was at fault for delays during the assessment process after the client was discharged from hospital, and for failing to share important information about her care charges. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client and to pay her £400 in recognition of the avoidable distress she suffered. The Council has also agreed to issue a credit of £348 to the client's outstanding balance to account for the backdated DRE.

ASC – The client's spouse complained that the Council failed to deal properly with her husband's care or respect her position as his power of attorney for property and affairs and health and welfare, causing her significant expense and distress.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for failing to deal properly with the complaint, which caused avoidable distress. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client and make payments for the additional costs she incurred and to reflect the long delay in sending her its summary report on the investigation into her concerns.

ASC – The client complained that the Council billed him for top-up fees, which he had already paid directly to the care provider.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for providing duplicate invoices and for not clarifying their process. The Council has agreed to provide the client with a written apology and pay him £200 in recognition of the fault identified.

CS – The client's mother complained that the Council failed to provide suitable education to her son, who has special educational needs.

The Ombudsman found fault with the Council for a delay in considering whether the education it was providing was sufficient, whether its section 19 alternative education duty was triggered and for a delay in issuing the final amended Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. The Ombudsman also found fault with the Council's communication with the client's mother. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client's mother and pay her £2,900 for the benefit of her son, who missed out on alternative education, and £750 in recognition of the avoidable stress caused by the faults identified.

The Council has also agreed to implement a timescale for decisions about whether its section 19 alternative education duty is triggered to prevent delays and ensure children do not remain out of education for longer than necessary.

CS – The client's mother complained that the Council delayed processing her daughter's annual review and failed to consider her safety and welfare during the request for a change of placement. The client's mother also said that the Council failed to consider all her comments and evidence, when it responded to her complaint.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for its delays during the annual review process. Furthermore, it failed to evidence that it had considered all relevant information when deciding on a suitable placement. The Council has agreed to apologise to the client's mother and pay £250 for her frustration and distress and £1,000 for the loss of her daughter's educational provision from June to October 2023.

The Council has also agreed to ensure it has a robust process in place to monitor when the annual review of an EHC Plan is due; and to ensure it has a process in place to keep detailed and contemporaneous records of special educational needs panel meetings.

CS – The client's mother complained that the Council failed to provide alternative education to her son after he was permanently excluded from school. She also complained that the Council delayed finding him another school and refused to issue him with an EHC Plan.

The Ombudsman found the Council at fault for not providing alternative education to the client. The Council has agreed to apologise and to pay the client's mother £500 in recognition of the distress caused and £1,500 for the 11 weeks her son did not receive any provision.

Web activity

There were 1,954,700 unique pageviews of the Council website in Q4 (and more than 7.2 million across the whole of 2023/24). In Q4, the jobs section of the site was viewed more than 600,000 times. Customer satisfaction with the website was 64%.

Media and information work

During 2023/24 the press office handled 470 media enquiries and issued 108 press releases which generated 261 media stories. There were 1,415 stories published in total about the Council during 2023/24.

In Q4, the press office dealt with 157 media enquiries and issued 31 press releases. In March, there were 138 media stories about the Council, 94 of which were positive or neutral.

Effective publicity and campaigns

Examples of successful campaigns include a campaign to recruit more hosts for Ukrainian people settling in East Sussex, 5 new hosts have been attracted so far. The campaign used personal stories from hosts and Ukrainians, who've already thrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. We promoted the campaign through a mix of paid-for and organic social media posts with print advertising and editorial, posters at transport sites and digital screens at supermarkets. The recruitment of 5 new hosts equates to a saving of around £27,000 by avoiding the costs of emergency accommodation.

Three pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinics in East Sussex libraries were publicised through no-cost social media and web posts and with a library poster campaign. 300 at-risk people attended for a vaccination, filling the available capacity.

South East 7 (SE7)

Throughout 2023/24, the SE7 partnership continued to provide a valuable forum for sharing intelligence on the rapidly evolving national policy context and developing joint lobbying messages to position the partnership's interests ahead of an expected general election. The SE7 partnership has also helped provide understanding on how neighbouring councils are responding to shared challenges, which this year has particularly focused on highways maintenance, asylum dispersal and demand and cost pressures in children's services, including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and Home to School Transport.

SE7 Leaders and Chief Executives met jointly in Q4 to discuss latest issues and priorities for all councils, including issues emerging from budget setting for 2024/25, productivity plans and asylum related issues. At that meeting Leaders also received an update on officer-led work to prepare an SE7 collective lobbying position ahead of a general election and agreed to focus lobbying on the priority areas for reform, including SEND, the asylum system, and utilities company street works. SE7 Leaders also met in March and discussed the latest work being done by Transport for the South East, as well as current issues including the Chancellor's Spring Budget and implications for local authorities. Chief Executives continue to meet regularly to discuss latest policy developments.

Revenue Budget Summary

The Governance Service revenue budget is currently £8.458m and has underspent by £163k. Within the Corporate Governance division there was a large overspend in the Coroner budget. This is largely as a result of cumulative increases in the costs of mortuary provision, court hire, body removal, toxicology and staffing, as well as accumulative demands on the service. During the latter part of 2023/24 there was a change in management of the service and also a reduction on demand compared to that anticipated (**ref i**). Budget earmarked for external legal fees was being used to offset in-house legal provision and along with smaller underspends in other services, has resulted in an unpredicted underspend. The overspend in Corporate Support is due to the cost of covering maternity leave in Legal Services. This overspend is partially offset with staff vacancies elsewhere (**ref ii**).

Performance exceptions (See How to read this report for definition)

Performance measure	Outturn 22/23	Target 23/24	RAG Q1 23/24	RAG Q2 23/24	RAG Q3 23/24	RAG Q4 23/24	2023/24 outturn	Note ref
No Council Plan exceptions								

Savings exceptions 2023/24 (£'000)

Service description	Original Target For 2023/24	Target including items c/f from previous year(s)	Achieved in-year	Will be achieved, but in future years	Cannot be achieved	Note ref
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Savings	0	0	0	0	0	
			-	-	-	
			-	-	-	
Subtotal Permanent Changes ¹			0	0	0	
Total Savings and Permanent Changes	0	0	0	0	0	

Memo: treatment of savings not achieved in the year (£'000)	Temporary Funding ²	Part of reported variance ³	Total	Note Ref
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	
Total	0	0	0	

¹ Where agreed savings are reasonably unable to be achieved other permanent savings are required to be identified and approved via quarterly monitoring.

² Temporary funding will only replace a slipped or unachieved saving for one year; the saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

³ The slipped or unachieved saving will form part of the department's overall variance - it will either increase an overspend or decrease an underspend. The saving will still need to be made in future years (or be replaced with something else).

Revenue Budget 2023/24 (£'000)

Divisions	Planned Gross	Planned Income	Planned Net	2023/24 Gross	2023/24 Income	2023/24 Net	(Over)/ under spend Gross	(Over)/ under spend Income	(Over)/ under spend Net	Note ref
Corporate Governance	5,323	(340)	4,983	5,196	(399)	4,797	127	59	186	i
Corporate Support	3,879	(404)	3,475	4,060	(562)	3,498	(181)	158	(23)	ii
Total Governance	9,202	(744)	8,458	9,256	(961)	8,295	(54)	217	163	

Capital programme 2023/24 (£'000)

Approved project	Budget: total project all years	Projected: total project all years	Budget 2023/24	Actual 2023/24	Variation (Over) / under 2023/24 budget	Variation analysis: (Over) / under spend	Variation analysis: Slippage to future year	Variation analysis: Spend in advance	Note ref
No current programme for Governance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total GS Gross (Planned Programme)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

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Strategic Risk Register – Q4 2023/24

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
5	<p>RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE & RESOURCE</p> <p>There is ongoing uncertainty in relation to future funding levels, the longer-term local government funding regime, and the impact of national reforms, particularly across Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care. The impact of a period of high inflation/cost of living are leading to higher demand for Council services and have increased the direct cost of providing services. Together these create a risk of insufficient resources being available to sustain service delivery at the agreed Core Offer level to meet the changing needs of the local community.</p> <p>The proposed budget for 2024/25 requires a draw from the Financial Management Reserve to balance the budget.</p>	<p>We employ a robust Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process for business planning, which ensures a strategic corporate response to resource reductions, demographic change, and regional and national economic challenges; and directs resources to priority areas. We take a commissioning approach to evaluating need and we consider all methods of service delivery. We work with partner organisations to deliver services and manage demand, making best use of our collective resources. We take a 'One Council' approach to delivering our priorities and set out our targets and objectives in the Council Plan. We monitor our progress and report it quarterly.</p> <p>Our plans take account of known risks and pressures, including social, economic, policy and demographic changes and financial risks. However, we continue to operate in changing and uncertain contexts. Current and forecast economic conditions continue to shape a very challenging financial outlook both for the Council itself and many of the county's residents and businesses. Alongside this we continue to face ongoing challenges as a result of the persistent legacy of Covid, the increased cost of living and other national and international factors. We will continue to use the latest information available on these challenges to inform our business planning. We will also continually review our performance targets, priorities, service offers and financial plans, and will update these as required. As part of this we will continue to take action wherever we can to mitigate financial and service delivery pressures – making best use of new technology, investing in our workforce, seeking efficiencies, and checking that our services are effective and provide value for money. We will look to develop and implement further measures to address the funding challenges we face.</p> <p>We lobby, individually and in conjunction with our networks and partners, for a sustainable funding regime for local government in general and for children's social care and adult social care specifically, to meet the needs of the residents of East Sussex.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
12	<p>CYBER ATTACK</p> <p>The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has highlighted the substantial risk to British web infrastructure, with elevated levels of Cyber Crime being reported against all areas of government, particularly in light of current international unrest.</p> <p>Cyber-attacks are growing more frequent, sophisticated, and damaging when they succeed. With many additional functions now routinely carried out virtually and remotely, the change in working practice gives rise to more requests to relax security controls, with services more likely to take risks on the technology they procure and how they use it. Controls have been enhanced to manage these requests.</p> <p>The impacts of a cyber-attack are far-reaching, and it is difficult to put a figure on the cost, but authorities that have been subject to major attacks have calculated the disruption to have cost between £10m and £12m.</p>	<p>Most attacks leverage software flaws and gaps in boundary defences. IT&D use modern security tools to assure our security posture: Monitoring network activity and identifying security threats; Keeping software up to date with regular patching regimes; Continually monitoring evolving threats and re-evaluating the ability of our toolset to provide adequate defence against them; Ongoing communication with the Security industry to find the most suitable tools and systems to secure our infrastructure. IT&D continues to invest in new tools, which use pre-emptive technology to identify threats and patterns of abnormal behaviour. The Council achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation during 2022/23. Cyber Essentials Plus is the industry standard for the private and public sectors, underpinning safe sharing with partners and helping ensure sufficient controls are in place to minimise the risk of a cyber incident.</p> <p>Enhancing user awareness: Expanding E-Learning and policy delivery mechanisms to cover Cyber threat; educating staff around the techniques and methods used by active threats; and providing General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training and workshops to cascade vital skills and increase awareness of responsibilities under GDPR legislation. Business Continuity Scenario testing has been cascaded through Departmental Management Teams.</p> <p>Services hosted in ISO 27001 accredited Orbis Data Centres.</p>	Red
9	<p>WORKFORCE</p> <p>An inability to attract and retain the high calibre staff needed could lead to a reduction in the expertise and capacity required to deliver statutory services to our residents, including to prevent harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults at the required level and standards, impacting on the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives.</p>	<p>Following Cabinet's agreement to additional investment of £270k across 2022/23 and 2023/24, a number of strategies responding to the current significant recruitment and retention challenges have been put in place. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-going attendance at events such as careers fairs and shows to maximise our presence with job seekers. - The new Pre-Employment Coordinator postholder has linked in with organisations that support people back into employment to extend our reach into sections of the labour market that are underrepresented or face significant barriers to employment. - Continued use of apprenticeships, traineeships, intern arrangements and more flexible work arrangements etc as a way of bringing in new talent to the Council. - Continued delivery of our two leadership development programmes to support our talent management strategies: the 'Ladder to Leadership' programme and 'Head of Service Masterclasses'. The second cohort of the Ladder to Leadership programme started in September 2023 and are making good progress on the programme. <p>Additional work undertaken in Q4 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of an exit interview pilot which is running for 3 months in the first instance to enable an assessment of success. 	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement with all DMTs and other senior management forums to determine the Council's future strategic workforce planning approach - Delivery of a masterclass on the use of AI in the Council led by specialists from Microsoft - Provision of information sessions and training around application and interview techniques for candidates who want to apply for roles at East Sussex County Council (ESCC) - Engagement with employees at ESCC, who are under 25, to get feedback on what attracted them to the Council as an employer; and to begin establishing a forum for young people in the new year to highlight any issues, and to attract candidates from a younger demographic to the Council 	
15	<p>CLIMATE</p> <p>Failure to limit global warming to below 1.5°C above pre-industrialisation levels, which requires global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) to be reduced by about 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching 'net zero' by 2050 at the latest. The predicted impacts of climate change in East Sussex include more frequent and intense flooding, drought, and episodes of extreme heat, as well as impacts from the effects of climate change overseas, such as on food supply. This will lead to an increase in heat-related deaths, particularly amongst the elderly, damage to essential infrastructure, increased cost of food, disruption to supply chains and service provision, and greater coastal erosion.</p>	<p>Climate change mitigation: the science-based target is to reduce scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 50% every 5 years (equating to 13% per year). The focus is on buildings, as they made up 79% of carbon emissions in 2020/21. Internal oversight of progress is by the corporate Climate Emergency Board.</p> <p>Climate change adaptation: we work with partners on some aspects of adaptation, including flood risk management plans and delivering a Heat Alert service during the summer months.</p> <p>In Quarter 4 2023/24:</p> <p>A) Mitigation:</p> <p>1) Carbon Reduction Target: the target for 2023-24 is a 13% carbon reduction compared with 2022-23 and a cumulative reduction of 42% against the baseline year of 2019-20. Energy usage data for Qs 1-3 2023-24 indicates that we achieved about a 9% reduction in energy usage compared with Qs 1-3 in 2022-23. However, the carbon emissions from our energy usage increased because the national electricity grid has become temporarily more carbon intensive in 2023-24 due to an increase in fossil fuels and a reduction in renewables to run the system. This is beyond the control of the County Council. If energy usage in Q4 was similar to 2022-23 then the annual result for 2023-24 will be about a 1% overall decrease in carbon emissions compared with 2022-23. The final outturn will be available in August and will be reported to full Council in October 2024.</p> <p>2) Carbon Reduction Schemes: the target for 2023-24 was for the delivery of a further 23 capital schemes. 25 schemes were completed by the end of Q4.</p> <p>B) Adaptation:</p> <p>1) Adaptation Plan: In August the Climate Emergency Board agreed to the procurement of consultancy support to produce a climate change vulnerability and risk assessment, to help inform the development of a corporate adaptation plan. Arup have been appointed and are due to complete the assessment in May 2024.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
20	<p>PLACEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CARE</p> <p>Inability to secure sufficient high quality placements for children in our care, suitable accommodation for care experienced young people and respite provision, leading to significant financial pressure leading to significant financial pressure and poorer outcomes for children/young people.</p>	<p>Effective demand management, robust management of front door.</p> <p>Delivery of early help services, implementation of Family Hub programme throughout 2023-24, and Level 2 Family Keyworkers (Q3).</p> <p>Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of Edge of Care 'Connected Families', Family Safeguarding programmes ('Connected Families in Partnership' launch planned for January 2024), enabling more children to live safely with their families.</p> <p>Further delivery of kinship/Special Guardianship Order placements.</p> <p>Capital bid for Sorrel Drive.</p> <p>Consultancy project-IMPOWER to determine forecast trajectory and development of evidence-based business case to further improve sufficiency of placements.</p> <p>Fostering Recruitment & Retention Strategy completed. East Sussex County Council is part of the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme, Regional Fostering Strategy, and piloting Mockingbird hub.</p> <p>Uplift to fostering allowance (for in house carers, Special Guardianship Orders, Kinship carers) approved by the Chief Management Team to help secure sufficient supply of in house foster carers as an alternative to more expensive care packages.</p> <p>In Q3, the valuing care tools have been embedded into the business as usual with a strong focus on reunification.</p> <p>Fostering allowance uplift has been made part of the recruitment drive. Both elements are attempting to mitigate the increased costs due to the lack of placements for Looked After Children.</p>	Red
19	<p>SCHOOLS AND INCLUSION, SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (ISEND)</p> <p>For Children with Special Educational Needs. Inability to secure statutory provision due to lack of availability of specialist placement within the county and increasing demand for placements in this sector. This would put the Council at risk of judicial review and/or negative Local Government Ombudsman judgements for failing to meet our duties within the Children and Families Act 2014, with associated financial penalties and reputational damage.</p>	<p>Effective use of forecasting data to pre-empt issues.</p> <p>Work with statutory partners to develop contingency plans.</p> <p>Work with the market to increase provision where needed.</p> <p>Expanding internal interim offer for children.</p>	Red

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
1	<p>ROADS</p> <p>Extreme weather events over recent years, including this winter, have caused significant damage to many of the county's roads, adding to the backlog of maintenance in the County Council's Asset Plan: and increasing the risk to the Council's ability to stem the rate of deterioration and maintain road condition.</p> <p>The economic impacts of the pandemic and recent events in Ukraine have had some effects on service delivery during this year, particularly with increased costs and shortages of suitable contractors and materials.</p>	<p>The changing climate is now influencing the rate of road deterioration, with more extreme events such as warmer wetter winters; and drier summers punctuated by unseasonal heavy downpours (drying and shrinking the substructure of roads). Additional funding over the last few years has helped maintain road condition, however, the latest condition and funding modelling showed the potential for deterioration over the next 10 years. Additional carriageway patching, footway, signing, and lining works were carried out with additional budget allocated through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process in 2023 and Cabinet approved additional investment of £15.7m in June 2023 for highway maintenance. The improvements are well underway to provide greater network reliance. Deterioration in road surfaces in 2023/24 has continued with a generally cool and wet summer and wet start to winter and spring.</p> <p>Road Condition Indicator (RCI) scores for this year indicate we are on target for principal roads but slightly below target for non-principal and unclassified roads, this is what we expected from the modelling given the current conditions. The evidence shows the current wet weather is taking its toll on the condition of many of the county's roads, with large numbers of potholes forming daily and roads deteriorating. Mitigations include encouraging road users to report potholes so we can intervene as soon as possible in accordance with our policies and lobbying Government for additional investment as, without it, it will be increasingly difficult to manage the risks of further decline.</p>	Red
18	<p>DATA BREACH</p> <p>A breach of security/confidentiality leading to destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data. This includes breaches that are the result of both accidental and deliberate causes. A personal data breach is a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of personal data regardless of whether information has been accessed, altered, or disclosed via electronic or manual means.</p> <p>Risks to individuals, reputational damage, fines from the Information Commissioner's Officer (ICO), compensation claims.</p>	<p>Policy and guidance procedures in place to support practice.</p> <p>Data Protection Officer (DPO), Caldicott Guardians and Information Governance Officers monitor breach reporting and put in place mechanisms to minimise recurrence.</p> <p>Staff training to develop awareness. E-learning and policy delivery mechanism expanded to enhance skills and increase awareness of responsibilities under General Data Protection Regulation legislation.</p> <p>Technical security measures operated by Information Technology and Digital (IT&D), including access control and segregation of duties.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
8	<p>CAPITAL PROGRAMME</p> <p>There are risks and uncertainties regarding the capital programme over the current Medium Term Financial Plan period and beyond, which could impact on the ability to deliver the Council's priorities and set a balanced budget.</p> <p>Factors such as inflation, supply chain issues, unforeseen operational risks, and wider economic and geopolitical factors are likely to impact project deliverability and affordability.</p> <p>Additionally, if capital expenditure isn't profiled accurately, then significant slippage against the budgeted programme can undermine the planning process, particularly in relation to treasury management modelling and the impact of borrowing.</p> <p>Due to the complexity of factors and uncertainties impacting them, the level of government grants and other sources of capital programme funding such as developer contributions and capital receipts could be significantly reduced.</p> <p>A combination of the above risks, alongside a volatile interest rate environment, could significantly increase the cost of borrowing to fund the capital programme, increasing pressures on the Council's revenue budget in an already challenging financial environment.</p>	<p>The Council reviews and updates its 20-year Capital Strategy annually as part of the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process, which sets the framework in which the capital programme is planned and allows the Council to prioritise investment to support its objectives. The development and delivery of the capital programme is overseen by a Capital Strategic Asset Board (CSAB), which is a cross departmental group, who also hear from Departmental Capital Board/Sub Boards who oversee priority areas.</p> <p>The capital programme includes an element of 'normal' level of inflation for ongoing target-based core programmes (as opposed to programmes that have cash limited envelopes). Additionally, a capital risk provision in the form of additional borrowing flexibility is in place to provide the ability to react to emerging risks such as supply chain issues and inflationary pressures. The level of provision is reviewed and approved on an annual basis as part of the RPPR process and is maintained by the CSAB in adherence to financial regulations.</p> <p>As part of the RPPR process, services are asked to provide a profiled programme based on best knowledge, which is reviewed and challenged by CSAB, to ensure the programme is profiled as accurately as possible. A corporate slippage risk factor can be applied to the programme to reflect likely programme spend to provide greater robustness to the planning and monitoring process.</p> <p>The CSAB have oversight of all sources of capital funding, including grants, capital receipts and developer contributions, to ensure that assumptions are prudent and realistic, and funds are used effectively and to minimise the need to borrow. Funding announcements are actively monitored, and funding targets reviewed to minimise the impact on delivery of the capital programme, ensuring that there is sufficient liquidity to meet funding requirements. The cost of borrowing for the capital programme has a direct impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan position, therefore capital investment decisions are considered as part of the RPPR process based on Treasury Management capacity and affordability in the context of the Council's wider financial position. The Council's approved Treasury Management Policy and Strategy has been prepared in the context of the current financial situation and seeks to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
6	<p>LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p>The transfer of South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) responsibilities and functions to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) does not successfully integrate the development of economic strategic planning, business support, and management of capital funded programmes, into Council operations as required by Government policy.</p> <p>Possible consequences if the transfer is not managed successfully include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Management, monitoring, and evaluation of the current capital programmes do not meet Government requirements, leading to potential clawback of £m funds; or an inability for ESCC to demonstrate it can manage funds successfully, affecting future allocations of growth funds. •Third parties with existing contracts may raise concerns if new / variation funding agreements are not put in place early from April 2024. •Loss of an effective 'business voice' through the current local economic growth board (Team East Sussex) and its various subgroups. •An inability to produce an agreed local economic strategy, which sets the ambitions, objectives, and key outcomes for East Sussex. 	<p>East Sussex County Council, working with partners, has successfully secured significant amounts of local growth funding totalling £127m since 2012 via the South East and Coast 2 Capital Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), to deliver a wide range of infrastructure projects in East Sussex. In August 2023, Government formally announced that direct funding for LEPs will be removed from April 2024. Upper tier local authorities (UTLA's) will then be required to take on the current non-statutory LEP powers, responsibilities, and functions. These include strategy development, business support and oversight/management of capital programmes. We submitted our proposal to Government in November 2023 to become an UTLA as per the guidance issued. East Sussex is eligible to be determined a 'functional economic area' to take on LEP responsibilities, but we still await a formal decision on this from Government.</p> <p>The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and East Sussex County Council have produced draft integration plans to mitigate the transfer risks on current and future capital programmes; and the financial, legal, and reputational risks. SELEP and our own Corporate Management Team endorsed the draft integration plans in Q3, and the plans have been taken to Lead Member in January 2024 and Cabinet in March 2024 to seek approval. Further Government guidance and an Assurance Framework are due to be released either in March or in new financial year to set out transition arrangements.</p> <p>Looking ahead, the lack of large-scale funding programmes to support economic growth across the county presents a big risk to us. Recent funds have been awarded directly to local Borough and District authorities (e.g., UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Levelling Up Funds and Long Term Plan for Towns) or funding has come from time-limited specific sources.</p> <p>The County Council and Team East Sussex, the local economic growth board, are jointly committed to producing a longer-term East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy to 2050. The strategy will set out our collective approach to take advantage of future funding sources as they become available. Significant work has been completed with consultants and stakeholder consultations and a draft strategy produced in March 2024. The draft strategy is currently being reviewed by partners and is scheduled for approval in 2024 and will help to mitigate economic strategic planning risks.</p> <p>The County Council is already in a good position to mitigate the risks on business support and ensuring business has a voice. We directly run the Business East Sussex Growth Hub services and Government have committed to fund this in 2024/25 although a contract has yet to be issued and funding not yet confirmed. We will also ensure the business voice continues to be heard through Team East Sussex, our local strategic advisory economic growth board for the county.</p>	Amber

Ref	Strategic Risks	Risk Control / Response and Post Mitigation RAG score	RAG
4	<p>HEALTH</p> <p>Failure to secure maximum value from partnership working with the National Health Service (NHS). If not achieved, there will be impact on social care, public health and health outcomes and increased social care operational and cost pressures. This would add pressures on the Council's budget and/or risks to other Council objectives, as well as shared system objectives in the context of our Integrated Care System across workforce and patients who are medically ready for discharge (MRD) from hospital or community beds.</p>	<p>East Sussex was allocated £5,088m, as part of the national Government Discharge Fund Grant for 2024/25, to support local authorities to build additional adult social care and community-based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays by delivering sustainable improvements to services for individuals. Plans for 2024/25 take account of the Discharge Frontrunner Economic Modelling and review report focussed on improving discharge to home, alongside increased therapy and assessment provision and associated plans to reduce the use of bedded discharge pathways. Funding has been agreed for Q1 2024/25 and Q2, 3 and 4 will be determined alongside the actions required to achieve the recommendations from the review report. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has retained the £4m uplift, to be used as transformation monies to cover dual running costs/ pump priming to affect the change and pace needed to avoid delays in hospital settings.</p> <p>In 2023/24 we have agreed our Integrated Community Team (ICT) footprints, which align with borough and district boundaries, and a pan-Sussex core offer for ICTs has been developed, focussed on proactive care for the most complex and vulnerable patients, and population health improvement. Alongside this, ICTs will also address local priorities based on intelligence and insight, and data and insight packs have been produced for each area to help further understand and address local health and care needs and inequalities. Building on our progress with integrated care in East Sussex, Hastings is our 'community frontrunner' area for developing the ICT model. The next phase of development will aim to identify current and relevant tests of change to further integrate service delivery, and action planning to support this.</p>	Amber



State of the County 2024

Focus on East Sussex

Version number 1

Publication date August 2024

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Summary

Population - around 558,400 people are estimated to live in East Sussex in 2024. By 2028 we expect that to increase to around 580,300 people, an increase of 3.9%, with just over half of our population aged 18-64 (53%), and over a quarter (29%) aged 65 and over. East Sussex has an older age profile than nationally, with a significantly higher proportion of the population aged 65 or more than both England and the South East. Rother has the highest proportion of people over the age of 85 in the country.

Children and young people - the levels of attainment at Key Stage 2 and at Key Stage 4 (Progress 8 and Attainment 8) in East Sussex are lower than the national average. The rate of children in East Sussex that are absent or excluded from school is higher than nationally, particularly from secondary schools. There continues to be higher levels of demand for children's social care which include more complex cases, and this has resulted in a higher number of Child Protection plans. The number of Looked After Children has also increased. Of those who became looked after last year, 23% were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. There continues to be increased demand for support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, including for Home to School Transport.

Health and wellbeing - East Sussex has a consistently higher life expectancy for both men and women than the national average. However, there are challenges to health in the county. Smoking levels are significantly higher in some parts of the county than nationally, and a greater percentage of people have high blood pressure which can lead to serious health conditions. The number of people with multiple long-term conditions in East Sussex is expected to increase over the next ten years which will greatly increase the complexity and costs of providing care services.

Adults - the number of people receiving long term support increased in 2023/24, with the majority aged 65 and over. Projections indicate that the number of people with dementia and other long-term conditions will continue to increase in

the coming years. Fewer people aged 65 and over are admitted to residential care than nationally, and a higher percentage of people are supported to successfully live at home after discharge from hospital than the average in England. A higher percentage of the population were providing unpaid care in 2021 in East Sussex than nationally.

Housing - house prices in East Sussex remain higher than the national average. The ratio of median house prices to median earnings is also higher than the ratio in England, but is the same as the South East ratio. Rented housing makes up a significant proportion of the housing sector in East Sussex, and there were significant rises in the cost of private rented housing between 2019 and 2023.

Deprivation - as a county, East Sussex is ranked 93 out of 151 Upper Tier Local Authorities on the Index of Multiple Deprivation rank. This is a similar level of deprivation as Lincolnshire, Somerset and Kent. However, deprivation varies across the county, with Baird Ward in Hastings in the most deprived 1% of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in the country, while an LSOA in Uckfield is in the least deprived 3%. The Government has identified 4 out of 5 district and borough council areas in East Sussex as having specific locations with priority need for 'levelling up' funding. This funding will be used on projects that address economic recovery and growth, improved transport connectivity, and the need for regeneration.

Economy - employment rates fell in 2023. The challenges that existed pre-pandemic relating to productivity and average wages for those employed within the county remain. Although the unemployment rate in the county is now below the national average, it remains higher than the regional rate. Youth unemployment remains higher than the overall percentage. Qualification levels across the county are broadly in line with the regional and national averages.

Environment - emissions of carbon dioxide have continued to fall in East Sussex over recent years. However, further reductions will be needed to contribute towards keeping the increase in global average temperature below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Civil Society - There are a diverse range of Voluntary, Community and Social

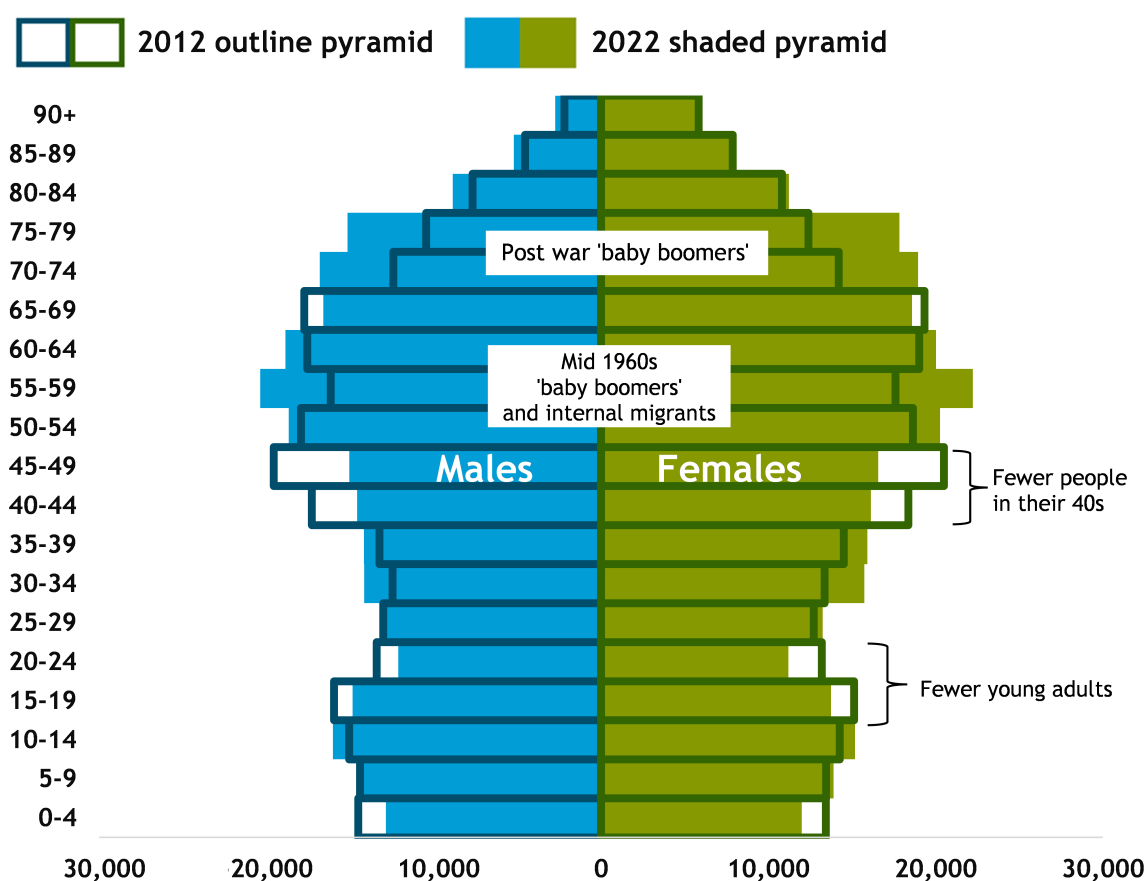
Enterprise organisations working at neighbourhood, town/parish, and district/borough levels in East Sussex. There are over 3,000 not-for-profit groups and organisations providing activities and support to residents and communities.

Community safety - the number of adults in East Sussex in treatment for substance misuse and alcohol use has increased, but at a lower percentage than nationally. In East Sussex in 2023 more potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking were referred by the local authority and Sussex Police than in the previous year. There was an increase in neighbourhood crime in East Sussex between 2022 to 2023 but the rates are lower than the national average in all categories. There was also an increase in serious violent crime in the county. However, the rate of serious violent crime remains low in East Sussex.

Population

Age and sex

The ONS mid-year estimates 2022 estimated the population of East Sussex to be 550,700. Compared to England and the South East, East Sussex has a much older age profile, with Rother having the highest rate of people over the age of 85 in the country at 4.9%, just ahead of North Norfolk and New Forest, both 4.8%. 26% of the East Sussex population is comprised of people aged 65 or over, compared to 20% for the South East and 19% for England. 3.9% of people in East Sussex were aged 85+ in 2022, higher than nationally, 2.5%, and the South East, 2.8%.



Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2022

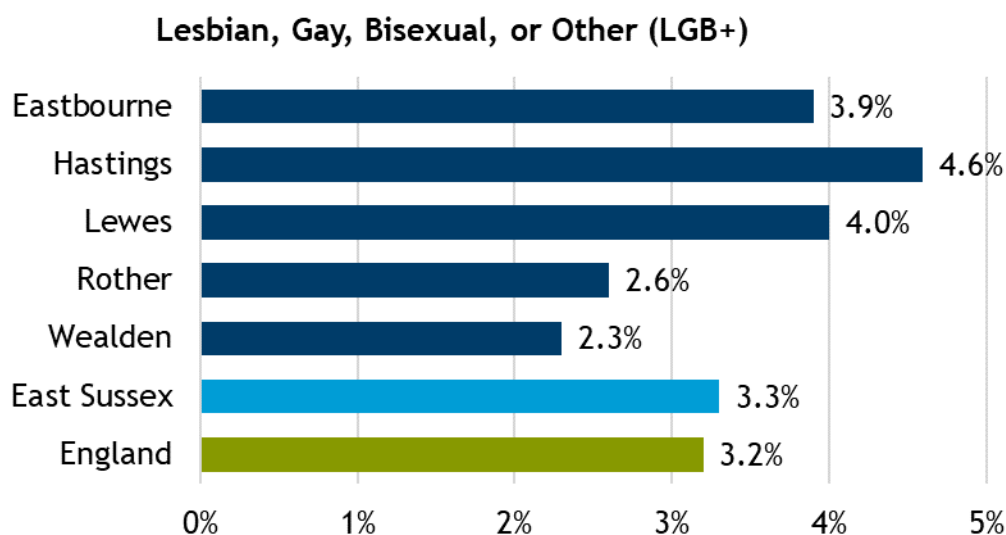
Young people, those aged 0-17, made up 18.7% of the population of East Sussex in 2022. This is lower than in England, 20.8%, and the South East, 20.9%. Working age people, those aged 18-64, made up 54.9% of the population in East Sussex in 2022.

This is lower than England, 59.4%, and the South East, 60.6%.

52% of the county's population was estimated to be female and 48% male, similar to the national split. For those aged 65 and above, it was estimated that 55% of the population was female and 45% male.

Sexual Orientation

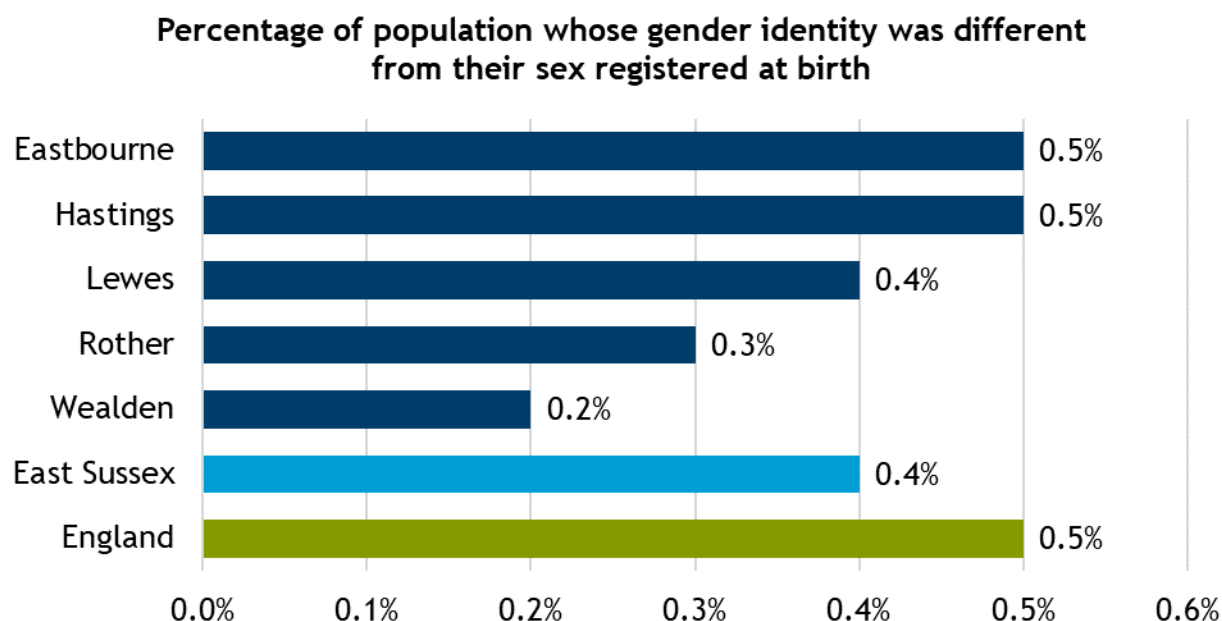
The 2021 Census indicates that 3.3% of the East Sussex population identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other (LGB+). This is similar to the national average of 3.2%. Hastings had the highest percentage of people identifying as LGB+ at 4.6%.



Note: A significant percentage of people across the county provided no response, therefore the percentage of people identifying as LBG+ could be either higher or lower than estimated. Source: Census 2021

Gender identity

Gender identity was included in the national census questions for the first time in 2021. A significant percentage of people did not respond to this question, but this is still the best data we have on this topic. 0.4% of the East Sussex population recorded that their gender identity is different to their sex registered at birth. This equates to 1,640 people.

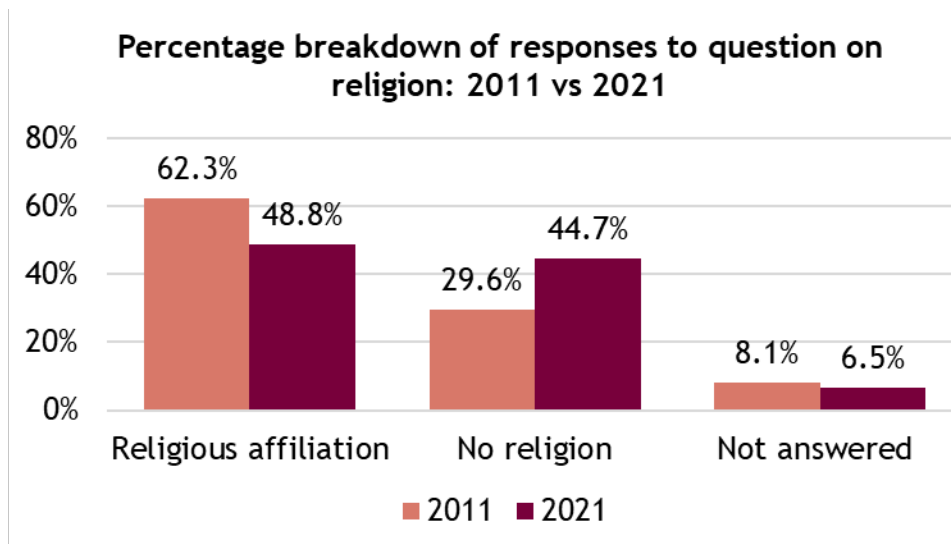


Note: A significant percentage of people across the county provided no response, therefore the percentage of people with a different gender identity to their sex registered at birth could be either higher or lower than shown. Source: Census 2021

Religion

For the 2021 Census, 45.9% of the population in East Sussex stated their religion was Christian, 1.1% stated their religion was Islam, 0.5% as Buddhism and 0.3% as Hindu. 44.7% of the population selected 'no religion' as their response.

The percentage of people who indicated an affiliation to a religion fell between 2011 and 2021, while the number of people who gave 'no religion' as their response grew.



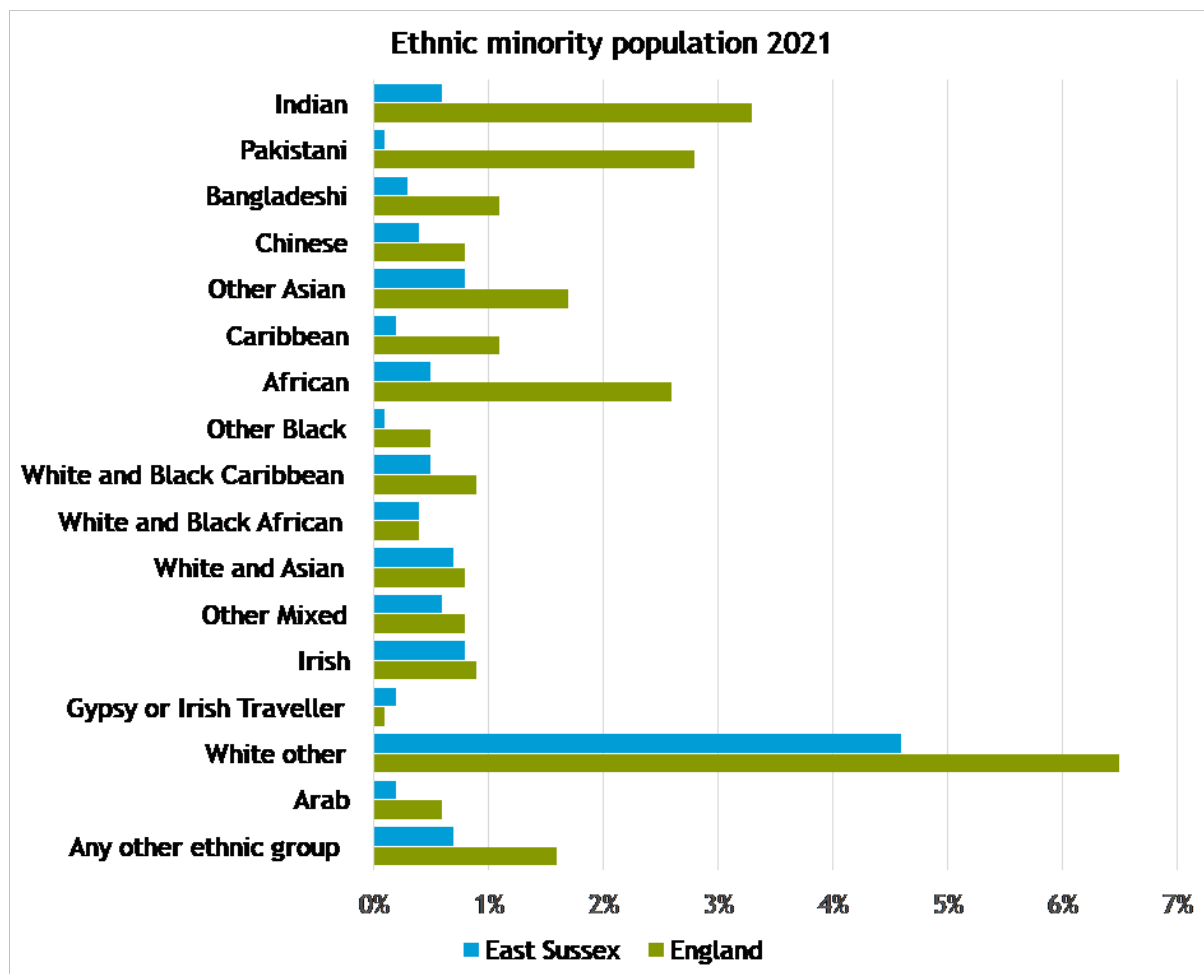
Source: Census 2021

Marital status

Data from the 2021 Census shows that 31.9% of respondents from East Sussex were single and 46.8% of respondents were married or in a civil partnership. 2.3% of respondents were separated from their partners and 11.2% were divorced or had a civil partnership which was dissolved. The remaining 7.7% of respondents were widowed.

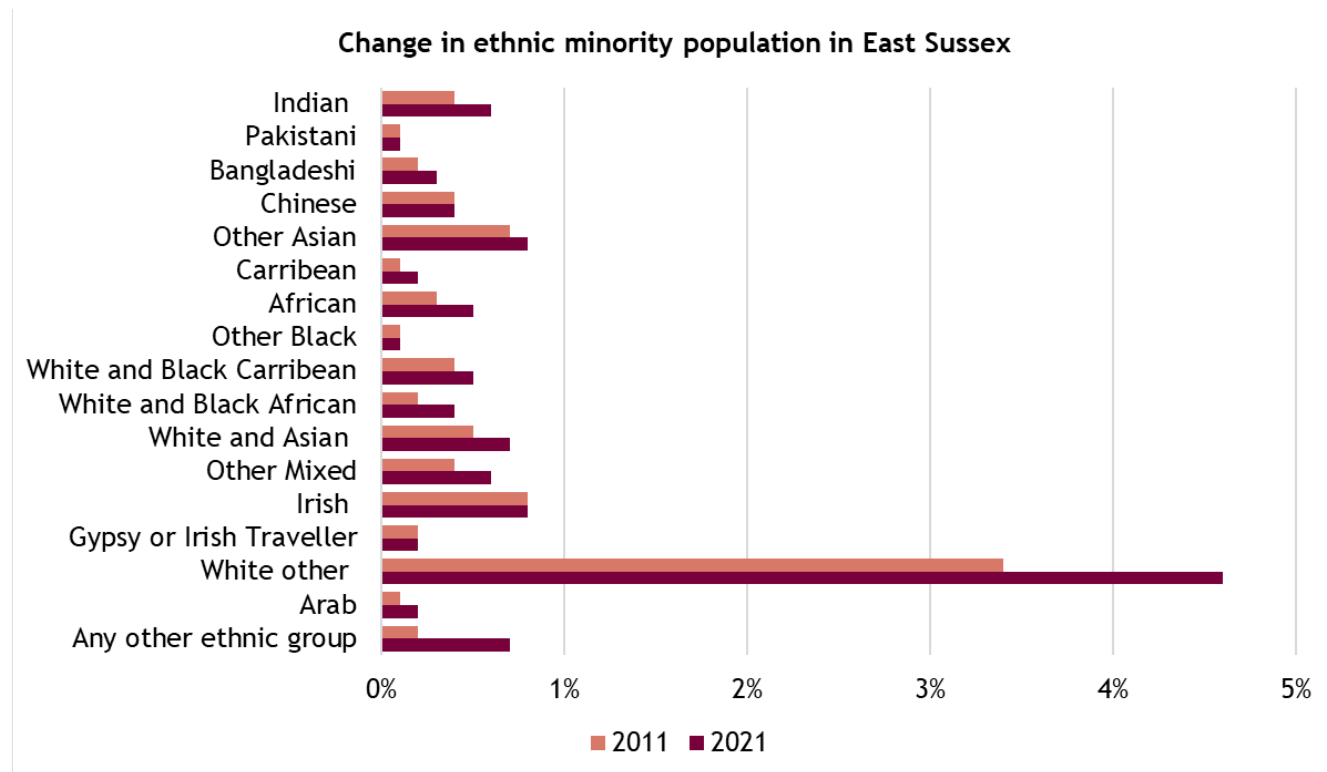
Ethnicity

The latest ethnicity data for the county is from the 2021 Census. 88.3% of the county's population identified as White: British and Northern Irish, compared to the regional average of 78.8% and the national average of 73.5%. A higher percentage of the population in East Sussex identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller than the national average (0.2% compared to 0.1%).



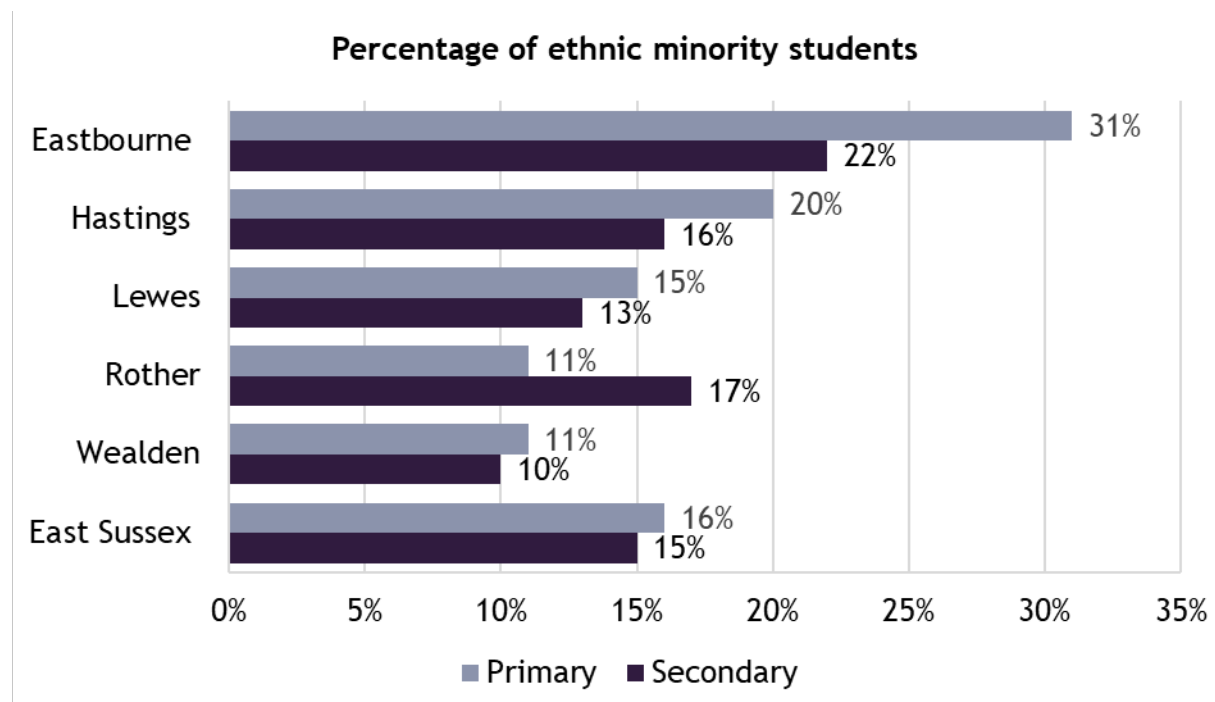
Source: Census 2021

Overall, the percentage of the population in East Sussex in each ethnic minority group has either stayed the same or increased between 2011 and 2021.



Source: Census 2021

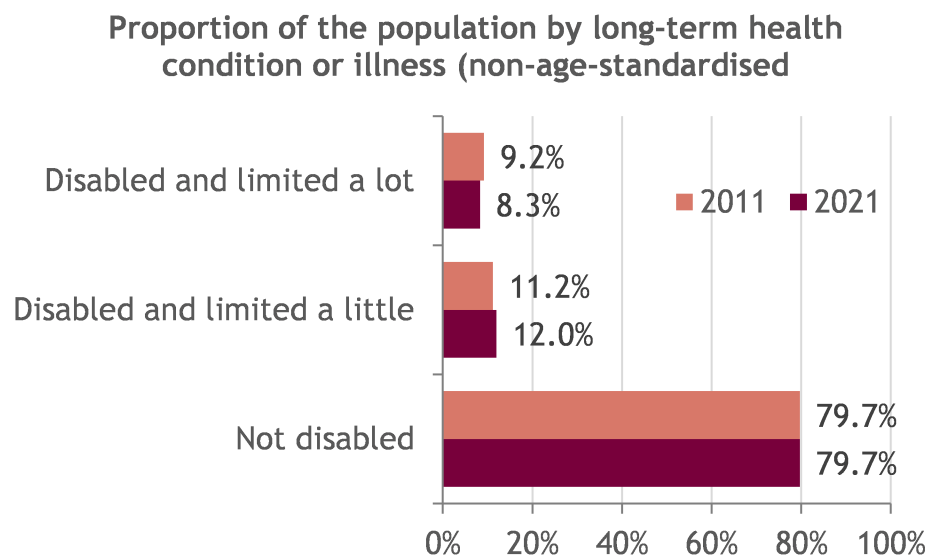
A higher percentage of pupils (15%) are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to the adult population. Overall, Eastbourne has the highest percentage of students from ethnic minority backgrounds in the county for both primary (31%) and secondary (22%) schools.



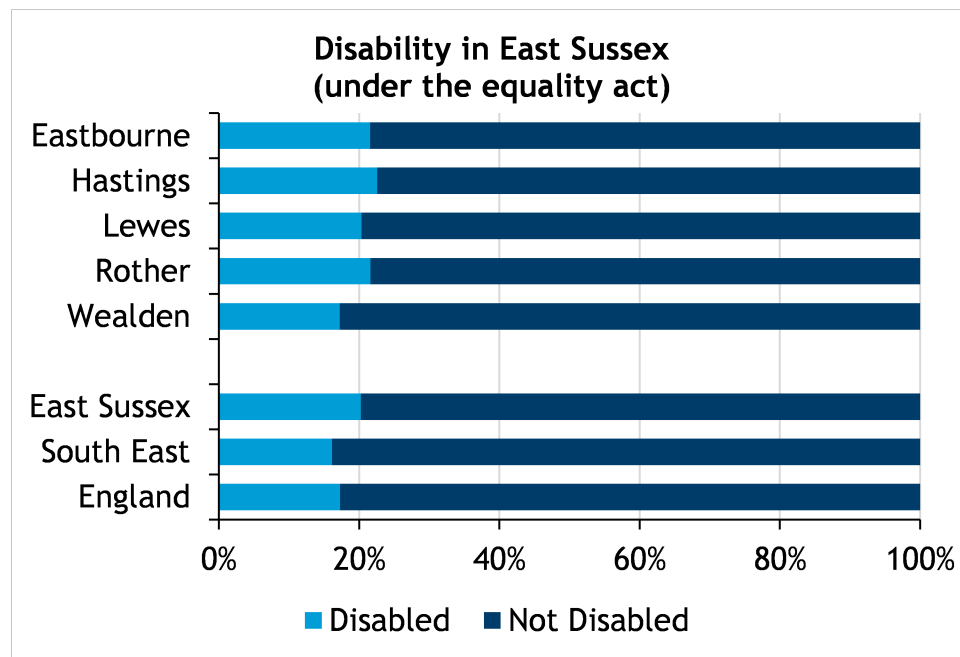
Source: ESCC Schools Census January 2023

Disability

In the 2021 Census, the proportion of the East Sussex population that identified as disabled was 20.3% (110,550). This is the same as the proportion that identified as disabled in the 2011 Census (20.3%, 107,150).

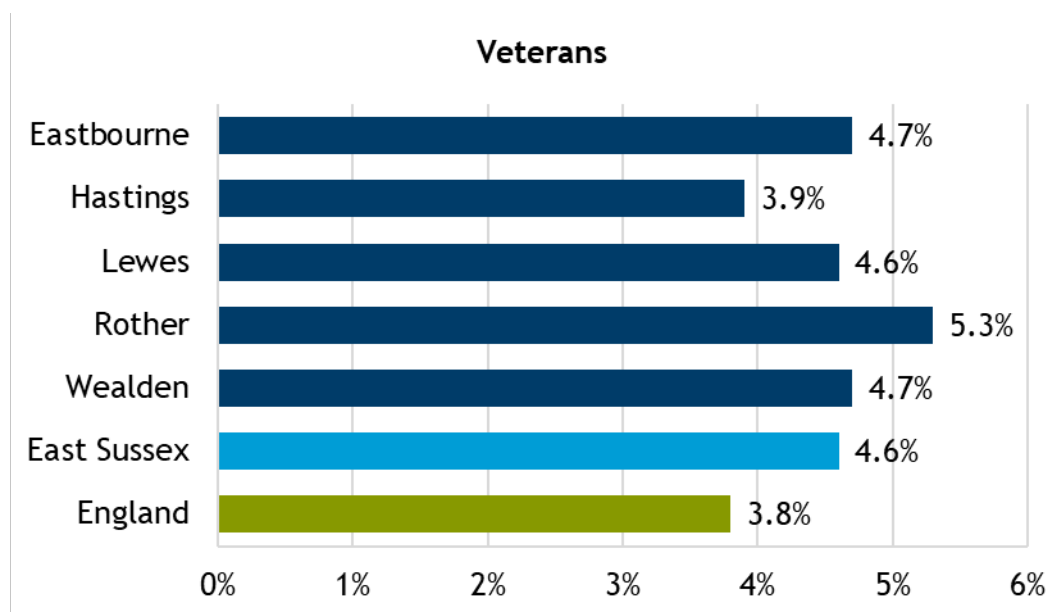


The percentage of people identifying themselves as disabled varied slightly across the district and boroughs, but rates across the county were higher than the South East average.



Veterans

2021 Census data shows that 4.6% of the population in East Sussex were Veterans, compared to the national average of 3.8%. This equates to 21,200 Veterans living in East Sussex.



Pregnancy and maternity

The ONS births data provides an indication of the number of women in East Sussex who may be pregnant or on maternity.

Pregnancy and maternity	East Sussex	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden
Live births - 2022	4,519	838	909	769	631	1,372
Births per 1,000 females - 2022	15.4	15.4	19.2	13.7	13.7	15.4

Source: Office for National Statistics

Population change

The latest ONS population estimates suggest that the East Sussex population increased by 0.7% between 2021 and 2022, lower than the increase in England at 1.0% and the South East at 0.9%. Over this period the population grew fastest in Wealden, up 1.4%, and declined slightly in Hastings, down 0.4%. Wealden has seen the fastest population growth over the past 10 years, with an increase of 8.2%, while Hastings has seen the slowest rate of growth, with only a 0.1% increase.

Based on the information currently available we estimate that around 558,400 people live in the county in 2024. We expect that to increase to around 580,300 people in 2028, an increase of 3.9%.

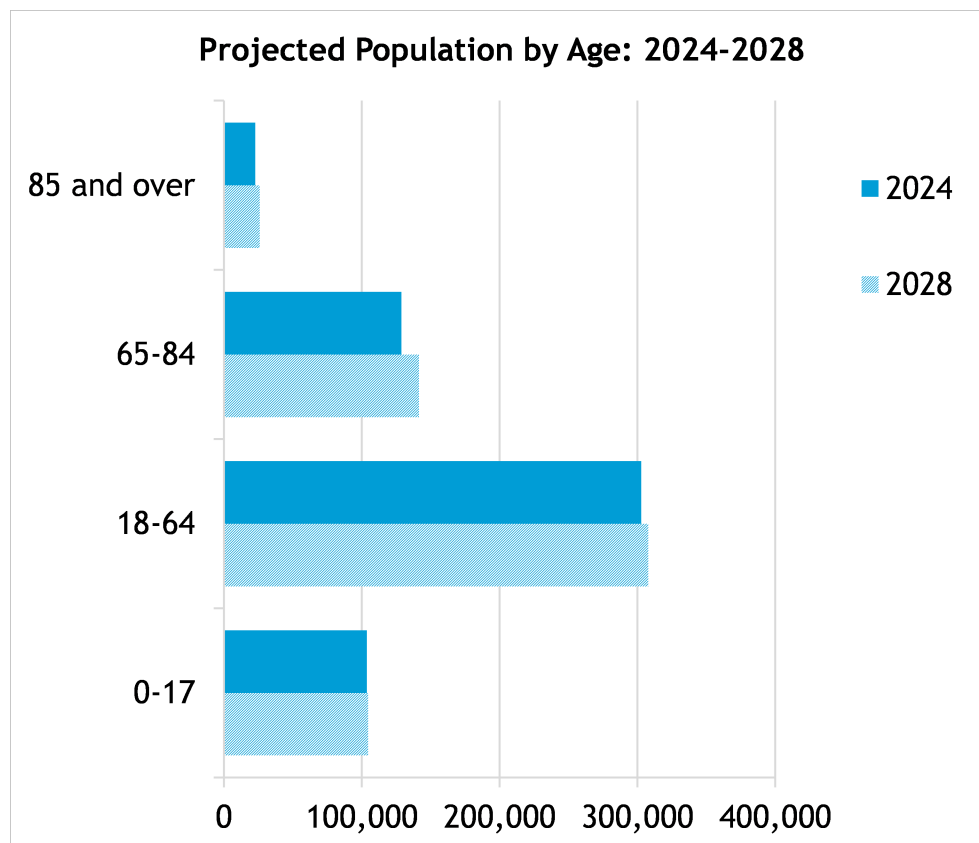
We expect the increase in population to be driven by people moving into the county from elsewhere in the UK. Many of the people who choose to come to East Sussex are older adults, as a result the over 65 age group is growing faster than younger age groups. In 2028 we expect that just over half of our population will be aged 18-64 (53%), with over a quarter (29%) aged 65 and over.

Between 2024 and 2028 we are expecting that there will be around 19,200 births in the county and around 26,500 deaths. This reflects the fact that we have a larger population of older adults in East Sussex. Over the same period, we are expecting around 141,600 people to move into the county, offset by around 112,500 people moving out of the county.

Overall, these changes mean that compared to 2024, we estimate that by 2028 there will be:

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- An increase of 0.9% (930 people) in the number of children and young people.
- An increase of 1.6% (4,960 people) in the working age population.
- 9.9% more people aged 65-84 (12,760 people).
- 14.2% more people aged 85+ (3,230 people).



Note: These dwelling-led population projections (sometimes known as policy-based projections) are constrained to reflect the number of extra dwellings being planned for future years by local authorities in East Sussex. They are also based on the latest 2022 data on population estimates and migration released by ONS in November 2023, which included rebased population estimates for the period 2012-2021, which take into account the results of the 2021 Census. These rebased mid-year estimates show that the population in 2020 was more than 14,000 lower than had been estimated by the ONS previously.

Projected Population in 2028

Age Range	East Sussex	England
0-17	18.1%	19.6%
18-64	53.1%	60.6%
65-84	24.4%	17.1%
85+	4.5%	2.7%

Population Change: 2024-2028

Age Range	2024	2028	Actual change
0-17	103,850	104,780	930
18-64	302,970	307,930	4,960
65-84	128,760	141,520	12,760
85+	22,800	26,030	3,230
All people	558,390	580,260	21,870

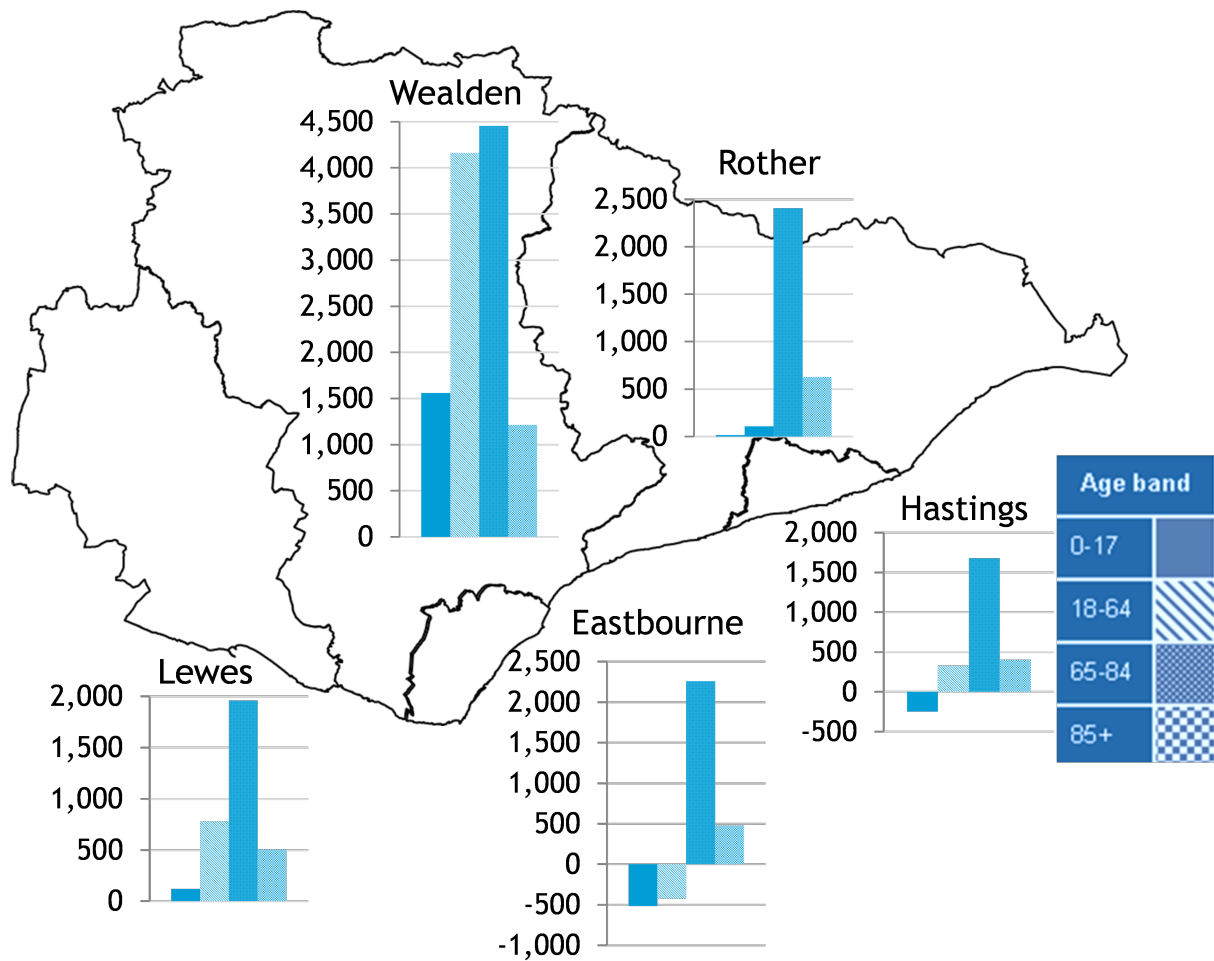
Source: ESCC data, ESCC interim population projections (dwelling led) January 2024. National Data, ONS trend-based projections, from 2021. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10 and therefore may not sum.

District population change

We expect that how our population changes will be different in different parts of the county. By 2028 our projections suggest:

- An increase of 19% (1,200) more people aged 85+ in Wealden; the smallest increase will be in Eastbourne, 11% (500).
- 11% (4,500) more people aged 65-84 in Wealden, 10% (2,300) more people in Eastbourne, and 8% (2,000) more in Lewes.
- Only Wealden is projected to see a significant increase of 5% (4,200) in the working age population (18-64).
- Eastbourne (down 0.7%, 400 people) is projected to see a fall in the working age population over this period.

District population change 2024 - 2028



Source: ESCC data, ESCC interim population projections (dwelling led) January 2024.

Children and young people

Early Years

East Sussex received 1,612 applications for a funded place for eligible 2-year-olds in the spring 2024 funding period. Of these, 306 children were not eligible to receive funding. 80% (1,045) of the remaining 1,306 eligible children have accessed a place with an early years provider, compared to the England average of 74% (Source: ESCC Children's Services).

Attainment

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In early years, children in East Sussex achieve above the national averages for Good Level of Development which is the expected standard for: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy and mathematics.

In 2023 the percentage point gap between children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development and their peers was -20.5, which is just above the England average gap for this cohort of -19.9.

Key Stage 2 Attainment

The percentage of pupils working at the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined at Key Stage 2 is 56%, which is below the England average of 60%.

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils working at the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined at Key Stage 2 is 39%, which is below the England average of 44%.

Key Stage 4: Progress 8

Progress 8 is a measure of students' progress across the Attainment 8 subjects from the end of primary school (Key Stage 2) to the end of secondary school (Key Stage 4). Scores for East Sussex are -0.19 which is below the England average of -

0.03.

Key Stage 4: Attainment 8

Attainment 8 is the students' average achievement across eight subjects: English, mathematics, three English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (from sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages), and three further subjects, from the range of EBacc subjects, or any other GCSE or approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualifications. Overall pupils in East Sussex, including disadvantaged pupils, achieved 43.6%, lower than the England average of 46.4%. Disadvantaged pupils achieved 30.3%, lower than the England average of 35.1%.

Attendance

The pandemic had a significant adverse impact on school attendance, both nationally and locally. The proportion of children persistently absent from school, defined as missing more than 10% of sessions, has doubled. In May 2022, the Government published attendance guidance to clarify responsibilities for local authorities, schools, parents and carers. This outlines the expectation that all councils should strengthen their oversight of attendance through regular individual dialogue with all schools, and provide whole family early help support, free of any charge, to schools and all families of children whose attendance is less than 50%. This guidance will become statutory in August 2024.

Absence for academic year 2022-2023 (Source Department for Education):

School type	Persistent Absence (%)	Overall Absence (%)
East Sussex Primary Schools	16.5	6.1
East Sussex Secondary Schools	30.0	10.4
East Sussex Special Schools	39.9	14.4
East Sussex schools overall	23.1	8.2
England National Primary Schools	16.2	5.9
England National Secondary Schools	26.5	9.0

East Sussex has high levels of suspension and exclusion, and these are rising further in line with national trends. School leaders are experiencing increased levels and complexity of need in their school populations and the demand for support services remains high.

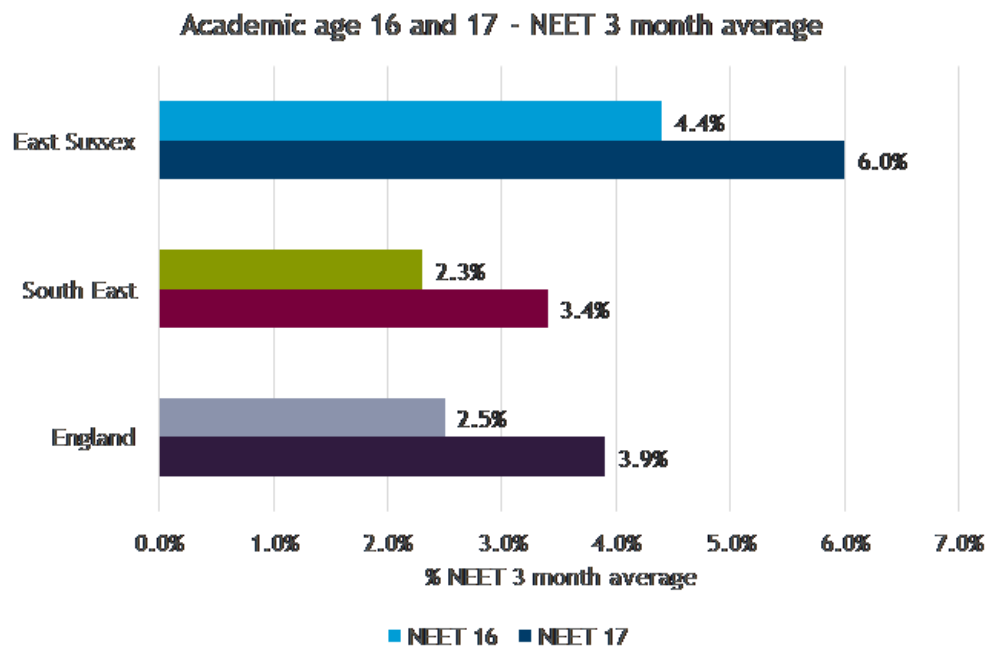
School type	Permanent exclusions	Fixed term exclusions
East Sussex Primary Schools 2022/23	0.08%	1.81%
England National Primary Schools 2021/22	0.02%	1.42%
East Sussex Secondary Schools 2022/23	0.34%	31.58%
England National Secondary Schools 2021/22	0.16%	13.96%

Source: Children's Services Department and Department for Education

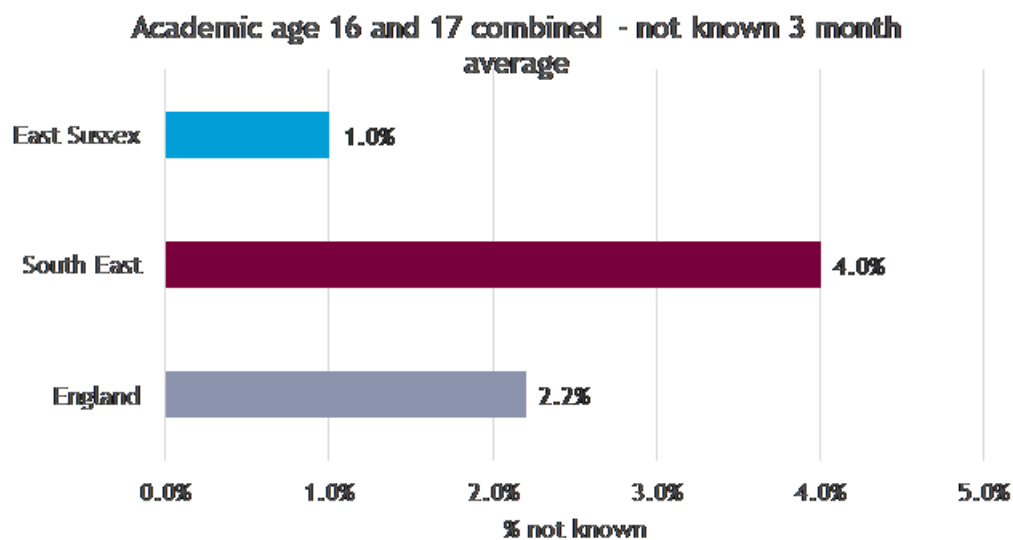
Young people in education, employment and training

At the end of 2023/24 95.6% of 16 years old and 94% of 17 year olds were participating in some form of education, training or employment - this includes those in employment without DfE regulated training or part-time/temporary employment. Local Authority comparisons data indicate East Sussex is slightly above the south east and national averages. There are concerns about the impact for young people of the national Traineeship programme ceasing in summer 2023, as well as European Social Fund not in education, training or employment (NEET) provision.

While the figures for the percentages of young people aged 16 and 17 who are known to be NEET are higher than the regional and national averages these need to be considered alongside the figures for young people whose activities were not known. We have a smaller percentage of young people whose activities were not known and it is likely that a significant proportion of the people across the South East and nationally whose activities were not known were actually NEET.



Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

School places

Although our overall population of under 18s is expected to increase slightly over the period 2024 - 2027, the highest rate of growth is expected in those aged 16 - 17, with an expected fall in numbers of children aged 4 - 10. During the period

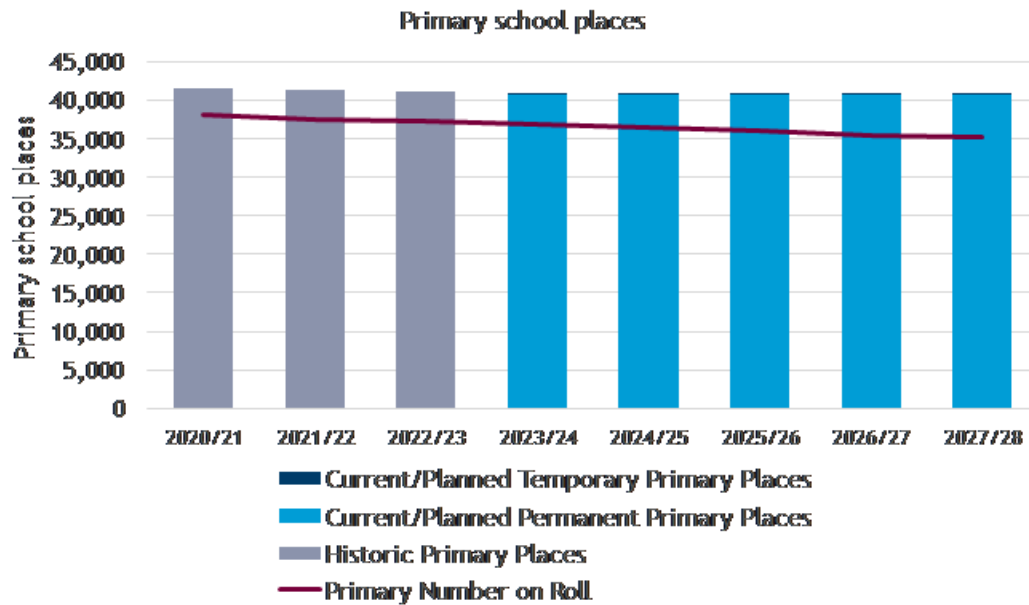
2028 - 2032 numbers of children aged 11-15 and 16-17 are expected to fall, but the total number of children aged 0-17 are expected to increase slightly.

Age/year	2024	2027	% change 2024-2027	2028	2032	% change 2028-2032
0-3	19,650	20,150	2.5%	20,180	20,840	3.3%
4-10	39,190	38,870	-0.8%	38,770	39,390	1.6%
11-15	31,180	31,390	0.7%	31,160	30,600	-1.8%
16-17	12,280	12,870	4.8%	13,190	12,890	-2.3%

Source: ESCC data, ESCC interim population projections (dwelling led) January 2024, numbers rounded to 10. Note: Care should be taken when using the projected population figures above. Due to ONS revised mid-year population estimates not currently being available these are interim projections based on dwelling-led population projections.

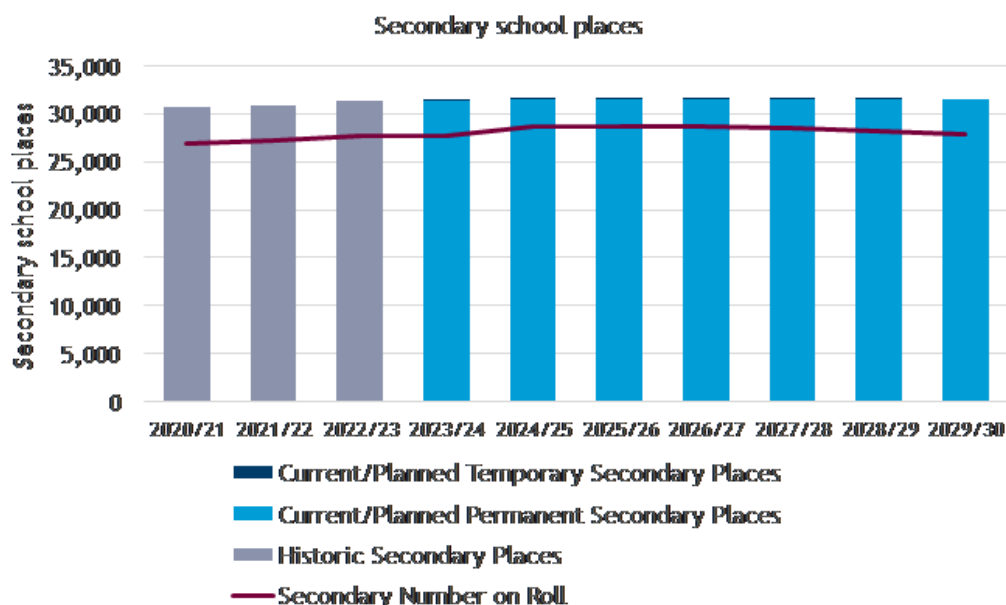
The total number of pupils in primary schools peaked in 2018/19 and are now in decline. As a result, some of the temporary additional capacity in schools that was created to accommodate the peak is being removed. This, together with the closures of Holy Cross CE Primary School on 31 December 2023 and St Pancras Catholic Primary School on 31 August 2024, will lead to a net reduction in capacity of 405 places between the start of the 2023/24 academic year and the start of the 2024/25 academic year.

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Source: Pupil Forecasts, July 2023, and Pupil Model, March 2024

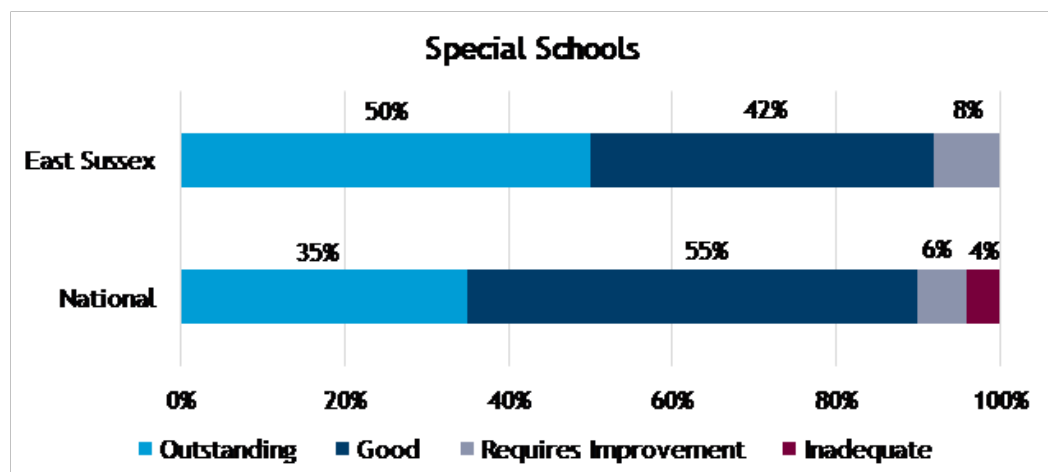
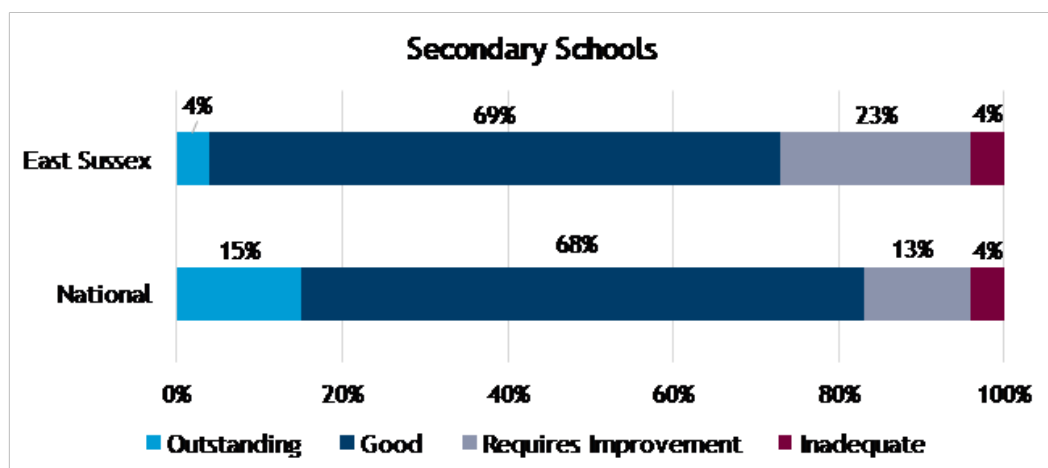
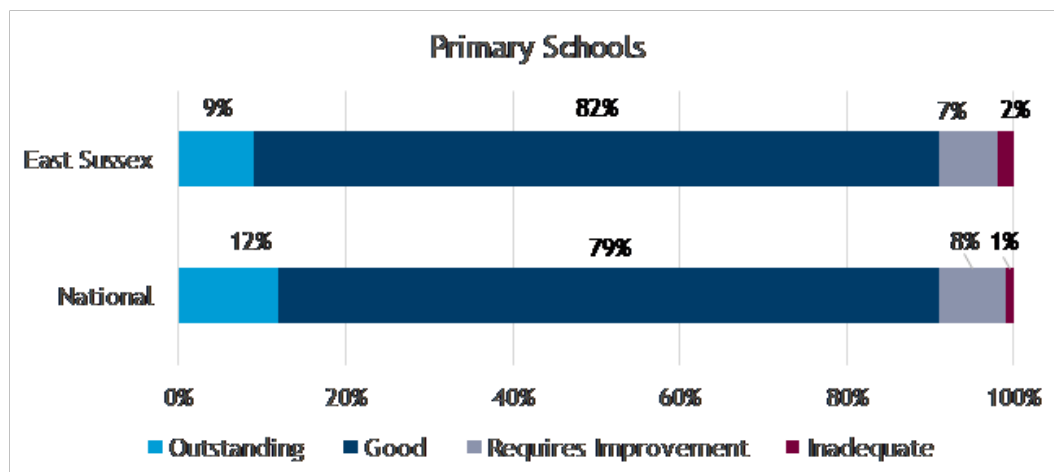
Secondary pupil numbers have been rising and are expected to peak around 2024/25. 105 additional permanent places and 30 additional temporary places will be added between 2023/24 and 2025/26 to meet forecast demand in local areas.



Source: Pupil Forecasts, July 2023, and Pupil Model, March 2024

State funded schools, percentage overall effectiveness Ofsted 2022

The majority of schools in East Sussex are outstanding or good as assessed by Ofsted.

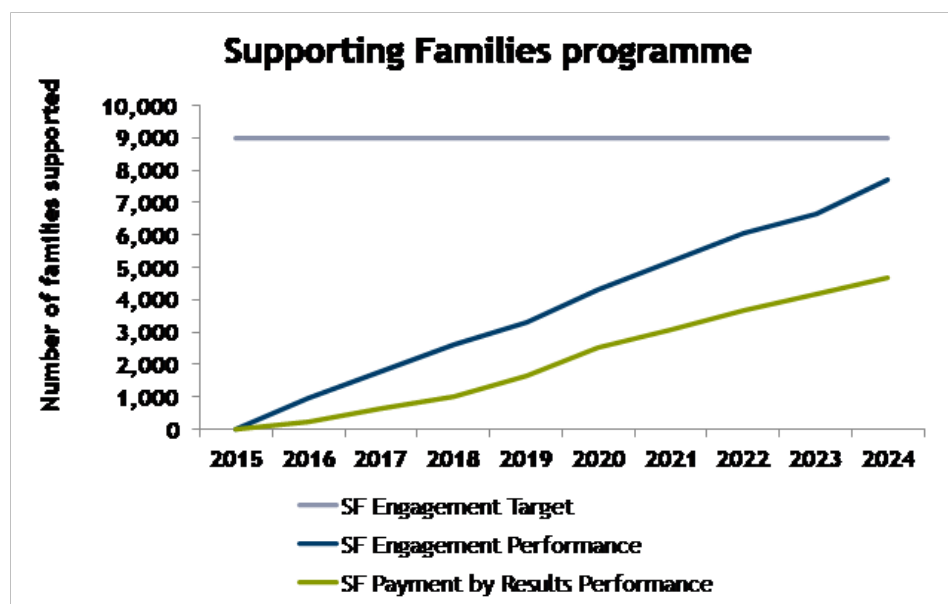


Supporting Families

Our Supporting Families programme supports vulnerable families who are facing multiple challenges to achieve better outcomes. The key outcomes for the programme are:

- Getting a good education.
- Good early years development.
- Improved mental and physical health.
- Promoting recovery and reducing harm from substance use.
- Improved family relationships.
- Children safe from abuse and exploitation.
- Crime prevention and tackling crime.
- Safe from domestic abuse.
- Secure housing.
- Financial stability.

We receive payment from Government for each family that we help to achieve significant and sustained progress across each of the outcomes where they need support. By the end of 2023/24, 8,251 families had received or were receiving support and 4,849 had achieved Payment by Results outcomes.

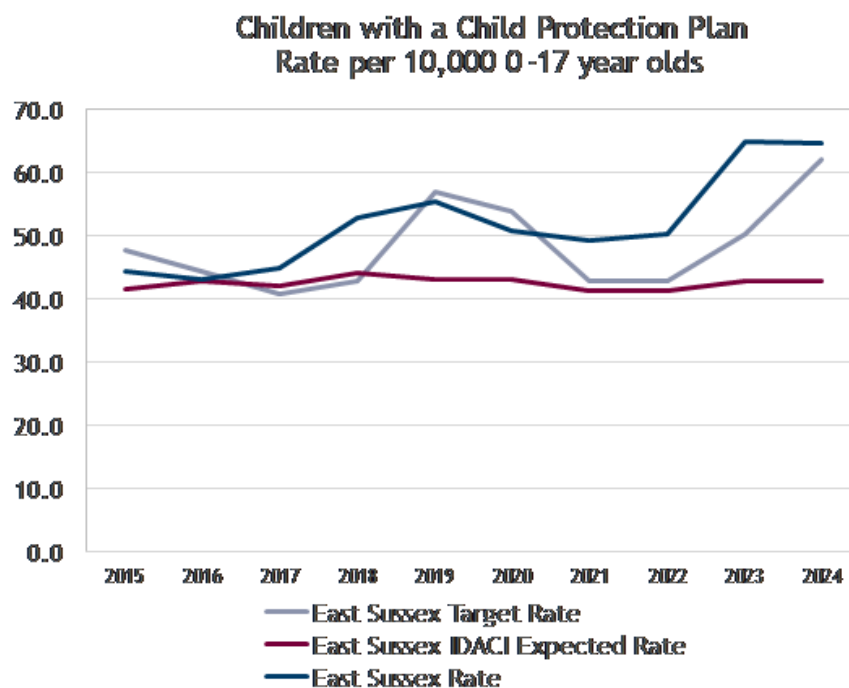


Source: ESCC Children's Services

Child Protection (CP) Plans

At the end of March 2024, the number of CP plans was 688, a rate of 64.6 per 10,000 children aged 0-17. This is significantly above the expected rate benchmarked for child deprivation using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI).

This reflects the significantly higher levels of demand and complexity seen over the past four years due to the pandemic, the impact of cost-of-living pressures and an increase in child and adult mental health concerns. We have a continued emphasis on enabling children to live safely at home where possible, resulting in relatively lower rates of looked after children.

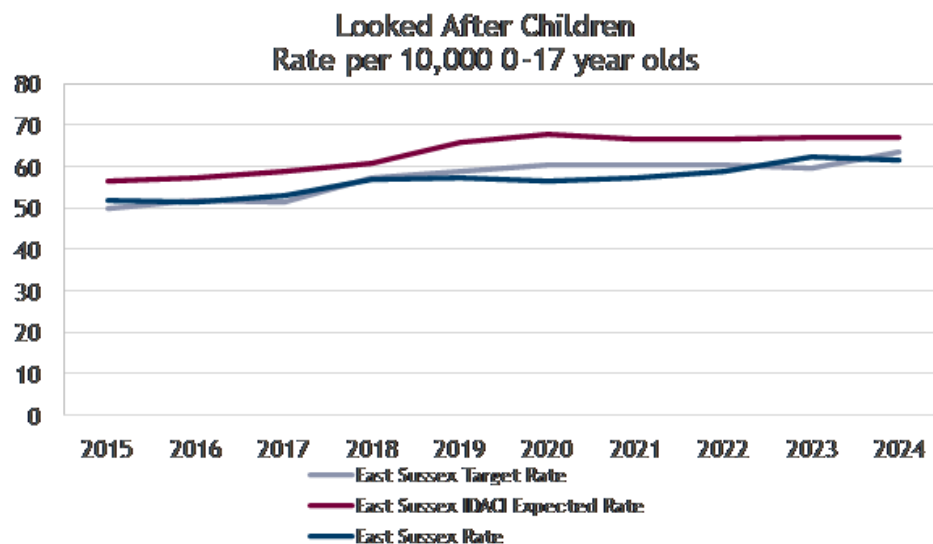


Source: ESCC Children's Services

Looked After Children

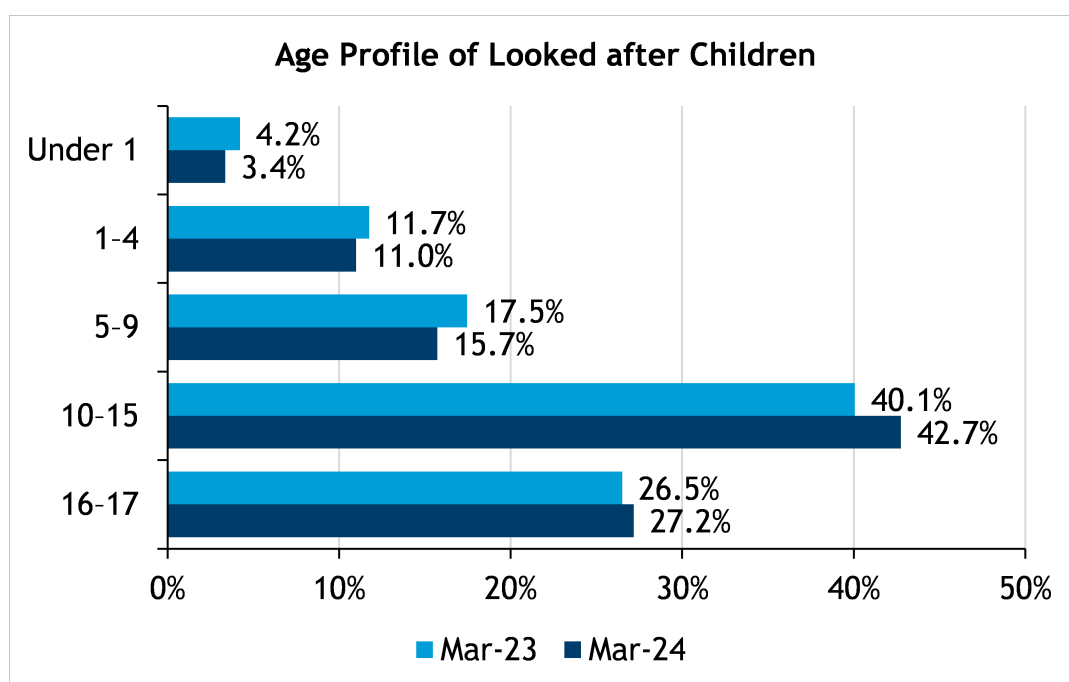
At the end of March 2024, the number of Looked After Children was 655, a rate of 61.5 per 10,000 children. Of the 655 children, 74 were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC), this group represented 23% of our new entrants to care in 2023-24. The rate of Looked After Children is below the expected rate

benchmarked for child deprivation using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) but remains higher than the average rate across those of our statistical neighbours who have been rated as Good and Outstanding (57.3 per 10,000 in 2023).



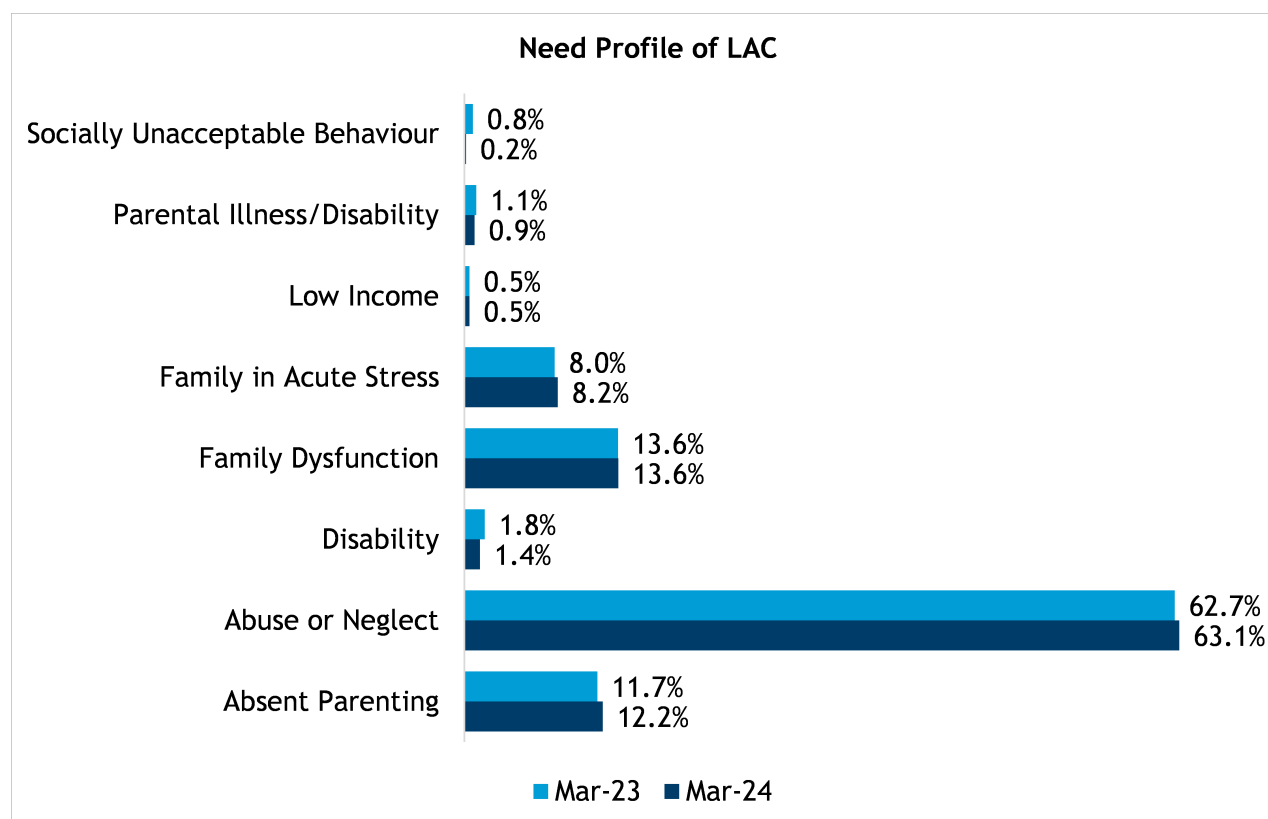
Source: ESCC Children's Services

The age profile of Looked after Children has increased between March 2023 and March 2024, with a higher percentage of children aged 10 and over.



Source: ESCC Children's Services

The 4 categories, Families in Acute Stress, Family Dysfunction, Abuse and Neglect and Absent Parenting accounted for over 97% of Looked after Children in March 2024. The percentage of all Looked After Children in these groups has increased between March 2023 and March 2024. The number of children in the remaining groups is very low in comparison.



Source: ESCC Children's Services

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

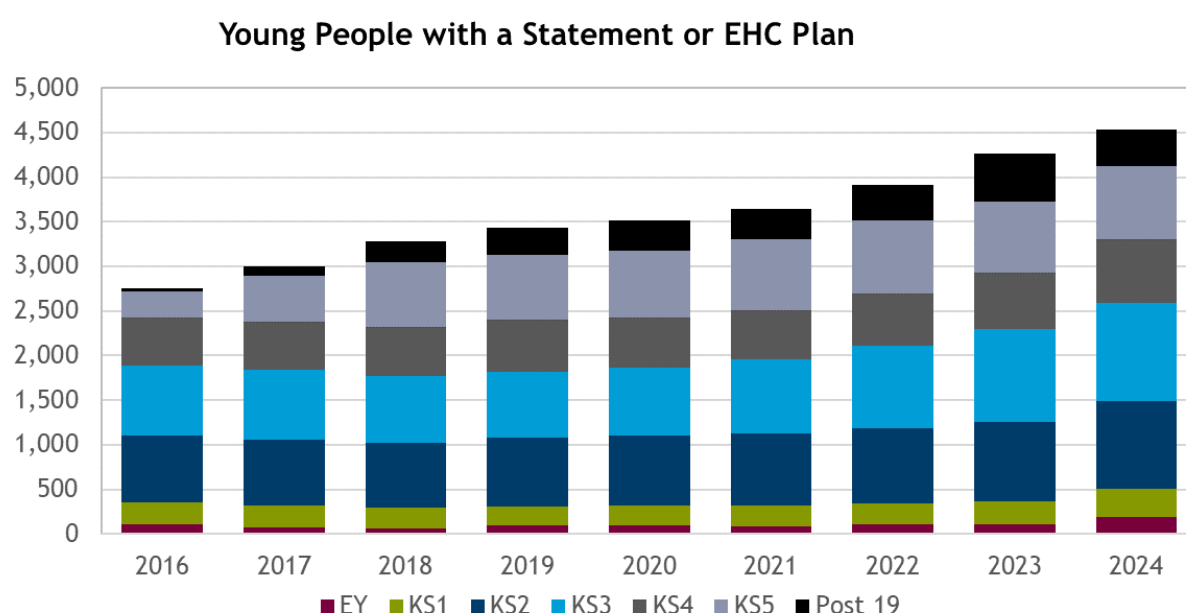
In line with the national picture, East Sussex continues to see significant increases in demands for statutory assessments and specialist provision for children and young people with SEND.

Over 40% of all children and young people aged 0-25 with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in East Sussex are placed in special schools which is over seven percentage points higher than the England average. 64.3% of all new EHCPs were

placed in mainstream schools, compared to 72.1% nationally. Council funded high-cost placements at Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools have increased significantly since 2015 and account for 9.8% of all EHCPs - greater than the England average of 6.1%.

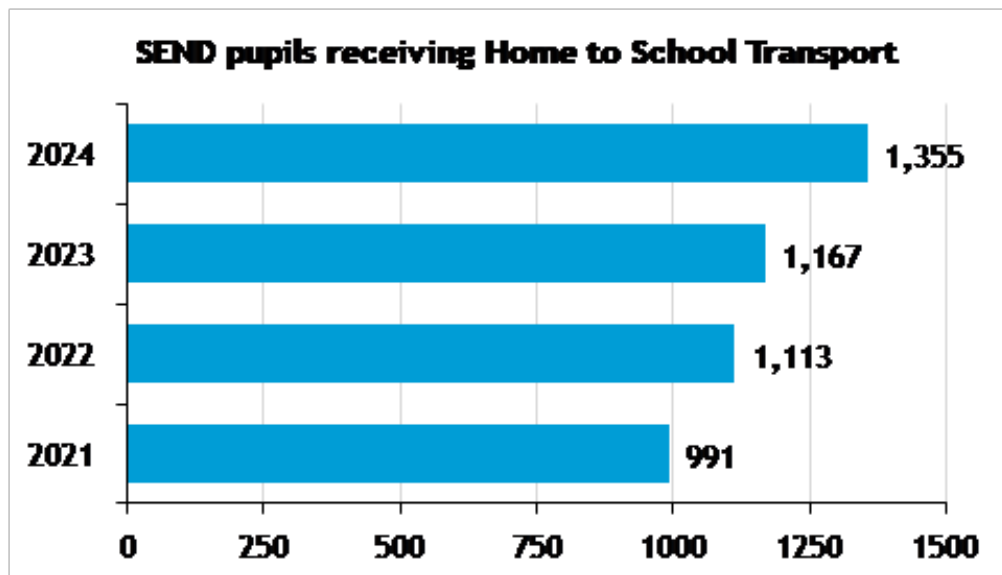
EHCPs of SEND maintained by the Council increased by 68% from 2014 (2,690) to 2024 (4,529). Most of the increase since 2015 has been in the Key Stage 5 and Post 19 groups; this is predominantly due to young people retaining EHCPs Post-16.

The number of school-aged pupils with an EHCP is forecast to rise in East Sussex by 24.2% over the next three years, having increased by 25.7% in the last three years.



Source: ESCC Children's Services

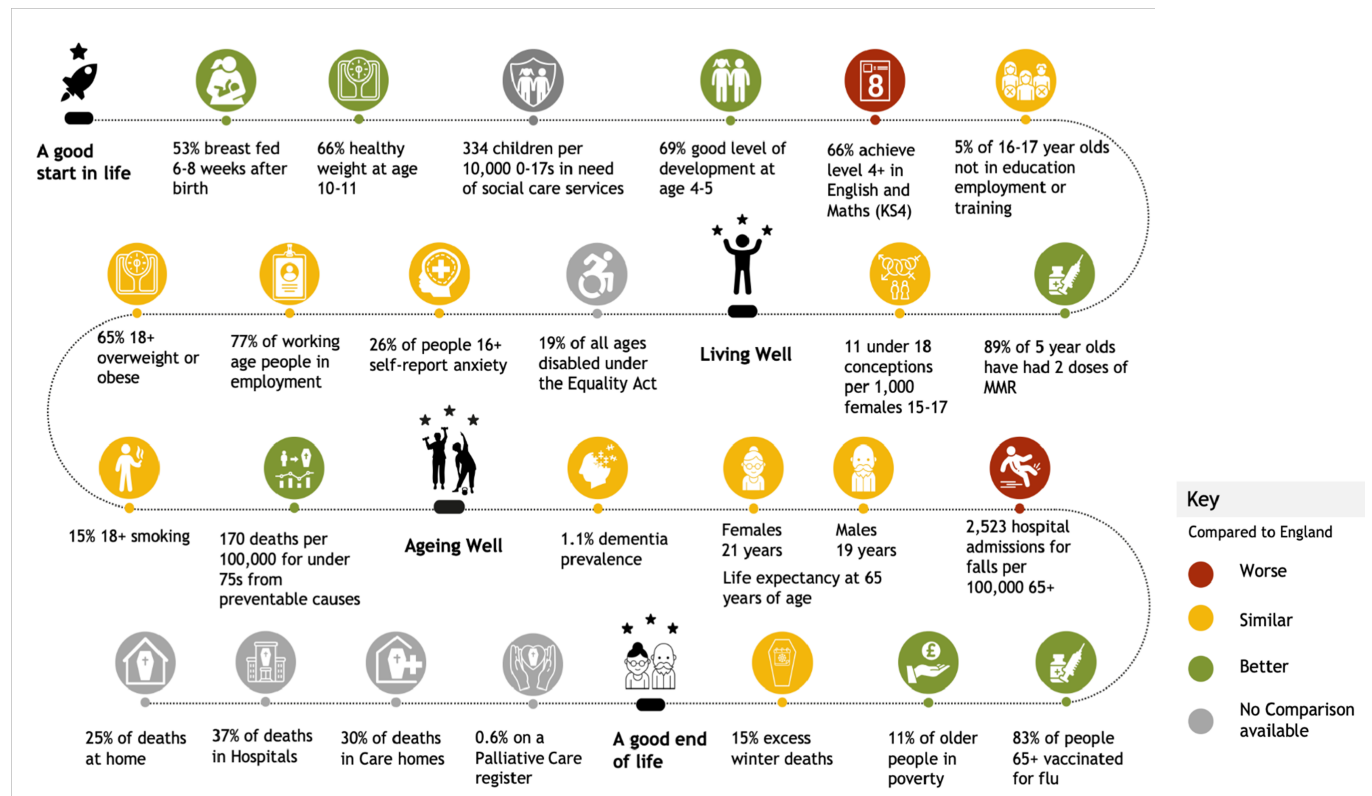
There have been increases in the number of pupils receiving Home to School Transport since 2021. These increases have been particularly acute with regards to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) with a 36.7% increase in the number of children requiring transport. There have also been significant increases in the cost of providing transport due to inflationary pressures on fuel and staff. The increased number of SEND pupils receiving Home to School Transport and the inflationary pressures has led to a 75% increase in costs of transporting SEND children since 2021.



Source: ESCC Communities Economy and Transport Department

Health and wellbeing

Life course summary

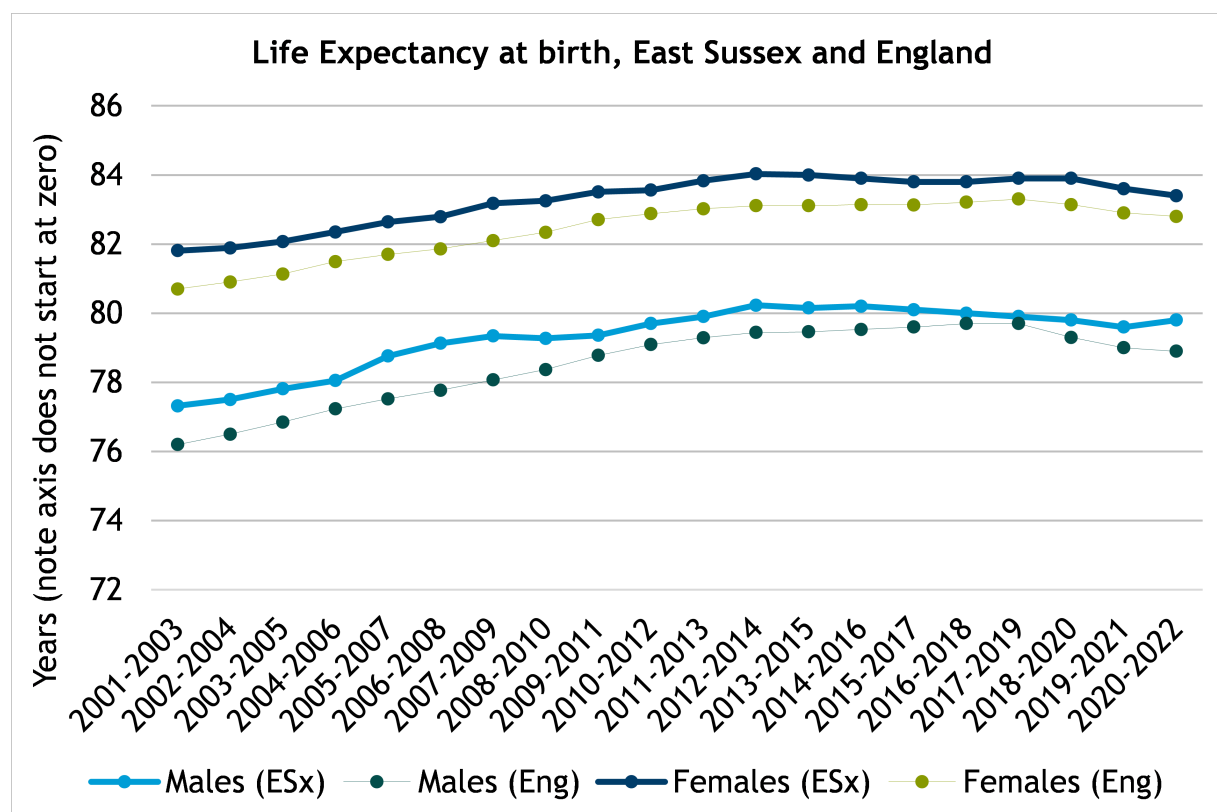


Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health department

This chart shows a timeline for the population of East Sussex, from having a good start in life, through living well and ageing well, to a good end of life. This is called a life course approach. It shows the protective factors and risk factors that can influence a person's physical and mental health and well-being throughout their life. There are many indicators that can be measured, but this chart selects a few key ones to paint a picture of the East Sussex population. Each indicator is compared to England where possible. For most indicators in East Sussex where comparison is possible the results are similar to or better than England overall. There are two indicators where the County is significantly worse, educational achievement in English and Maths at GCSE, and admissions to hospital for falls amongst older people.

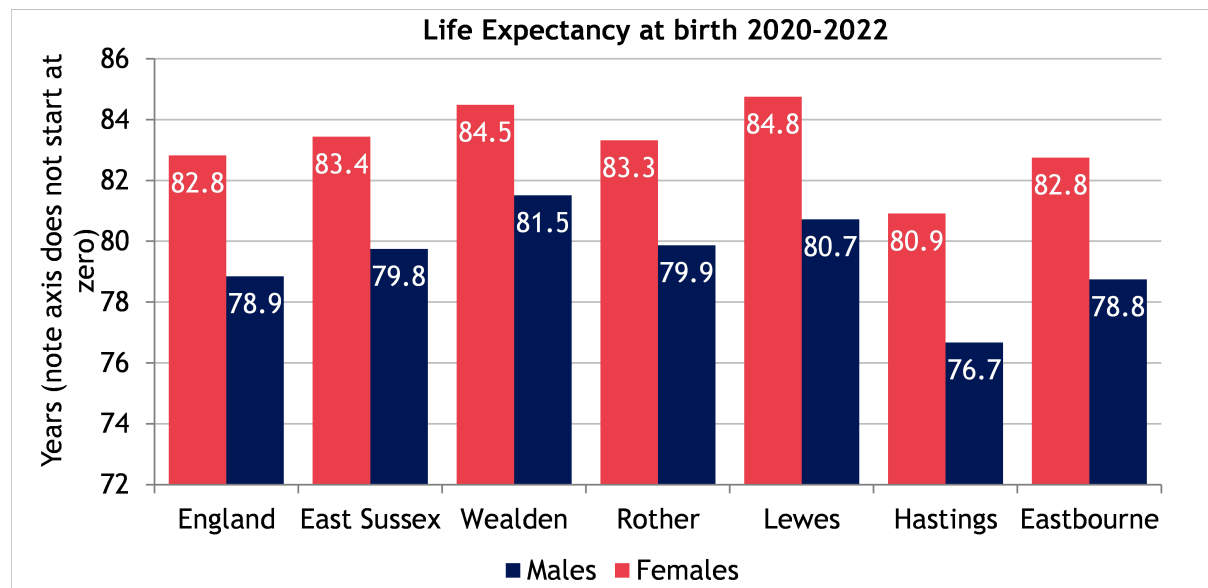
Life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy at birth is an estimate of the average number of years that a person born can expect to live. East Sussex has consistently had a higher life expectancy for both men and women than the national average. Life expectancy has generally increased gradually since the early 2000s, however it has plateaued, or begun to reduce, in recent years.



Source: Office for National Statistics Life expectancy at birth and selected older ages

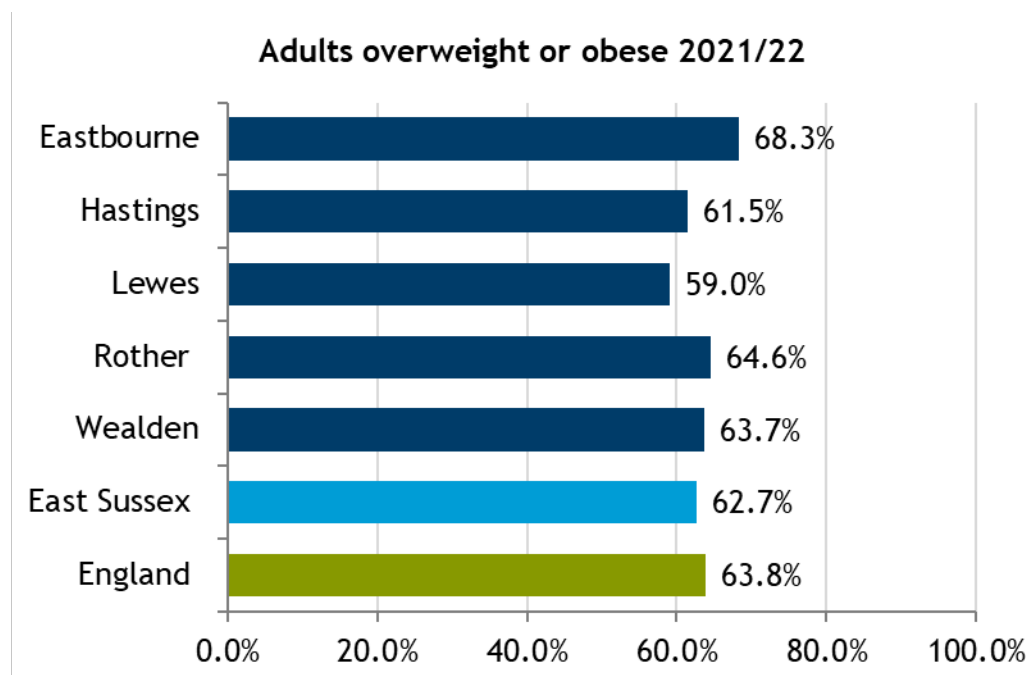
Wealden has the highest levels of life expectancy at birth for men in the county, the highest levels for women are in Lewes. The lowest levels are in Hastings. Countywide life expectancy levels are higher at birth for both men and women than nationally.



Source: Office for National Statistics

Excess Weight

Overall, the percentage of adults in East Sussex who were overweight or obese in 2021/22 was lower than the national average, however the picture varied across the county.

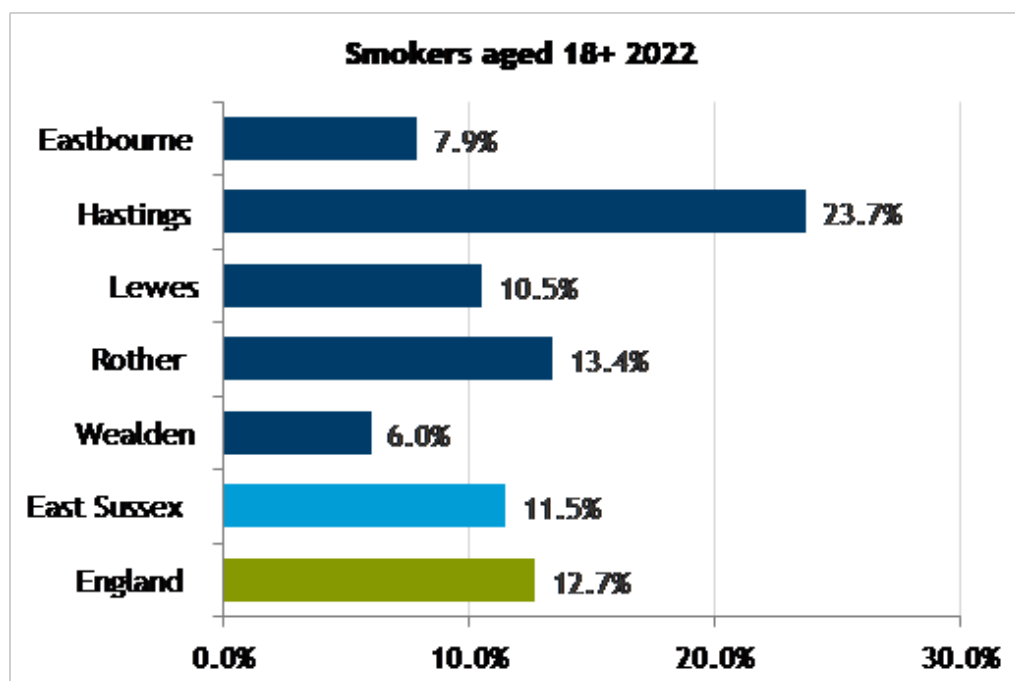


Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Eastbourne had the highest percentage of adults overweight or obese in East Sussex in 2021/22, at 68%. The lowest percentage in the county was for Lewes, at 59%.

Prevalence of Smokers

Hastings has the highest proportion of people aged 18 or over who smoke in East Sussex at almost 24% in 2022. The lowest prevalence is in Wealden with 6%.

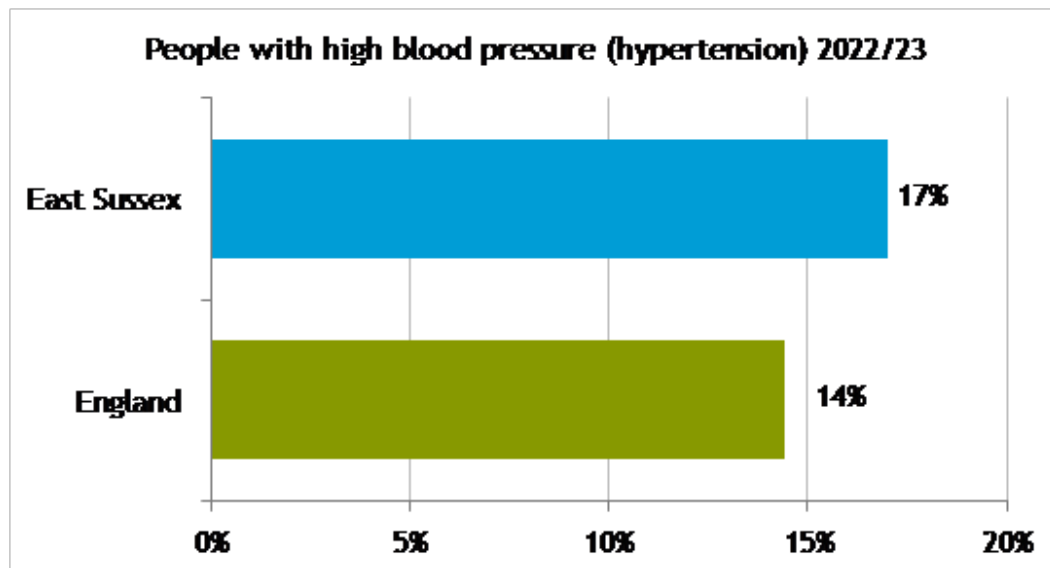


Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Prevalence of Hypertension

East Sussex has a higher prevalence of diagnosed high blood pressure (17%) compared to the national average for England (14%). Persistent high blood pressure can increase the risk of developing a number of serious and potentially life-threatening health conditions such as heart disease, heart attacks, strokes and

arterial disease.



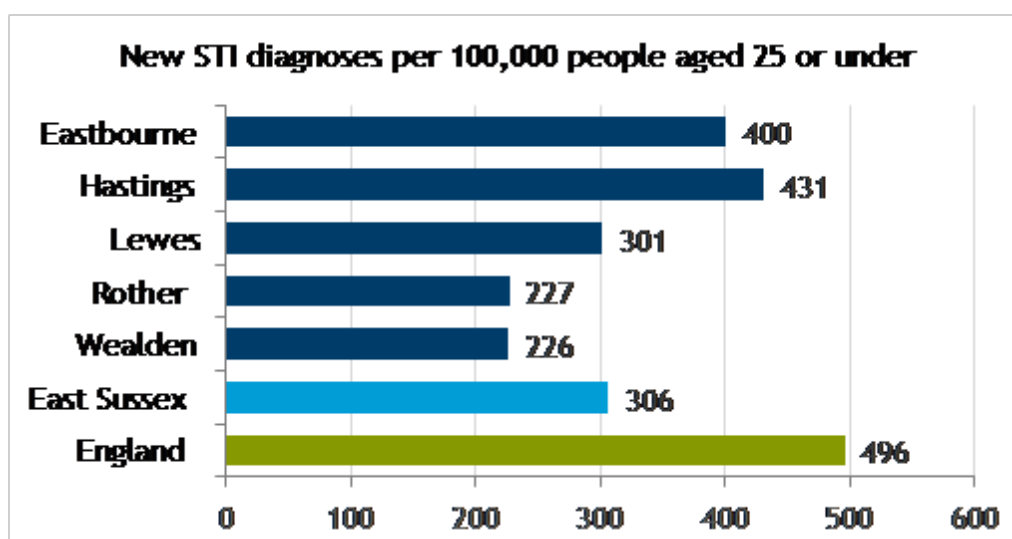
Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Physical Activity

Over 70% of people in East Sussex did 150 or more minutes of physical activity per week in 2021/22. Almost 20% did less than 30 minutes per week with the remaining 10% falling in between these categories (source: Public Health Outcomes Framework).

Sexual Health

East Sussex has fewer new Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) diagnoses per 100,000 population compared to England. Within the county rates are lower than for England in all areas.



Note: This data does not include diagnoses of Chlamydia and only represents people aged 25 or younger. Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Mental health

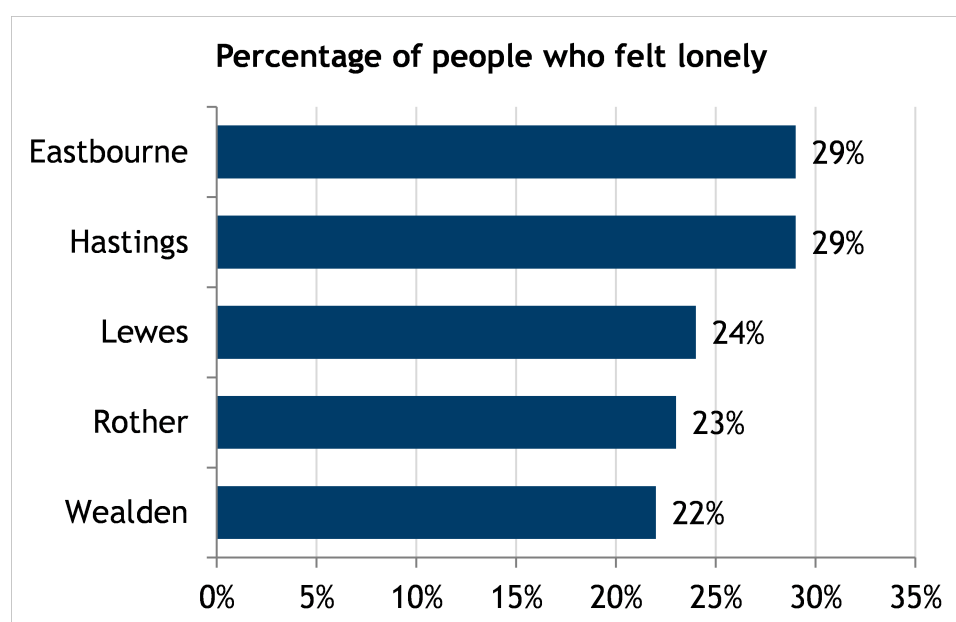
It is estimated that 1 in 6 people will have a mental health condition at any one time. Latest survey figures show a higher percentage of adults in East Sussex reported low happiness, high anxiety and low satisfaction with life compared to the national average.

Indicator (persons aged 16+ years) 2022/23	East Sussex	England
Self-reported low satisfaction with life	7.5%	5.6%
Self-reported low worthwhile score	3.5%	4.4%
Self-reported low happiness score	13.0%	8.9%
Self-reported high anxiety score	24.1%	23.3%

Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Loneliness

In East Sussex, 25% respondents reported feeling lonely often (5%) or some of the time (20%), with feelings of loneliness not changing markedly from the 2015 (24%) and 2017 (25%) East Sussex Community Surveys.



Note: Percentages are derived by combining the number of people who answered as feeling lonely often and some of the time. Source: East Sussex Community Survey 2019

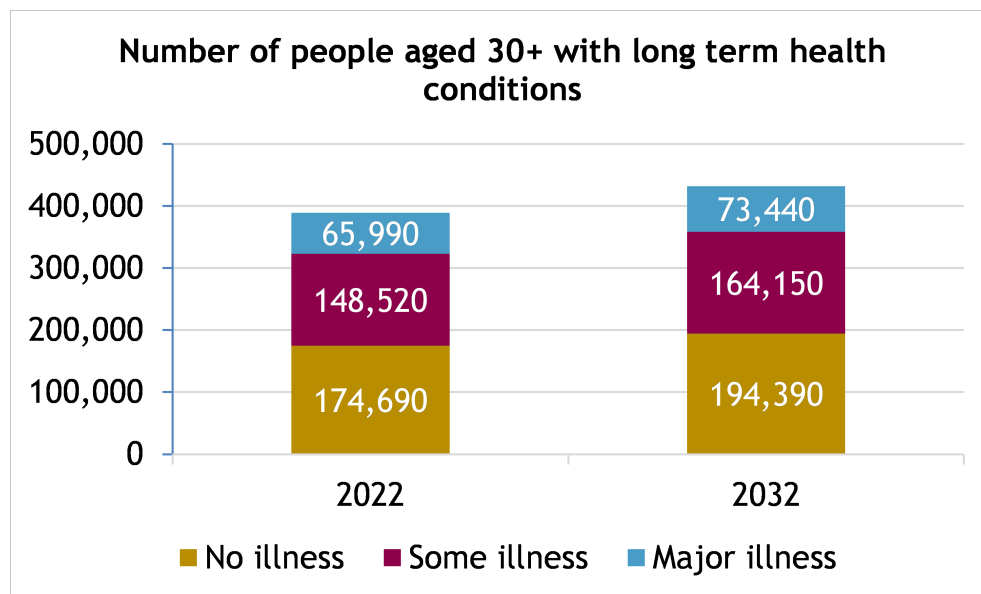
Data from the 2019 survey shows that feelings of loneliness are more prevalent among groups who are more likely to spend more time at home (e.g. due to mobility issues), workless residents (56% vs. 20% of those in work); those in poor health (55% vs. 18% of those in good health); those with a disability (44% vs. 19% of those without); single person households (38%) and single parents (47% vs. 25% overall). Other groups who are more likely to feel lonely include: social tenants (46%) and private renters (39% vs. 20% of owner occupiers); people with no qualifications (34% vs. 25% overall), and women (26% vs. 24% of men). At district and borough level, those in Hastings and Eastbourne are more likely than average to feel lonely often or some of the time (both 29% vs. 25% overall). The population in these areas are more likely to be comprised of the groups listed above. Those living in Rother and Wealden are more likely to say they hardly ever/never feel this way (77% and 78% respectively).

Multiple long term health conditions

The number of people with multiple long-term conditions (multi-morbidity) in the East Sussex population is expected to increase in line with the growth in the

general population over the next ten years. Multi-morbidity is the presence of 2 or more conditions, and therefore greatly increases the complexity and overall costs of managing care for people, families and services.

For the purposes of looking at health problems at a population level these can be classified using the Cambridge Multimorbidity Score into three groups: people with no illness, some illness and major illness.



Source: Ref Watt T, Raymond A, Rachet-Jacquet L, Head A, Kypridemos C, Kelly E, Charlesworth A. Health in 2040: projected patterns of illness in England. The Health Foundation; 2023 ([Health in 2040: projected patterns of illness in England - The Health Foundation](#)). Population figures based on East Sussex population projections 2022 rounded to the nearest 10.

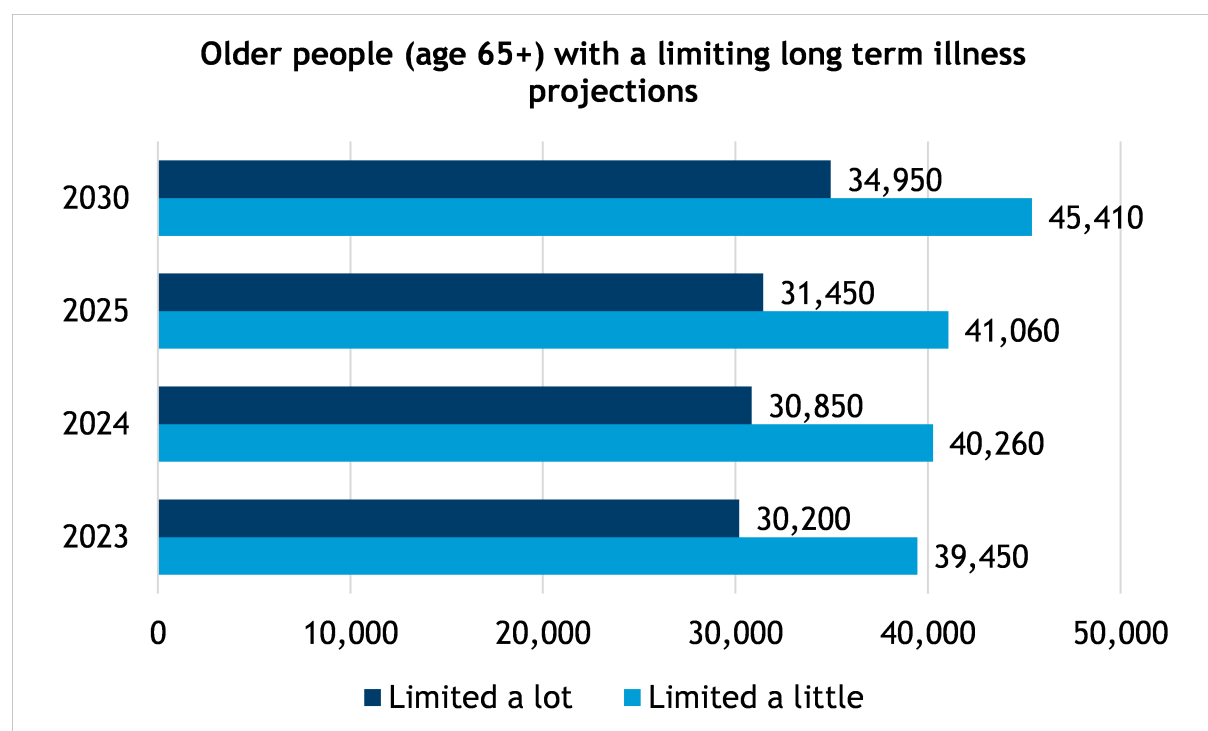
The Cambridge Multimorbidity Score (CMS) assigns a weight (score) to 20 conditions based on how the illness is likely to affect people's use of primary care and emergency health services and the likelihood of their death.

Adults

Long Term Illness

It is estimated that in 2023 there are 69,650 older people (age 65+) in East Sussex who are living with a long-term illness which limits their day-to-day activities. 39,450 of these people are ‘limited a little’ in their day-to-day activities, while the other 30,200 are ‘limited a lot’.

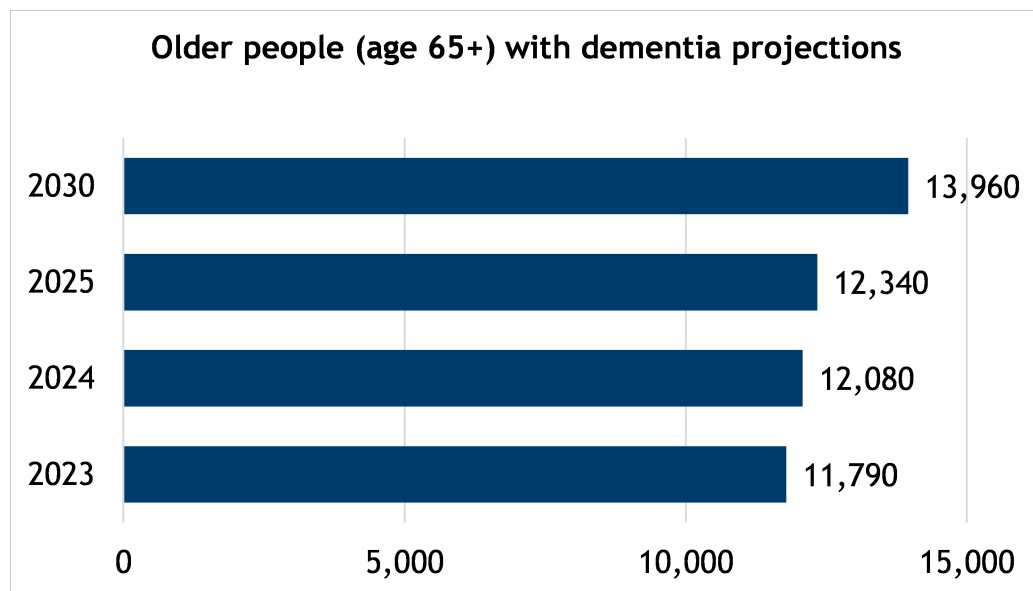
These figures are projected to rise to an estimated 80,360 older people living with a long-term illness which limits their day-to-day activities in 2030, an increase of 15.4% compared to 2023. 45,410 of these people are projected to be ‘limited a little’ (up 15.1% compared to 2023), and the other 34,950 are projected to be ‘limited a lot’ (up 15.8% compared to 2023).



Source: POPPI. Note: These figures are based on population projections produced before the latest population figures from the 2021 Census were available

Dementia Projections

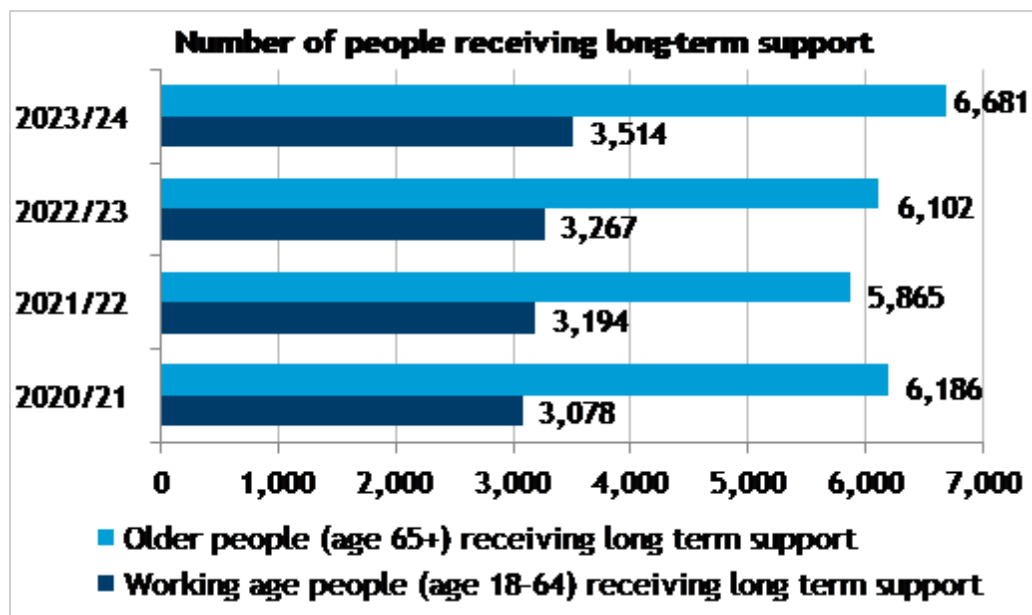
13,960 older people (age 65+) are projected to have dementia by 2030, an increase of 18.4% from 2023.



Source: POPPI. Note: These figures are based on population projections produced before the latest population figures from the 2021 Census were available.

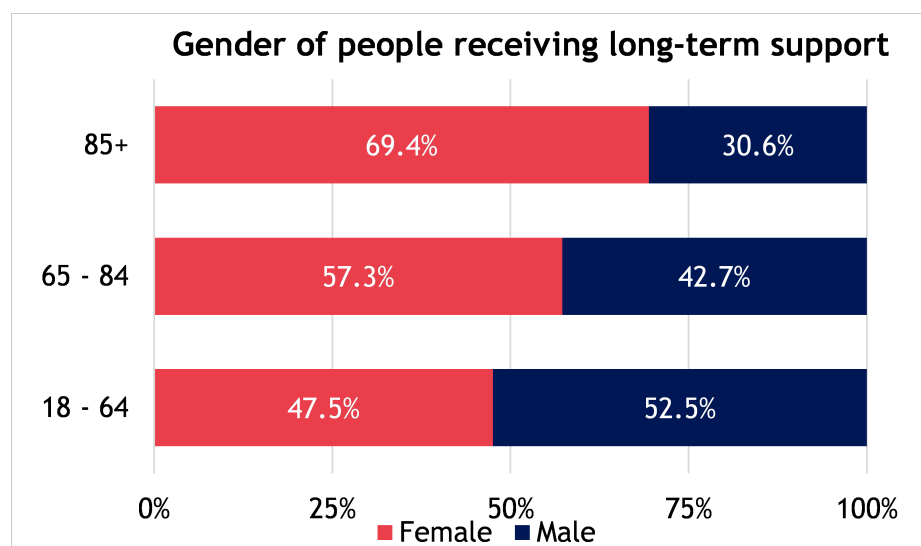
People receiving long term support

The total number of Adult Social Care clients receiving long term support increased by 8.8% in 2023/24 to 10,195. The majority of clients receiving long term support are older adults (those aged 65 and over).



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

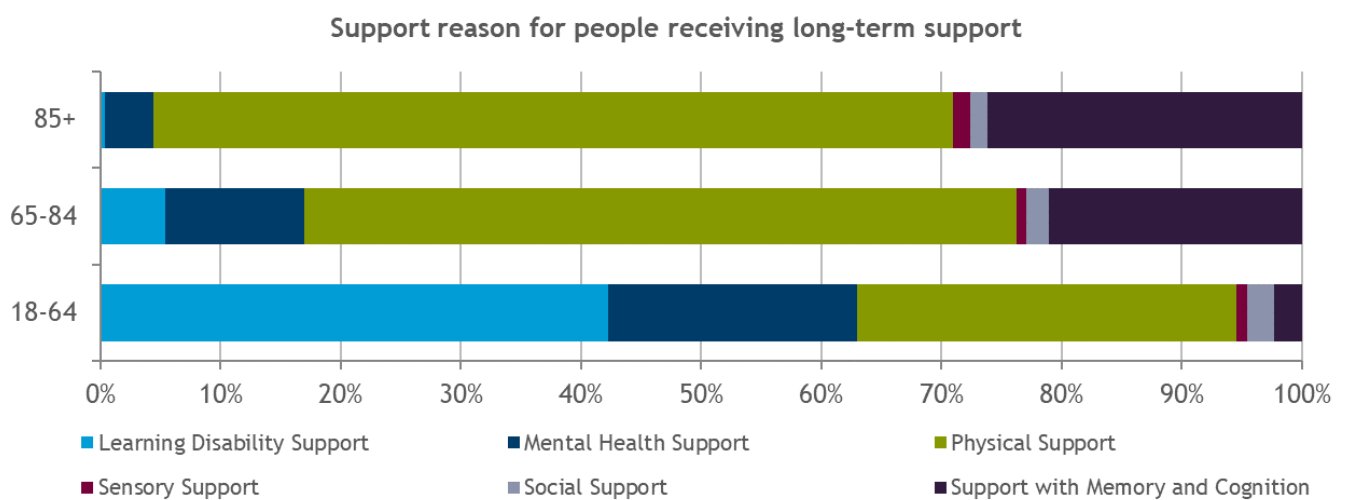
The percentage of women receiving long term support is higher than the number of men for older people, especially those above the age of 85. This reflects the fact that women on average have a longer life expectancy than men and make up a higher proportion of the population among older age groups. The percentage of men receiving long term support is slightly higher than women for the working age population.



Source: East Sussex SALT Returns

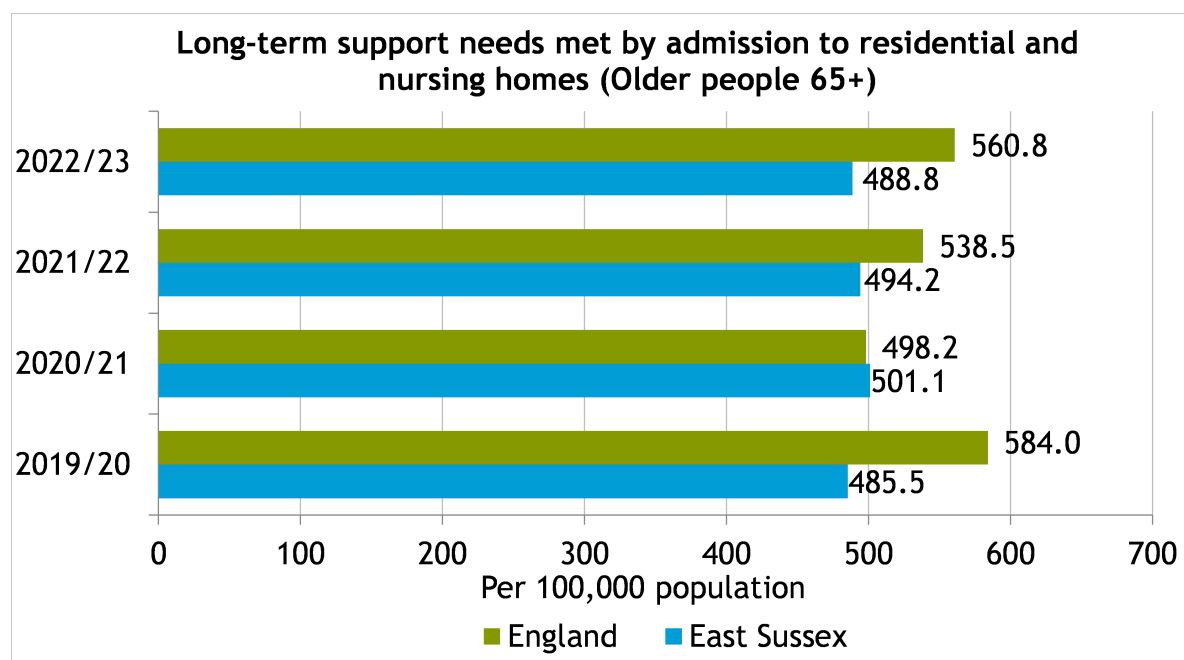
State of the County 2024: Focus on East Sussex

People receive long-term support for a variety of different needs. The percentage of people receiving long term support due to Learning Disability Support and Mental Health Support reduces as you move up the age ranges, whilst the percentage of people needing support for Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support with Memory and Cognition increases.



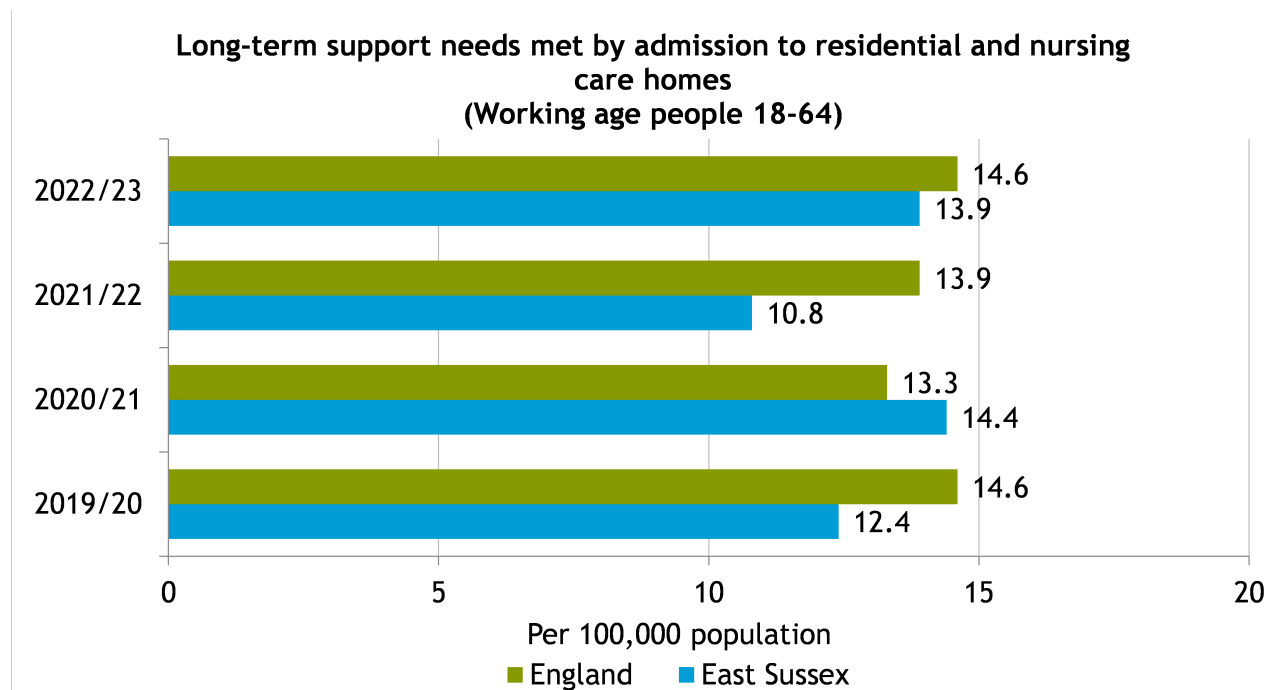
Source: East Sussex SALT Return

Permanent admissions of older people aged 65 and over to residential and nursing homes per 100,000 population aged 65 and over slightly decreased in East Sussex in 2022/23.



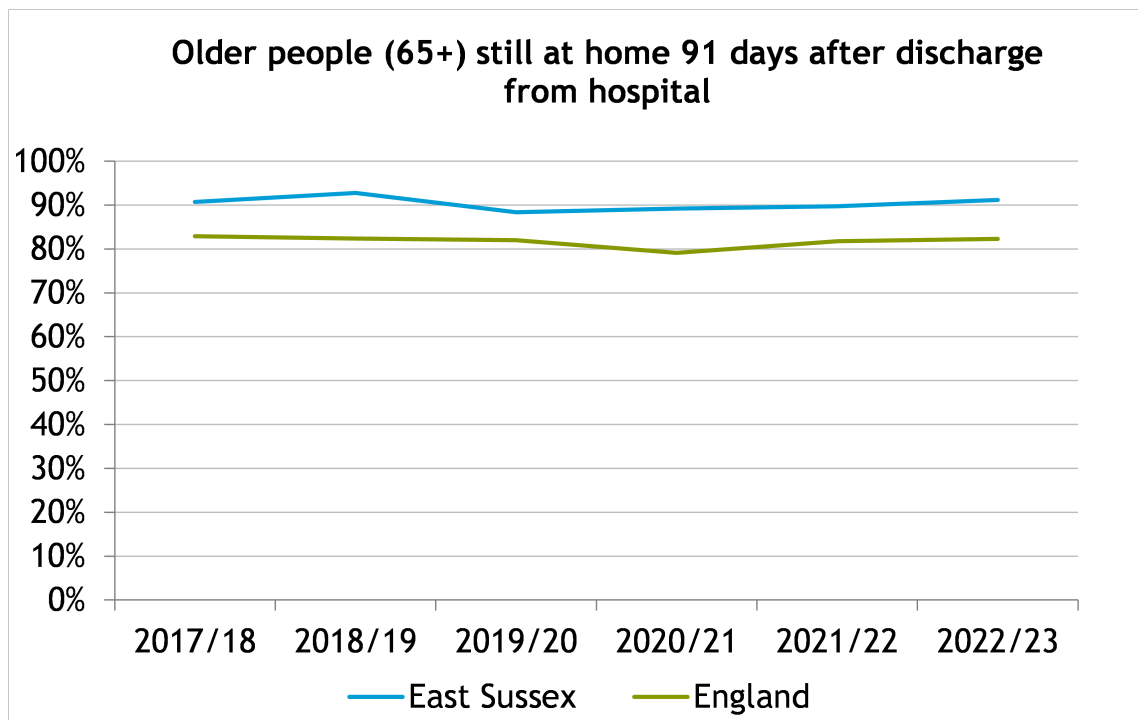
Source: NHS Digital Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework data ASCOF 2A2

Permanent admissions of working age people (18-64) to long term residential care increased in East Sussex in 2022/23 and is now similar to the national rate.



Source: NHS Digital Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework data ASCOF 2A1

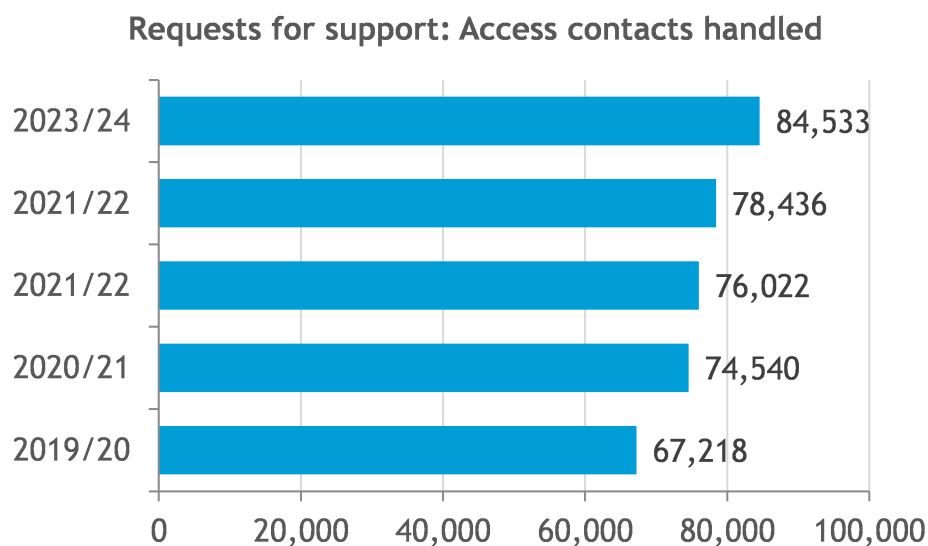
The proportion of older people (age 65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services increased in 2022/23 to 91.2% and remains significantly above the national figure of 82.3%.



Source: NHS Digital Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework ASCOF 2B1

Access contacts

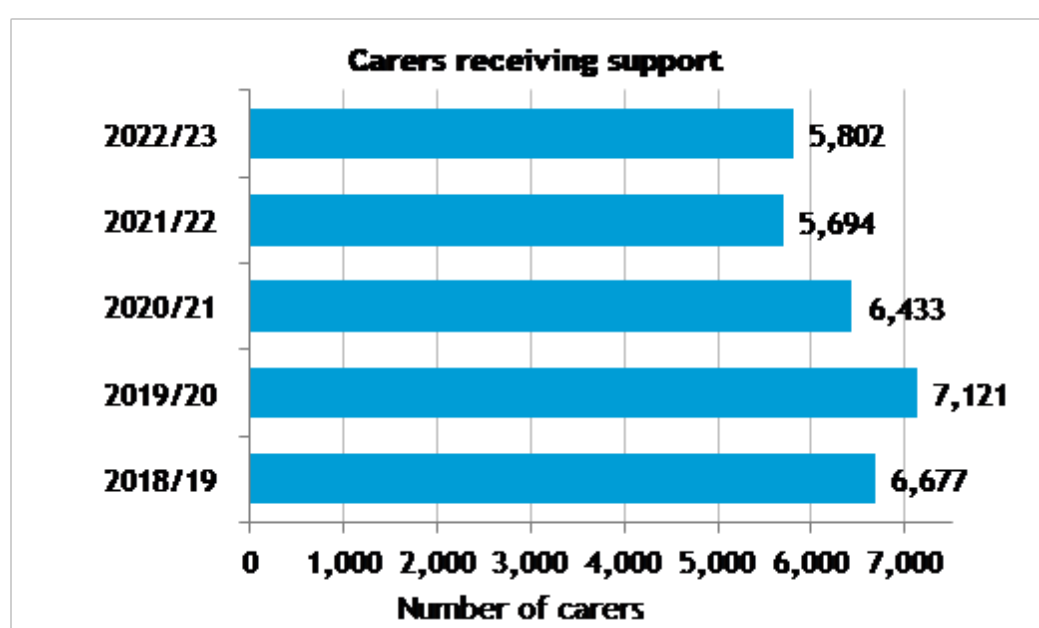
The Access team in Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC) handled 84,533 contacts in 2023/24, an increase of 6,097 (7.8%) compared to 2022/23.



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health department

Carers receiving support

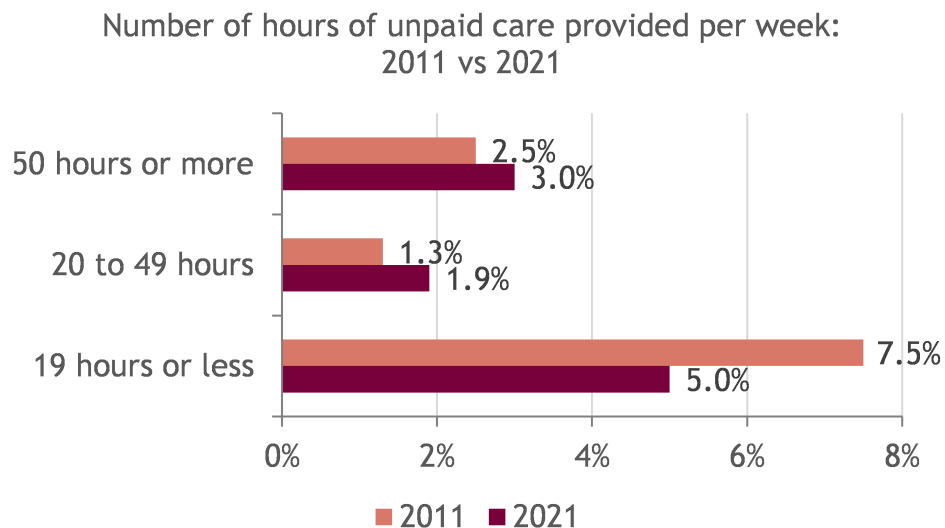
The total number of carers receiving support from Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) in East Sussex increased slightly in 2022/23, however the numbers are still well below the peak seen in 2019/20. This decrease is partly due to the impact of the pandemic, during which carers were less likely to contact Adult Social Care for help, and also due to an increase in the number of carers being supported by Care for the Carers, a partner organisation who provide support, guidance and information to carers in East Sussex.



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

Unpaid Carers

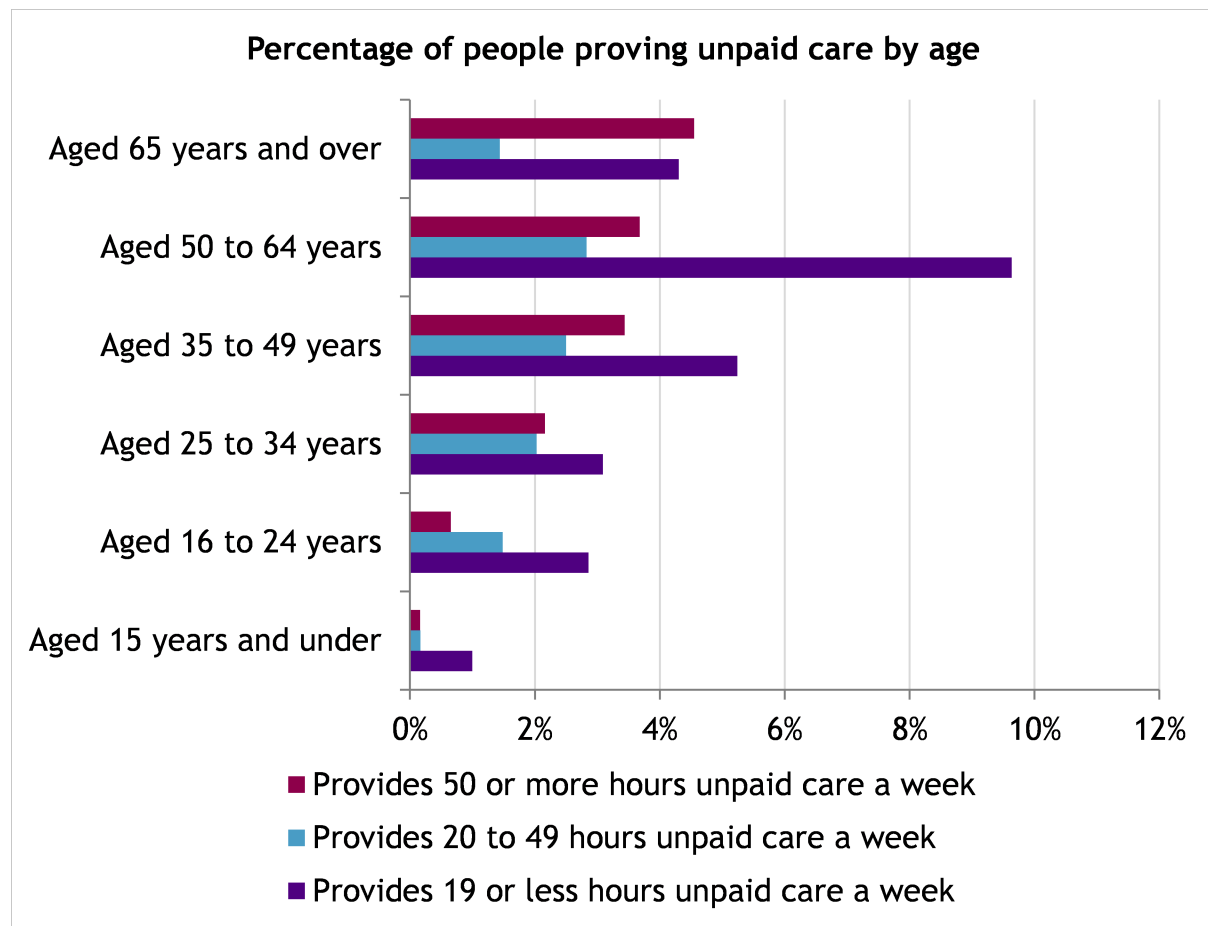
Data from the 2021 Census suggests that 9.9% of the population in East Sussex provides any form of unpaid care, compared to the national average of 8.8%. Compared to the 2011 Census however, the proportion of unpaid carers has decreased by 1.8 percentage points within East Sussex. The proportion of people providing 19 hours or less of unpaid care a week decreased from 7.5% in 2011 to 5.0% in 2021, those providing 20 to 49 hours of unpaid care increased from 1.3% to 1.9% and those providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care increased from 2.5% to 3.0%.



Note: Percentages are representative of the population aged 5 years or above.

Source: Office for National Statistics

The percentage of people providing unpaid care varies by age. 16.1% of those aged 50 to 64 provided some unpaid care a week, with the majority providing 19 or less hours unpaid care a week. Although the percentage of those aged 65 and over providing unpaid care is lower, people in this age group were more likely to be providing 50 or more hours unpaid care a week.

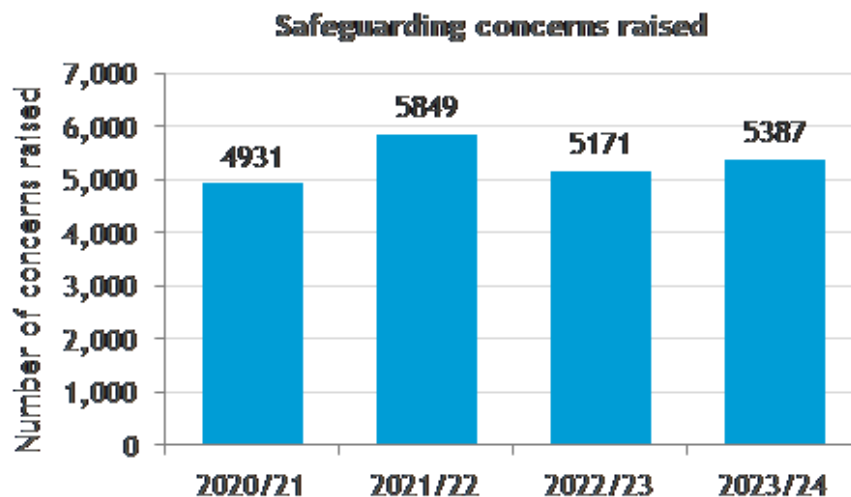


Note: Percentages are representative of the population aged 5 years or above.

Source: ONS

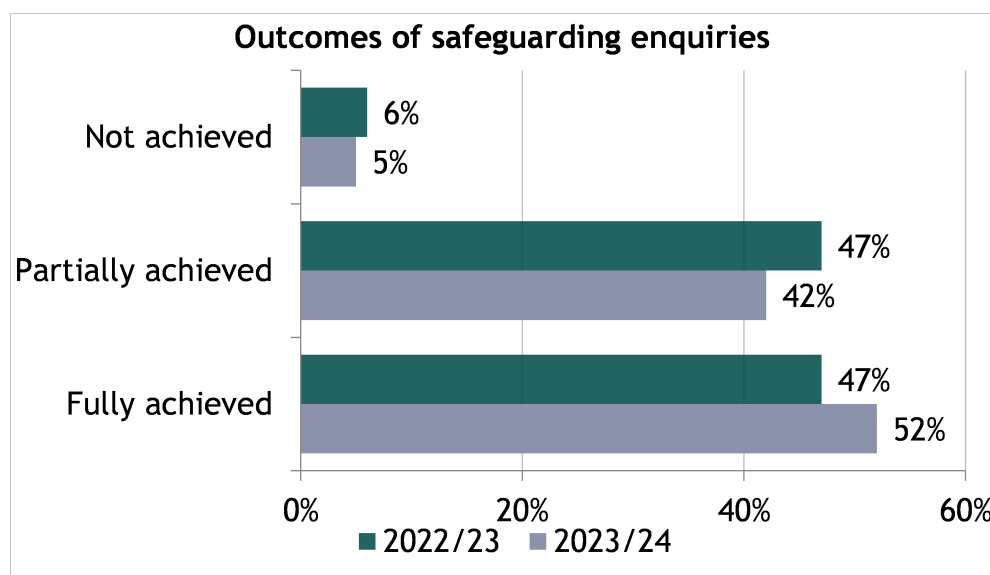
Adult safeguarding

5,387 adult safeguarding concerns were received in 2023/24. This is an increase of 4.2% compared to the 5,171 concerns received in 2022/23, but below the 5,819 received in 2021/22.



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health department

Part of a safeguarding enquiry is to identify desired outcomes for the adult concerned. In 2023/24, there was an increase of 5 percentage points in the number of safeguarding enquiries where outcomes were fully achieved compared to the previous year. The number of enquiries where outcomes were partially achieved fell by 5 percentage points.

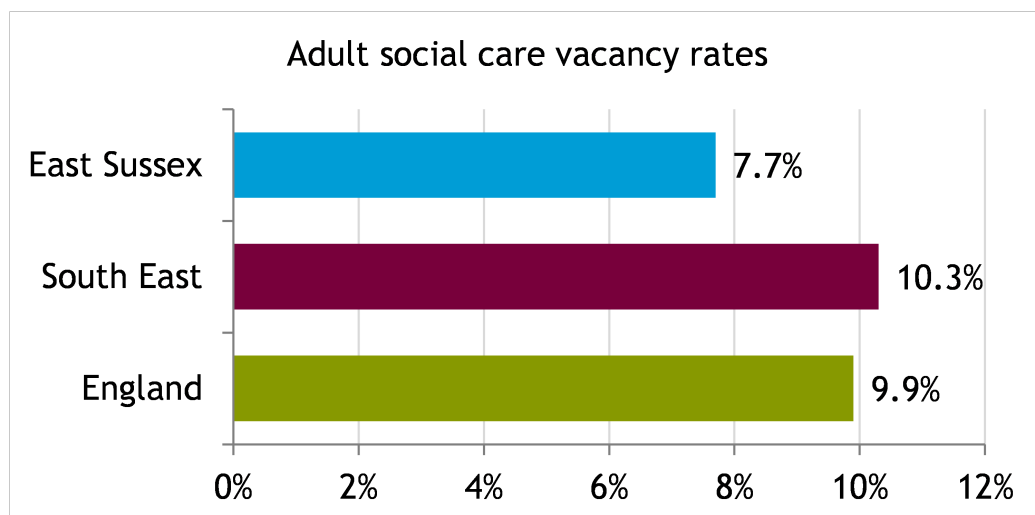


Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health department. Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding issues

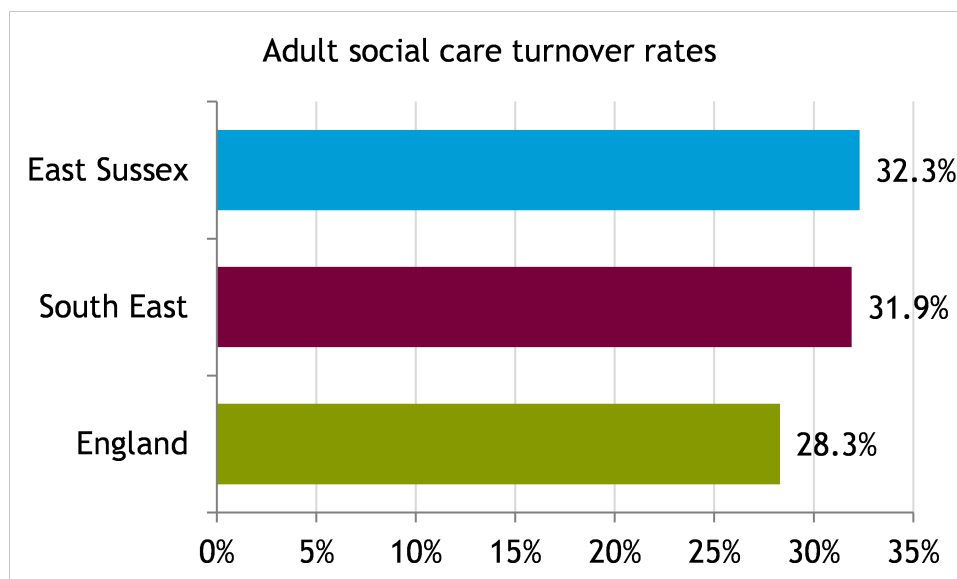
Adult social care workforce

As the demand for support in adult social care increases it is important that we have a sufficient supply of highly skilled workers for the sector. The adult social care workforce includes all staff working in adult social care settings, in both the independent sector and for the Council. There were 17,000 staff in post in the adult social care workforce in East Sussex in 2022/23, with 1,500 posts vacant. Projections show that between 2023 and 2035 the workforce required in the county will grow by 28%.

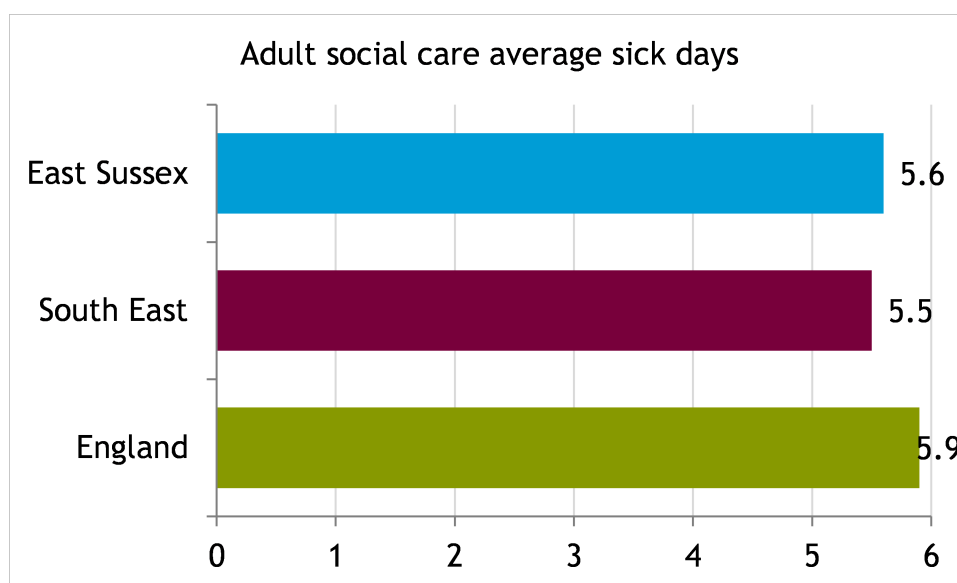
The vacancy rate in the adult social care workforce in East Sussex was lower than both the South East and England averages in 2022/23.



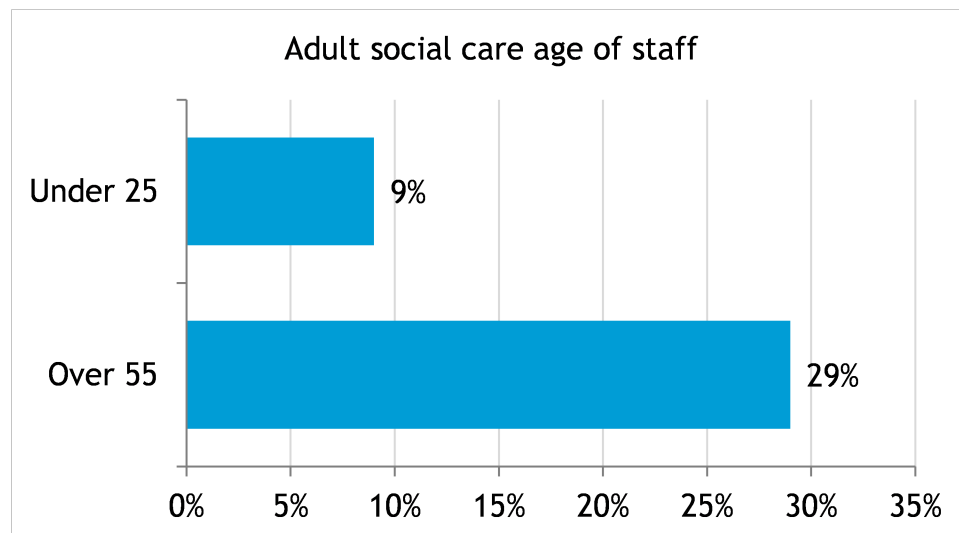
However, the rate of staff turnover was higher than the South East and England averages.



The average number of sick days taken by adult social care staff in East Sussex in 2022/23 was similar to the average across the South East and for England.



Only 9% of people working in the adult social care sector in East Sussex in 2022/23 were under 25, while 29% were over 55. It is expected that 5,000 workers in the sector will reach retirement age in the next 10 years.

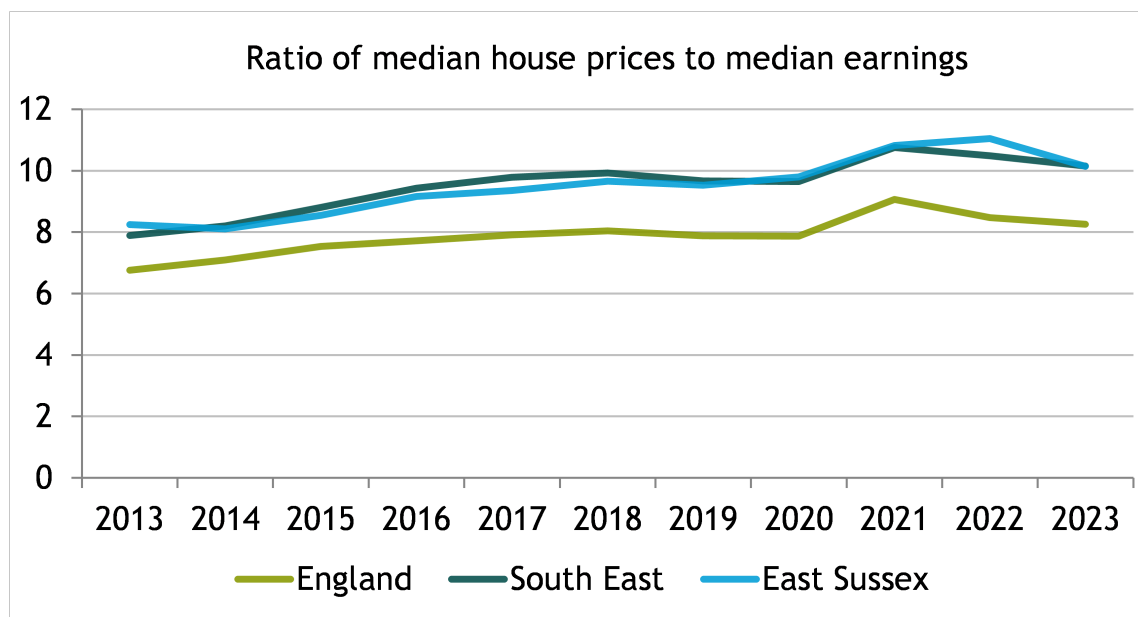


Housing

Housing affordability

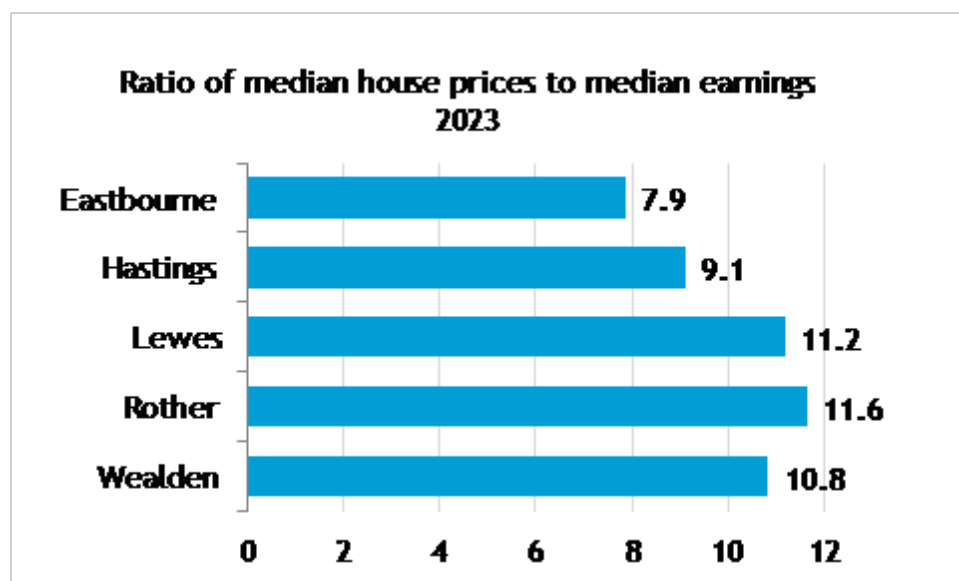
East Sussex is an attractive area to live, however this means that house prices are higher than the national average. In 2023 in East Sussex the average (median) house price was £345,000, 10.1 times the average annual earnings of residents, which were £34,028. In comparison the average house price in England was £290,000, 8.3 times average annual earnings, which were £35,100.

The average ratio of median house prices to median earnings in East Sussex is higher than for England and is the same as the South East average.



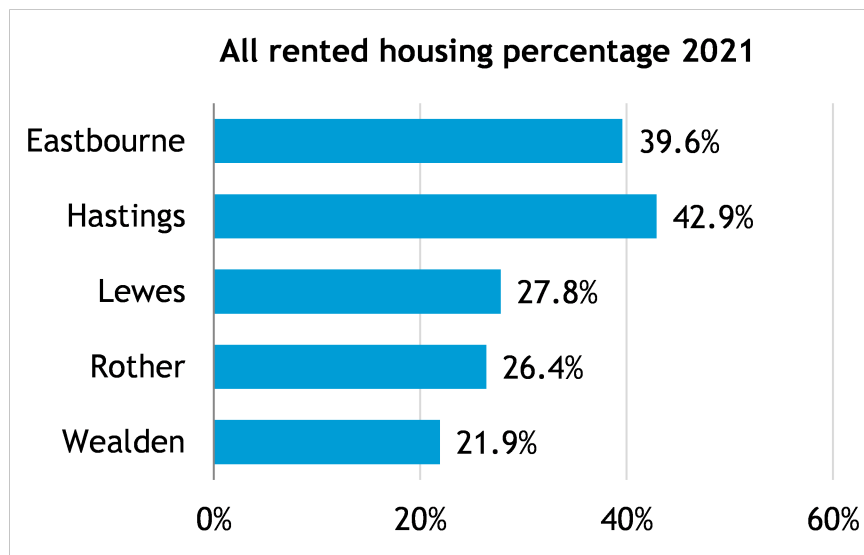
Source: ONS

The median average house prices were over 10 times the average annual earnings of residents in Lewes, Rother and Wealden.



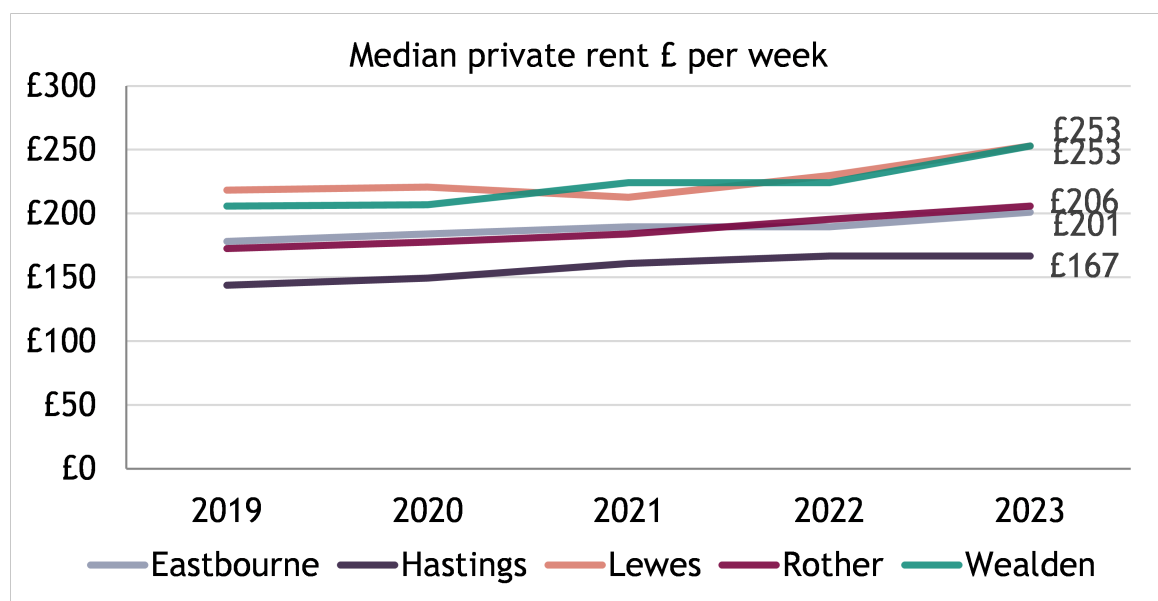
Source: ONS

Rented housing is a significant sector in East Sussex, making up 21.9% of housing in Wealden and 42.9% in Hastings.



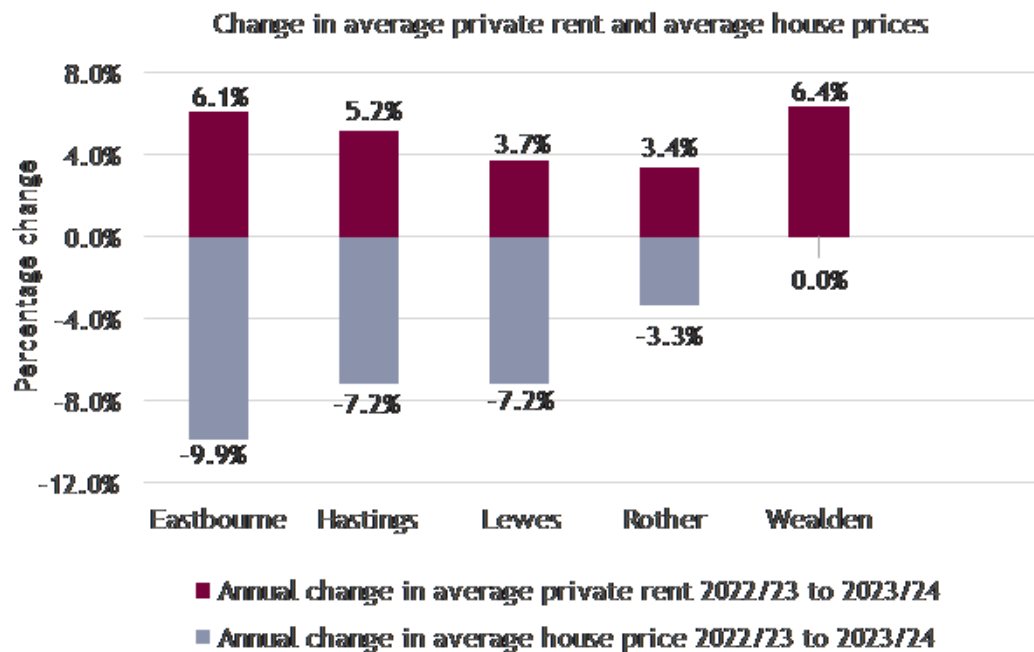
Source: Census 2021.

The cost of private rented housing rose by up to 27% between 2019 and 2023. Average private rents ranged from £167 to £253 a week across districts.



Source: ONS/Valuation Office Agency

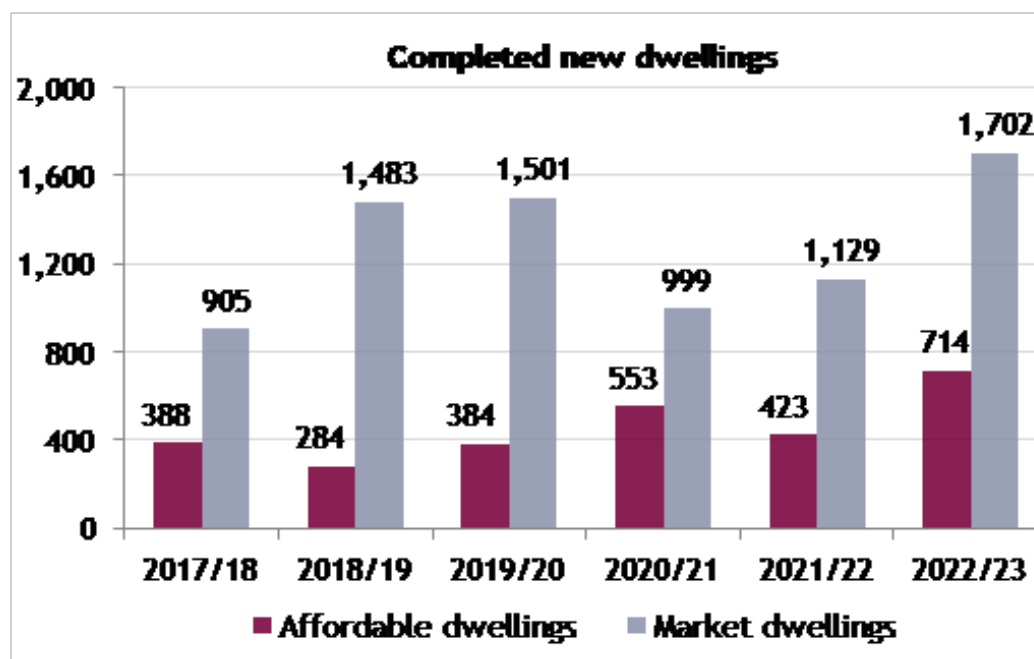
The cost of private rented housing in East Sussex continued to rise during 2023 to 2024, while the cost of house purchases across the county fell by up to 9.9%.



Source: Price index of Private Rents and UK House Prices from the ONS

Households and housing delivery

2,416 new dwellings were completed across the county in 2022/23. Of these, 714 (29.6%) were classed as affordable.



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Homelessness

There was an increase in the number of households in East Sussex in temporary accommodation in September 2023 compared to the previous year. The rate of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households shows Hastings having the highest rate in East Sussex at 12.16. The highest rate in the country outside of London was for Brighton and Hove at 12.88.

District/Borough	Number of households in temporary accommodation (30 September 2023)
Eastbourne	359
Hastings	532
Lewes	74
Rother	160
Wealden	57

Source: ONS

The Council's Children's Services Department have a duty to help children whose families face destitution. As some immigrant families with children have no recourse to public funds the Council provides assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless. The total number of people assisted with accommodation over the last three years has fluctuated, but the number of households has been consistent.

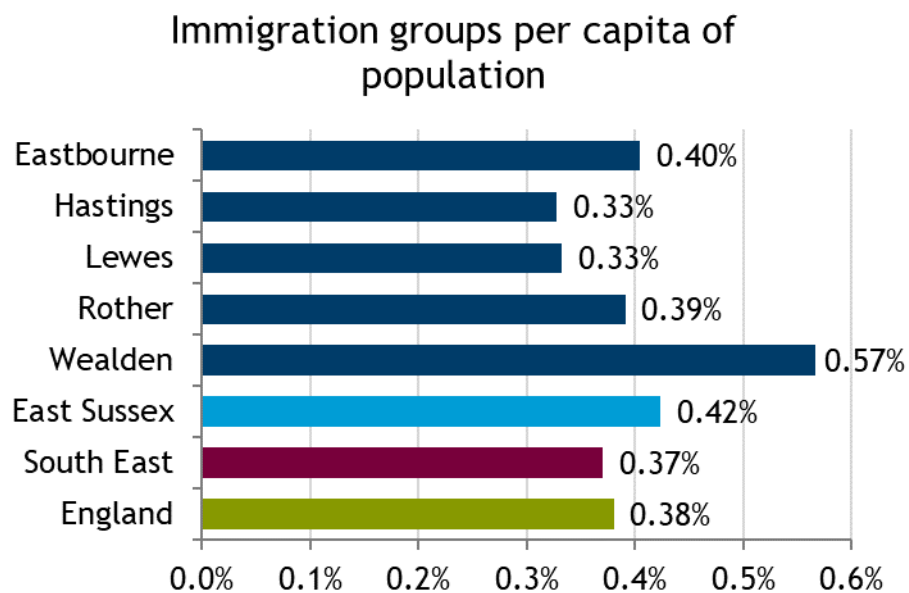
Year	Number of adults	Number of children	Total households
2020/21	23	40	22
2021/22	31	53	22
2022/23	21	34	21
2023/24	38	33	22

Source: ESCC Children's Services department]

Refugees and asylum seekers

The rate of immigrants who have arrived in East Sussex as refugees, asylum seekers or displaced persons of another type as a percentage of the total population shows that East Sussex had a higher rate at the end of 2023 than both the South East and England. The rates differed across the county, with the highest

level in Wealden and the lowest in Lewes and Hastings.



Source: Office for National Statistics. Note: the groups above include those who have arrived as part of the Homes for Ukraine, Afghan Resettlement Programme and as part of Supported Asylum.

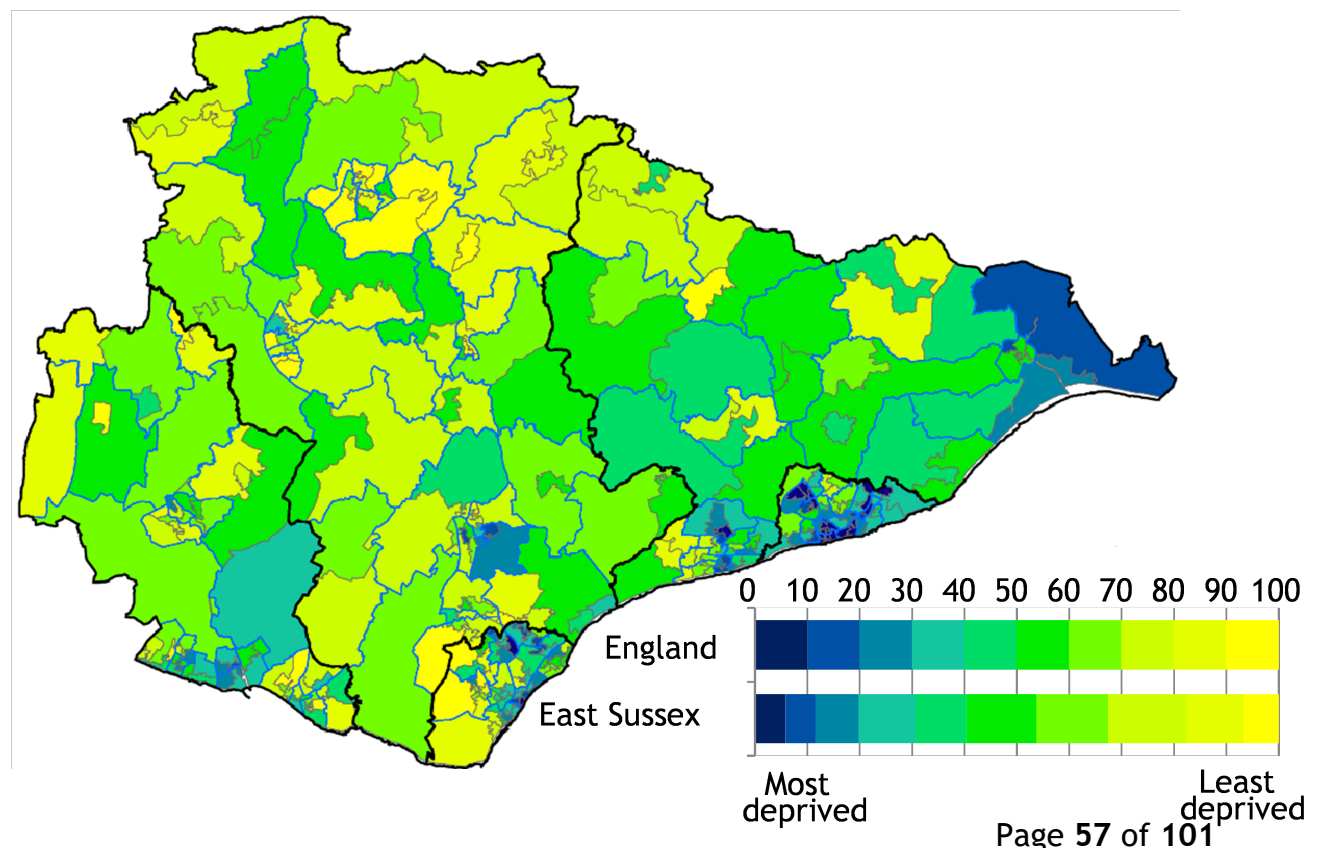
Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 measures relative deprivation for small areas in England. It takes into account a number of factors including health, access to services, environment, crime and housing, however income and employment have the greatest effect on the deprivation score given to an area.

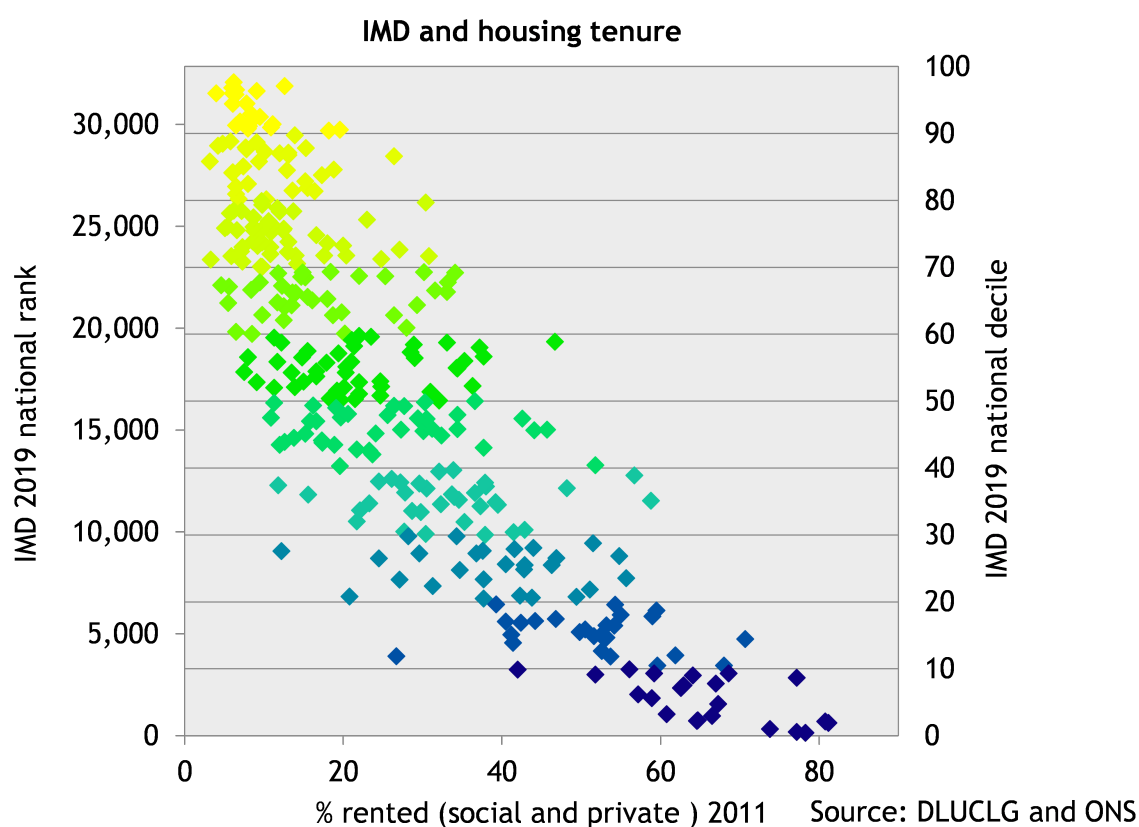
East Sussex has a significant variation across the county in levels of deprivation. Hastings is the 13 most deprived Lower Tier Local Authority (LTLA) out of 317 LTLAs in the country, with similar levels of deprivation as Newham, and Blackburn with Darwen. Wealden is the least deprived LTLA in East Sussex, with a rank of 254, which means it has similar levels of deprivation as Sevenoaks and Hambleton.

Overall, as a county East Sussex is ranked 93 out of 151 Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLA) on the IMD rank. This is a similar level of deprivation as Lincolnshire, Somerset and Kent. Blackpool is the most deprived UTLA, whilst Wokingham is the least deprived.

The map shows how deprived individual parts of the county are compared to the national average. Map of East Sussex showing LSOA deciles of deprivation



The IMD is calculated for small areas called Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), as shown on the map, each of which have approximately 1,500 residents. In East Sussex there are 329 LSOAs. 22 of these are in the most deprived 10% nationally. 16 of these are in Hastings, four in Eastbourne, and two in Rother. 21 LSOAs are in the least deprived 10%, 13 are in Wealden, six in Lewes, and two in Eastbourne.



Areas of high deprivation correlate with some areas of predominately rented housing. This includes concentrations of social rented properties (up to 70%) and private rented properties (up to 68%), and both (up to 81%). Measures of deprivation include the indoor living environment, and in these areas, more properties (excluding social housing) may be in poor condition or without central heating, leading to higher heating costs and other negative outcomes.

People living in more deprived areas often face multiple challenges and therefore may be more likely to access Council and other public services. However, it is important to note that the IMD is based on averages across an area, so it is possible to have people with low levels of deprivation in an area classified as being more deprived and vice versa.

The relationship between multiple deprivation, low income and poor-quality housing means it can be hard to change relative deprivation for people living in an area of predominantly low-cost housing without addressing housing quality.

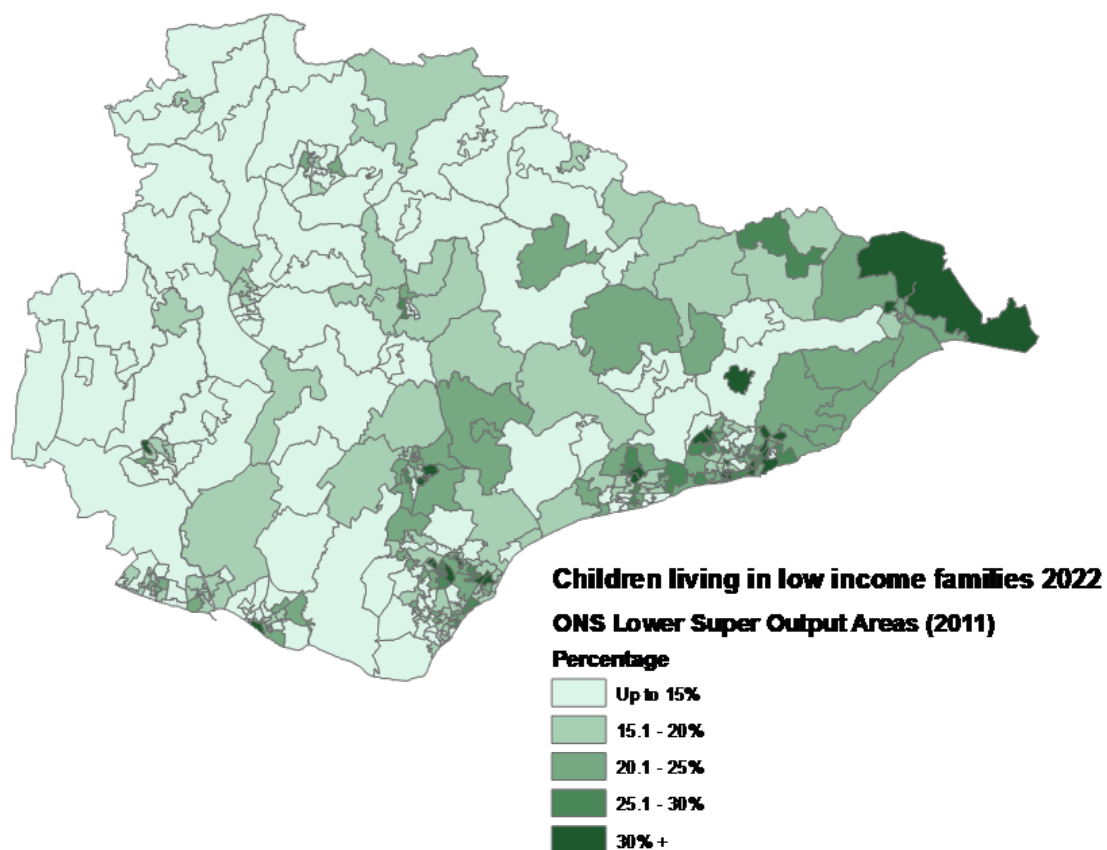
Lower Tier Local Authority	Rank of average rank out of 317 (1=most deprived)
Blackpool	1
Newham	12
Hastings	13
Blackburn with Darwen	14
Northampton	105
Eastbourne	106
Dover	107
Westminster	133
Rother	135
Crawley	136
Exeter	193
Lewes	194
Watford	195
Sevenoaks	253
Wealden	254
Hambleton	255
Hart	317

At the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level the picture across the county is even more nuanced. The most deprived LSOA in the county, Hastings 005A within Baird Ward, is within the most deprived 1% of LSOAs in England. Whereas the least deprived LSOA, Wealden 012D in Uckfield, ranks amongst the least deprived 3%.

	Most deprived LSOA	Least Deprived LSOA
England	1	32,844
Eastbourne	2,352	31,476
Hastings	147	23,407
Lewes	5,233	31,476
Rother	754	28,840
Wealden	4,812	32,075

Some of the data that the IMD is based on is now several years old. However, the latest child poverty data, relating to children living in families with relative low-income, shows a similar pattern in income deprivation across the county.

In 2021/22, there were 20,910 children in East Sussex living in families with relative low-income, which was 18.6% of all children and young people aged 0-19. This is a slightly lower rate than the national average of 19.8%. 87% of all children in relative low-income families in East Sussex were in working families. This compares to the national picture, where 71% of children in relative low-income families were in working families. Only 13% of East Sussex children in low-income families were in families where no-one was in work.

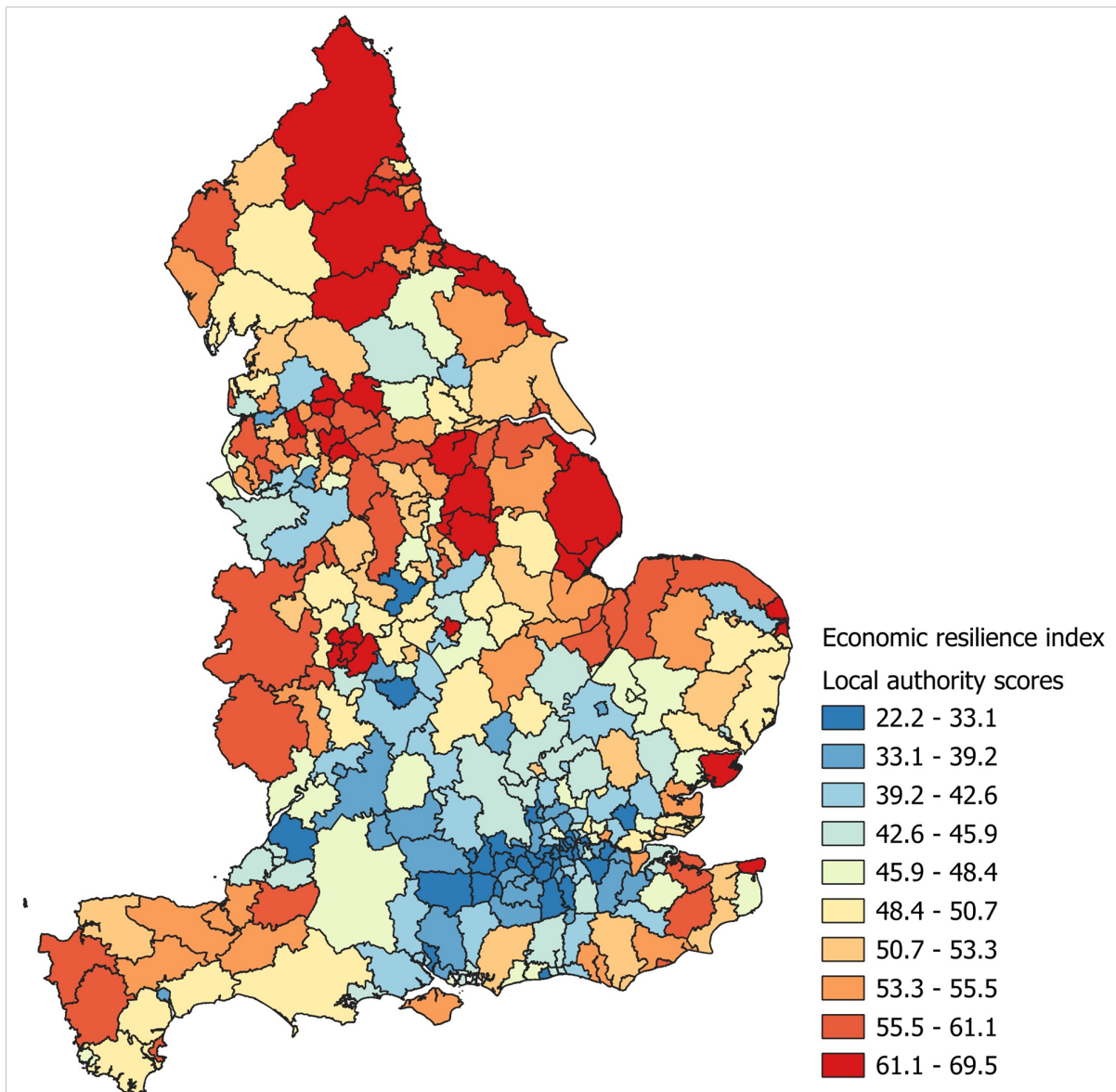


23.5% of East Sussex pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals in 2022/23. For England the figure was 23.8% (Source: Department for Education).

The data on deprivation shows some parts of the coastal region of the county face greater challenges. Central Government has established the Levelling Up Fund to

address areas of high need. The Government has identified 4 out of the 5 local authorities in East Sussex as having locations with priority need for ‘levelling up’ funding, which will be used in projects that address economic recovery and growth, improved transport connectivity, and need for regeneration. Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, and Rother have all been identified as having specific locations with the greatest priority need for ‘levelling up’.

The allocation of funding from one of the levelling up funding streams, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, was informed by an economic resilience index. This looked at a range of factors including economic productivity, employment rates, wage levels and skills. The map shows that all of the district and borough areas in East Sussex scored above the national average, indicating higher levels of need for support. The map below also shows most lower tier local authorities in the South East scored lower than the national average.



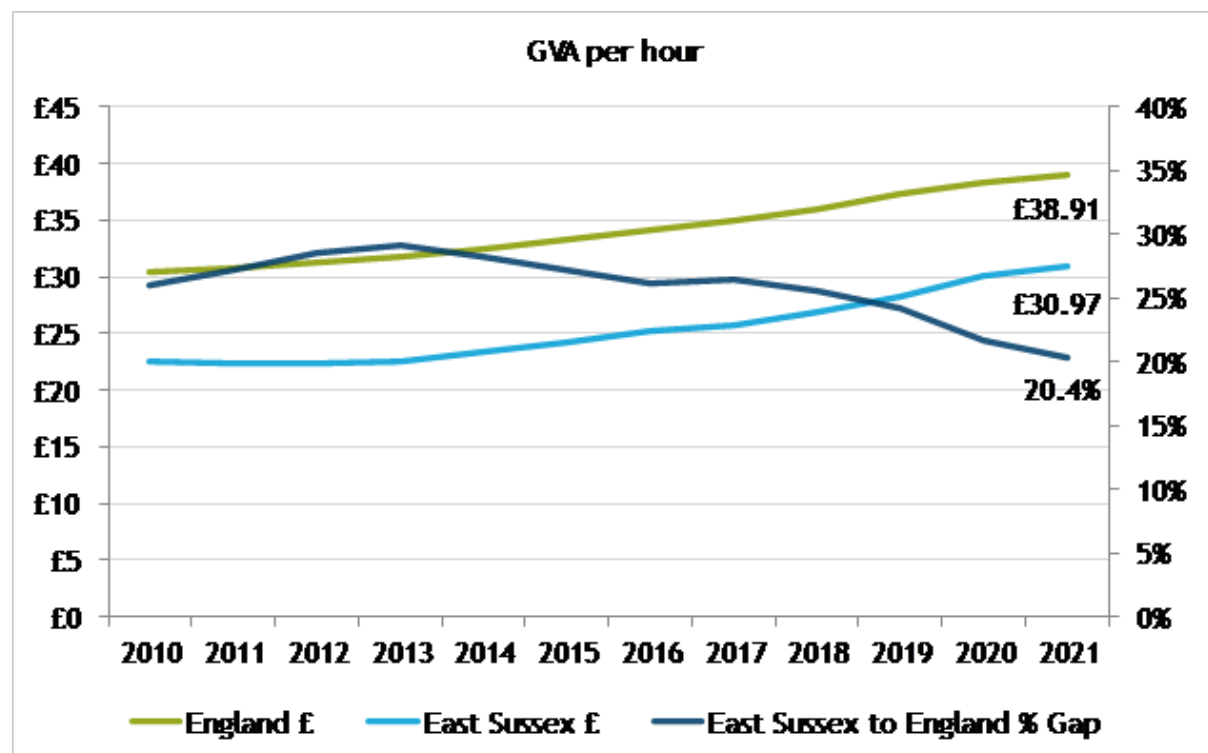
Source: data from DLUHC, Local authority boundary information from Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. Note that Cornwall and the City of London were not included in the index.

Economy

GVA per hour

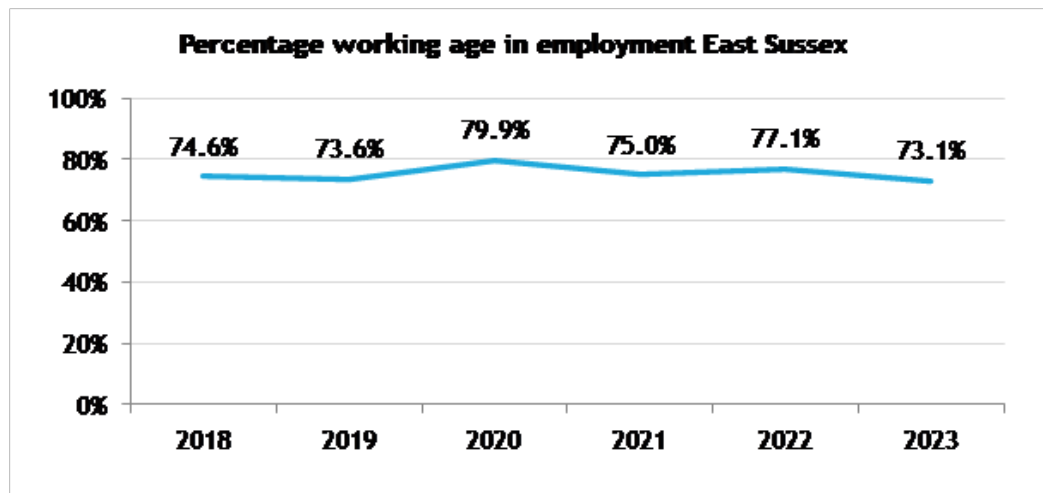
Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour is used to assess the productivity of an area. It measures the value of goods or services produced in an area per hour worked in that area. GVA per hour for East Sussex in 2021 was £30.97, 20.4% below the England level of £38.91. This gap has narrowed from a high point of 29.2% in 2013.



Source: Office for National Statistics

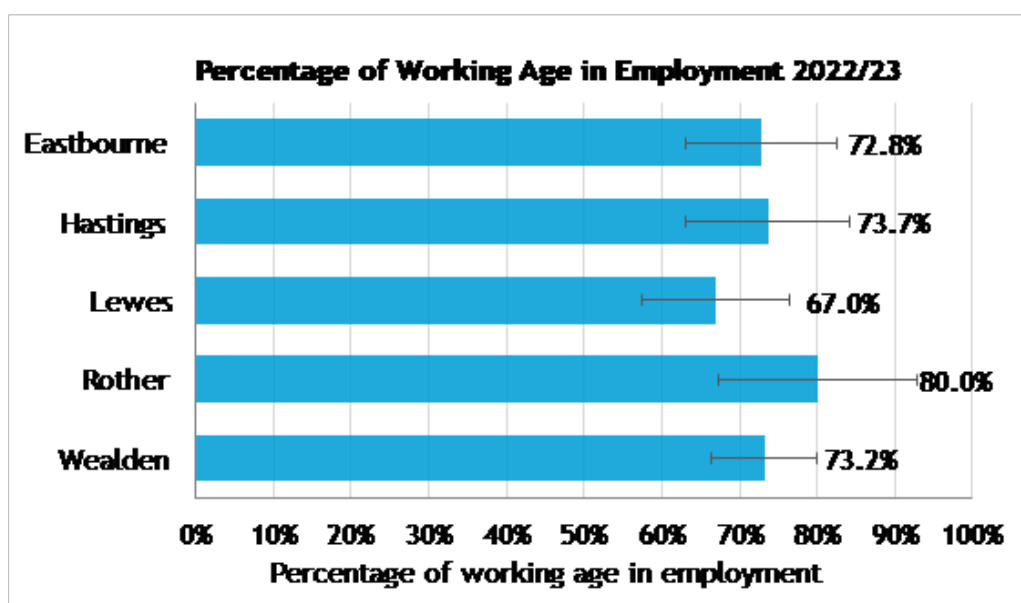
Employment

73.1% of the East Sussex working age population (age 16-64) were in employment between April 2022 - March 2023. This was lower than the national average of 75.7% and the average across the South East of 78.0%.



Sources: Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS

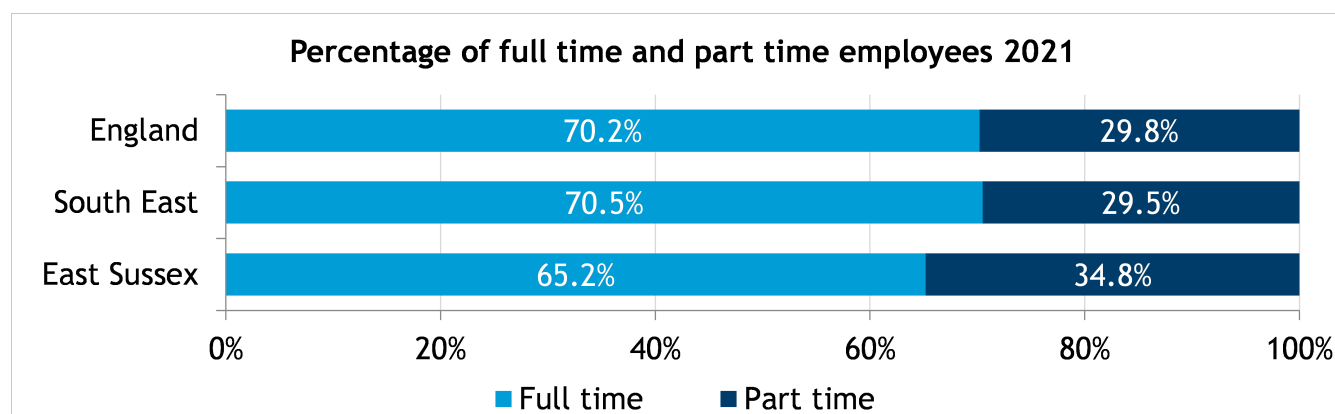
Rother experienced a surge of almost five percentage points since 2022, giving it the highest rate of employment at 80.0%. Meanwhile, Lewes had the lowest at 67.0% following a dip of almost nine percentage points compared to the previous year. However, The Annual Population Survey (APS) can have very small sample sizes at district and borough levels which can result in the data changing significantly year on year and having very broad confidence intervals. The confidence intervals have been added to the chart above, the actual figure may fall anywhere between the lower and higher level.



Sources: Annual National Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS

Note: The Annual Population Survey (APS) can have very small sample sizes at district and borough levels which can result in the data changing significantly year on year and having very broad confidence intervals. The confidence intervals have been added to the chart above, the actual figure may fall anywhere between the lower and higher level.

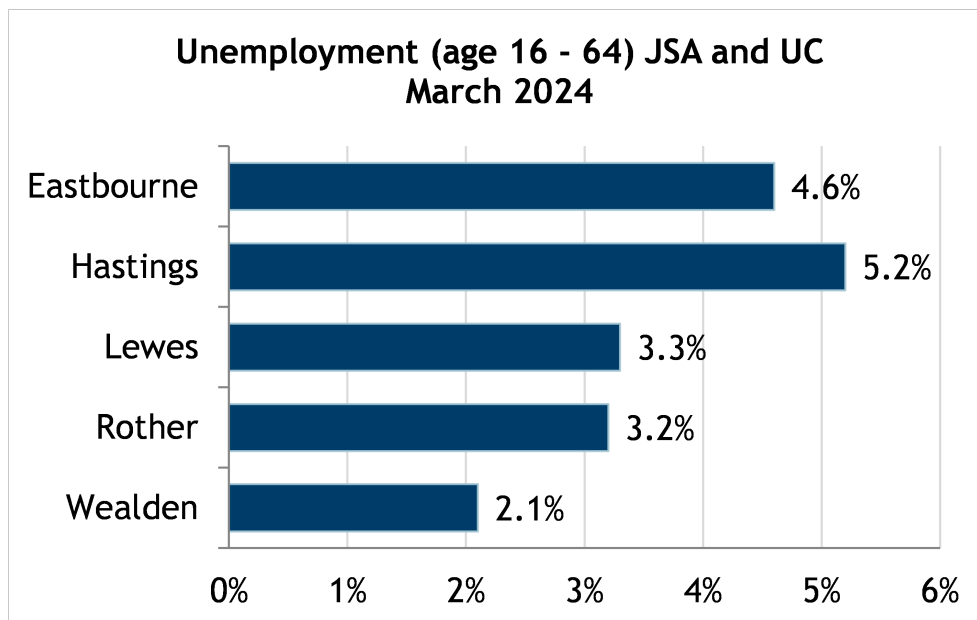
A higher proportion of people work part time in East Sussex (34.8%) than in the South East (29.5%) or England (29.8%).



Sources: Census 2021

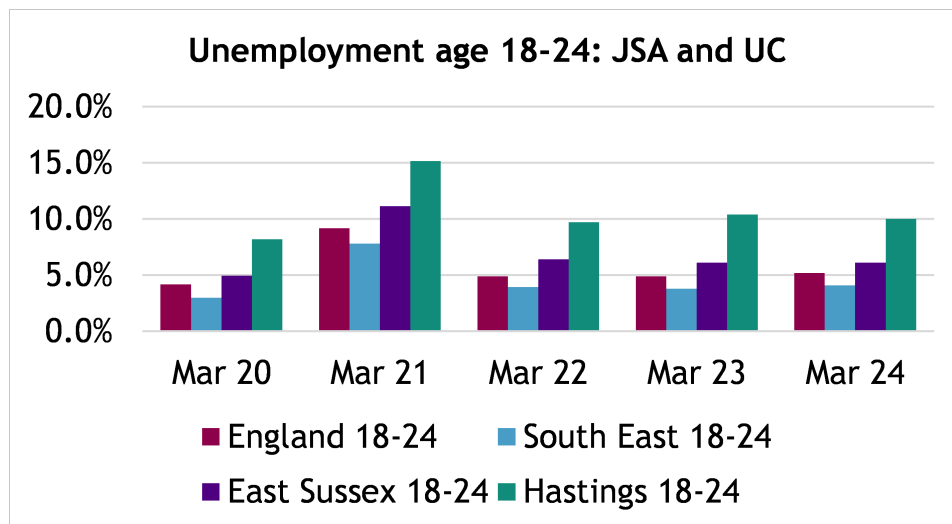
Unemployment

The unemployment rate for March 2024 was 3.5% for East Sussex, lower than the national average of 3.9%, but above the regional average of 3.0%. Hastings had the highest rate of the districts and boroughs at 5.2%.

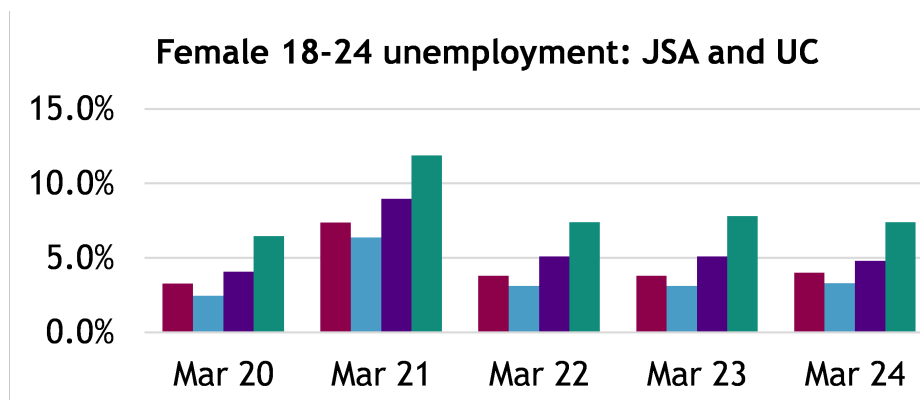


Source: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS - claimants of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (UC) who are searching for work age 16 - 64

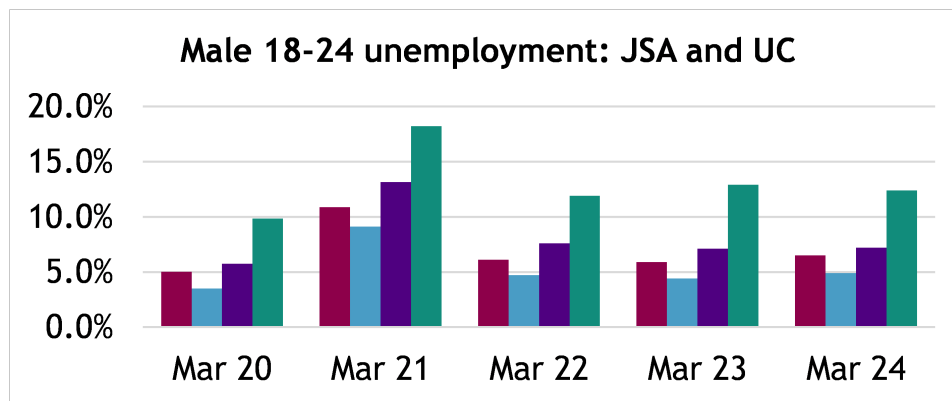
Youth unemployment (age 18-24) is normally higher than the overall rate and this trend is greater at time of economic stress. In March 2023 youth unemployment for East Sussex was 6.1%, whilst the England rate was 4.9%. Hastings had the highest district and borough rate at 10.4%. Rates in East Sussex stayed the same for March 2024 at 6.1%, compared to an increase nationally to 5.2%. Youth unemployment in Hastings fell but remained higher than the county average at 10.0%.



Female unemployment is usually lower than male unemployment. For example, in March 2024 female youth unemployment for Hastings was 7.4%, while the male rate was 12.4%.



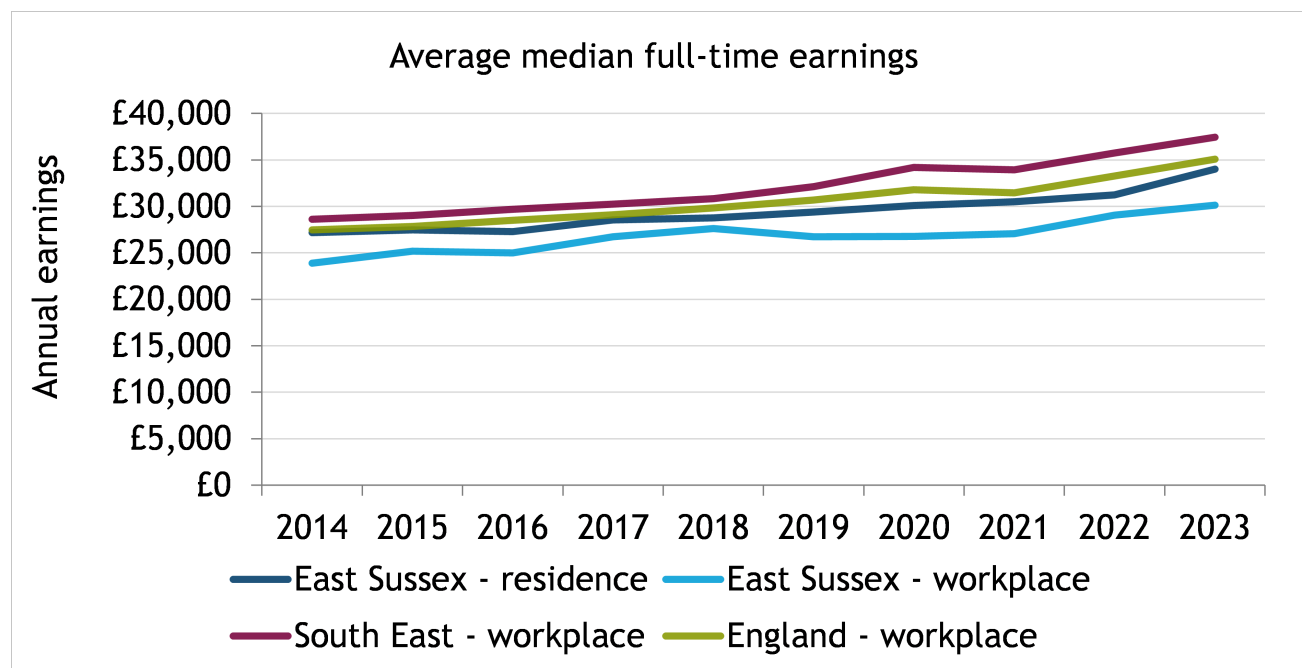
Males are more likely to be economically active, which causes the unemployment rate to result in relatively more unemployed males than the same rate for females. 590 young people were unemployed in Hastings in March 2024, 210 were female and 380 were male.



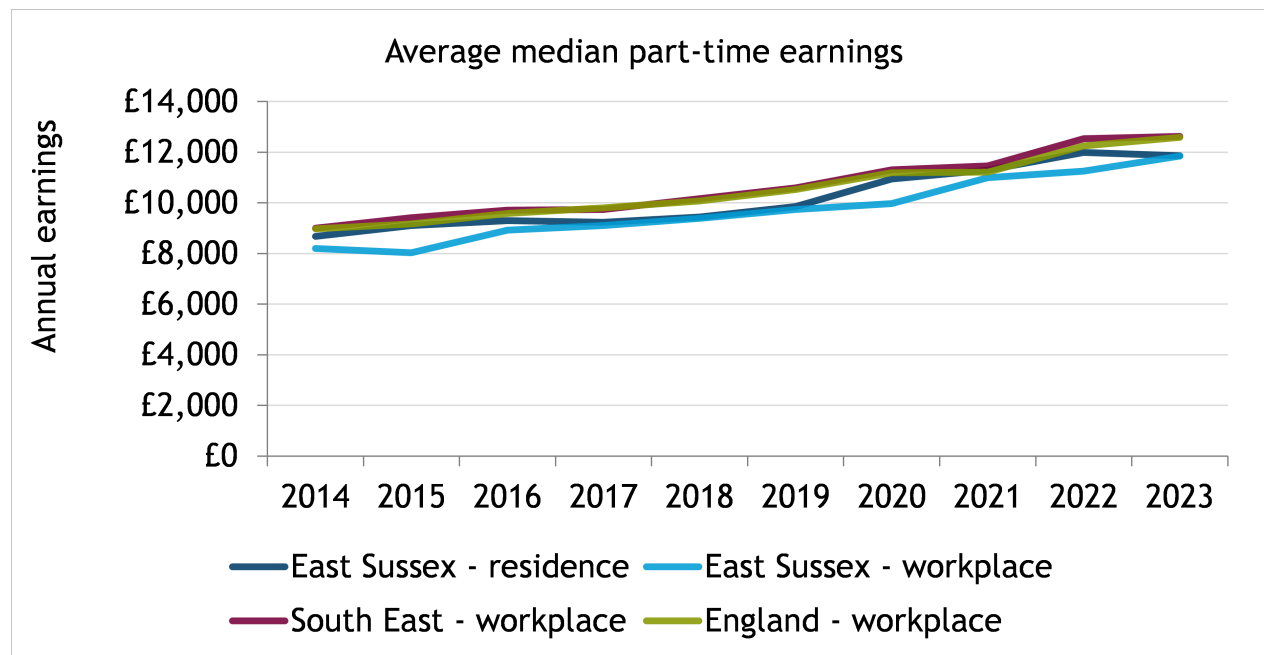
Source all: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS

Earnings

East Sussex residence based earnings increased for full-time employees in 2023, and are now closer to the England average. However, earnings for residence based part-time employees fell in 2023 and are now at a similar level to workplace based employees in the county, and below the average earnings for England and the South East. Residence based earnings are those of people living within East Sussex, some of whom have workplaces outside East Sussex; workplace earnings are those of people whose workplace is within East Sussex.



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Office for National Statistics



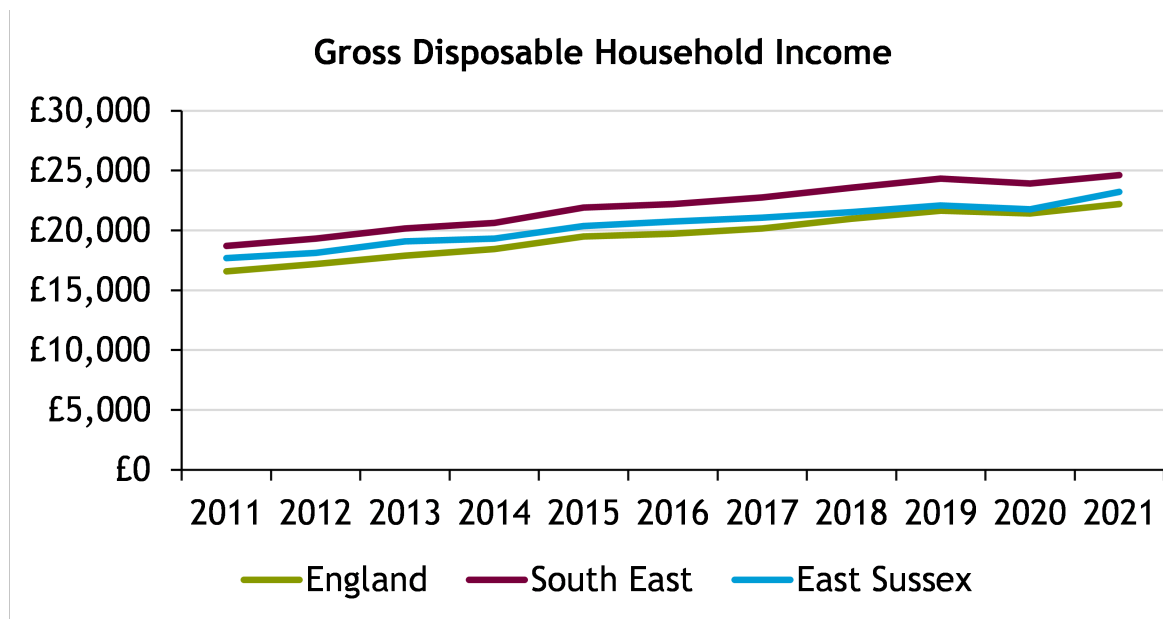
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Office for National Statistics.

Note: The ASHE can have very broad confidence intervals, so changes in data year on year may not be reflective of a real change in earnings.

Gross Disposable Household Income

Gross disposable household income in 2021 was close to the average in the South East, and slightly above the England rate. There is a time lag with the release of this data so it is unclear how the inflationary rises over the last few years have

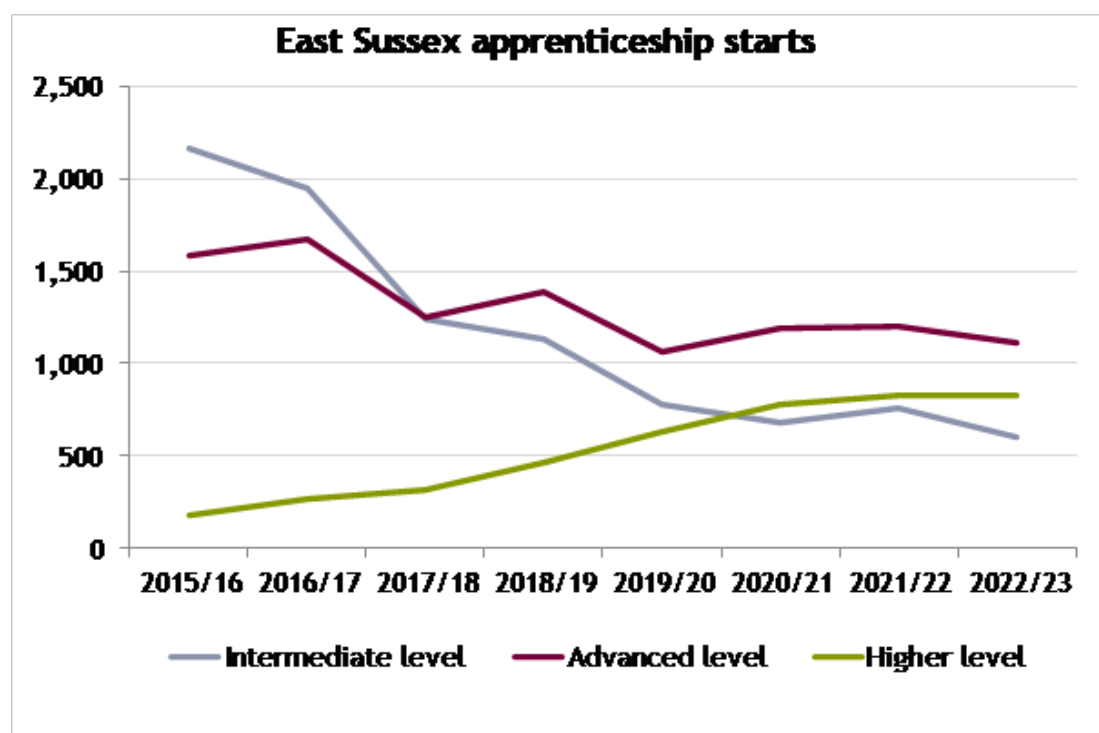
affected current levels of gross disposal household income.



Source: Office for National Statistics

Skills

There were 16,260 apprenticeship starts in East Sussex between 2017 and 2023. Apprenticeship starts in East Sussex in 2022/23 were down 9% on the previous year at 2,540. There were 830 higher level apprenticeship starts in 2022/23, which was the same level as the previous year.



Source: Department for Education further education data library, apprenticeships

Qualification levels across the county are broadly in line with the regional and national averages. Both Lewes and Wealden have a significantly higher proportion of better qualified people compared to the rest of districts and boroughs in the county.

	Qualifications of working age population 2021 (16-64)					
	None	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4+	Other
Eastbourne	12.2%	11.6%	16.7%	20.6%	32.2%	6.7%
Hastings	14.1%	11.9%	17.4%	19.8%	30.6%	6.2%
Lewes	9.2%	10.7%	16.5%	20.4%	37.4%	5.7%
Rother	11.0%	11.7%	17.5%	21.1%	32.6%	6.1%
Wealden	8.1%	10.5%	17.9%	22.1%	35.3%	6.0%
East Sussex	10.6%	11.2%	17.2%	21.0%	33.8%	6.1%
SE region	10.0%	9.9%	15.3%	20.1%	38.8%	5.9%
England	12.4%	9.9%	14.8%	19.5%	37.1%	6.3%

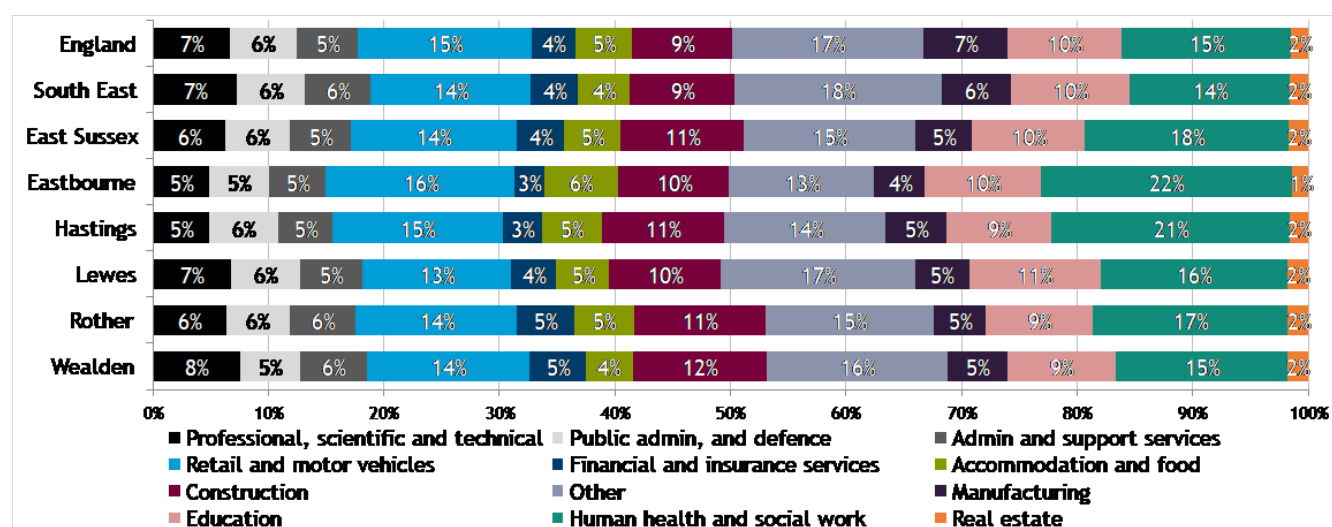
Source: Census 2021

Employment by industry

The proportion of people in East Sussex employed in different industries is broadly

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similar to the national picture. We have a higher proportion of people employed in human health and social work and a lower proportion employed in professional, scientific and technical, and manufacturing than the national average. However, employment by industry varies significantly across the county. It is interesting to note that the proportion of people employed within the Accommodation and Food industry reduced by half in Rother compared to 2020 (from 10% to 5%), possibly linked to the impacts of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.

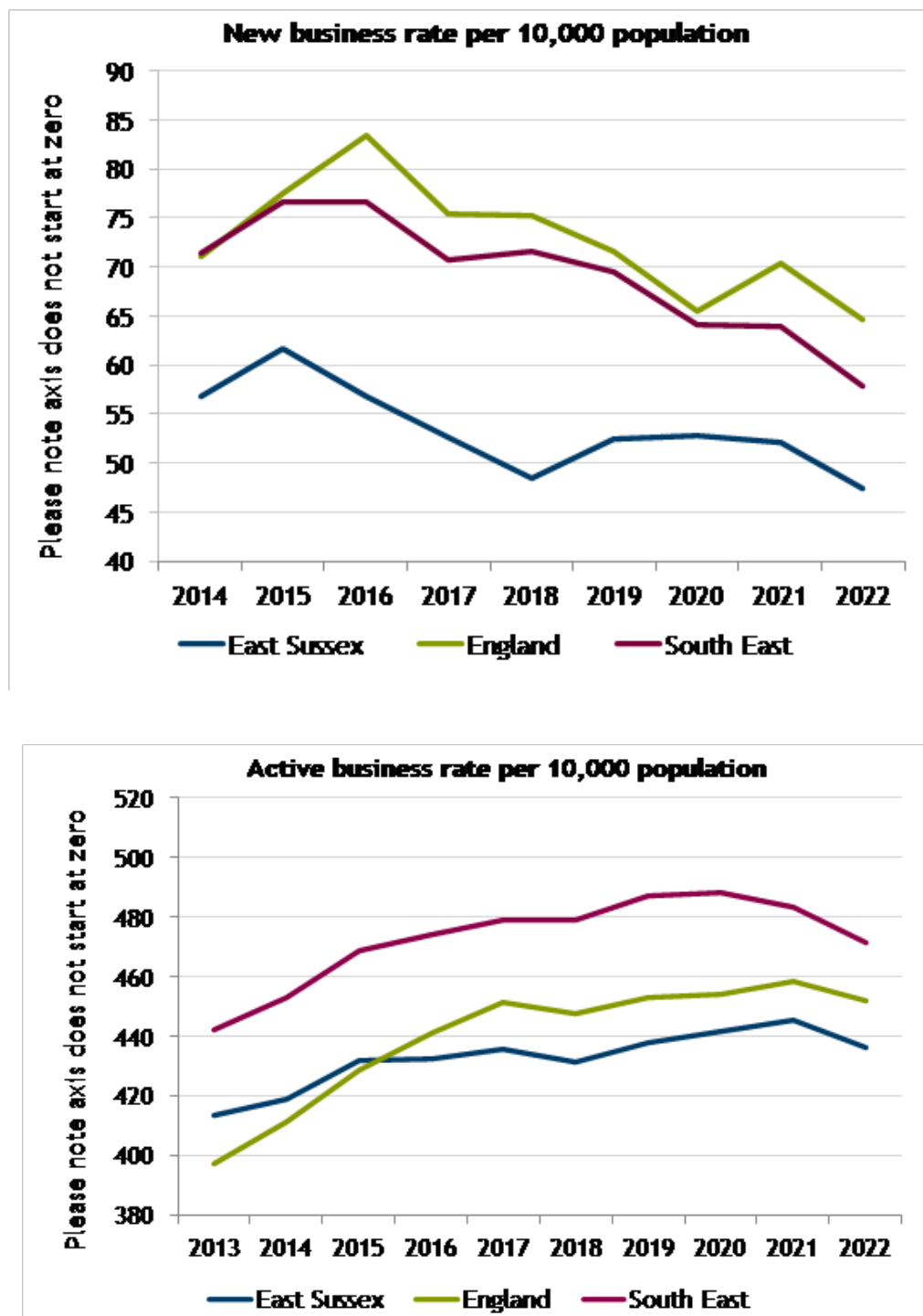


Other includes- Arts, Entertainment and other; Agriculture energy and water, Transportation and storage; and Information and communication.

Source: Census 2021

Businesses

The latest data we have for businesses is for 2022 when the economy was still affected by the impact of the pandemic and there were significant increases in the rate of inflation which will have affected both decisions to start new businesses and business survival rates. In 2022 in East Sussex there were 2,185 business starts and 2,335 business closures. The East Sussex new business registration rate per 10,000 people decreased between 2021 and 2022 to 47.5. The highest rate was in Wealden at 53.3, whilst the lowest was in Rother at 42.3.



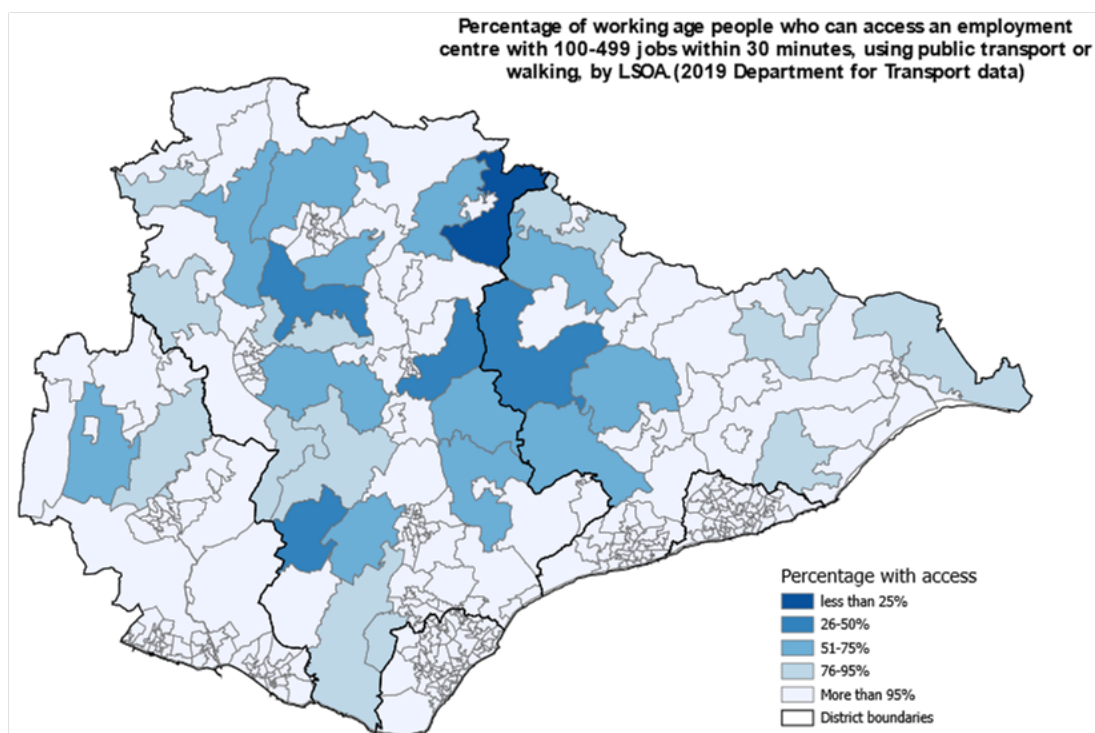
Source for all: Office for National Statistics Business Demography

Infrastructure

The latest Department for Transport data from 2019 shows there was good access to services by car across the county. However, accessing services by public transport or walking can be more challenging in rural areas.

State of the County 2024: Focus on East Sussex

Access to employment centres (100-499 jobs) within 30 minutes by public transport/walking.



Source: Department for Transport

This table details the projects which will improve the infrastructure in East Sussex in the coming years.

Key		
Local Growth Fund		Other Funds
Area	Project	Value
Countywide	Local Transport Improvements	£20.5m
Countywide	Developing EV infrastructure provision across the county	£4.4m

Key		
Local Growth Fund		Other Funds
Area	Project	Value
Countywide	Broadband - Superfast coverage (>30 Mbps) 99% Ultrafast coverage (>100Mbps) 68% Building Digital UK (BDUK) has awarded a contract for East & West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, to Cityfibre as part of their Project Gigabit programme. Details tbc.	£100m (please note this is for Sussex overall, not just East Sussex)
Countywide	East Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plan -Bus priority measures in Eastbourne, Newhaven and Peacehaven	£18.5m
Countywide	A259 Major Road Network South Coast Corridor Package	£28m
Countywide	Exceat Bridge Levelling Up Fund Round 1	£7.9m
Countywide	Potential A27 offline solution	N/A
Countywide	A22 Major Road Network Junction Improvement Package	£46.5m
Countywide	Centres of Digital Excellence across Sussex	£2.3m
Countywide	Greener Sussex land management & Decarbonisation Academies	£7.2m
Bexhill	North Bexhill Access Road	£18.6m
Bexhill	Bexhill Enterprise Park North	£1.9m
Bexhill	Bexhill Enterprise Park Development	£46.0m
Eastbourne	Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package (Terminus Road)	£11.3m
Eastbourne	Eastbourne and South Wealden walking and cycling package	£6.6m
Eastbourne	Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne Movement and Access Corridor	£2.1m

Key		
Local Growth Fund		Other Funds
Area	Project	Value
Eastbourne	Levelling Up Fund (including £4.7m 'Victoria Place' pedestrianisation project)	£19.9m
Eastbourne	Long Term Plan for Towns (over ten years)	£20m
Hastings	Bexhill and Hastings Movement and Access Package	£9.0m
Hastings	Potential HS1 rail extension (also to Bexhill and Eastbourne)	N/A
Hastings	Town Deal (includes the £10m Hastings Green Connections public realm project)	£24.3m
Hastings	Long Term Plan for Towns (over ten years)	£20m
Hastings	Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) (including £2.5m for Queensway Gateway Road infrastructure)	£20m
Lewes	North Street Quarter	N/A
Newhaven	Future High Streets	£5.0m
Newhaven	Town Deal	£19.3m
Newhaven	Levelling Up Fund	£12.7m
Rother	Levelling Up Fund	£19.2m
Bexhill	Long Term Plan for Towns (over ten years)	£20m
Rother	Levelling Up Partnership (LUP)	£20m
Uckfield	Bus station improvements	£0.7m

N/A = Not Allocated at present

Broadband

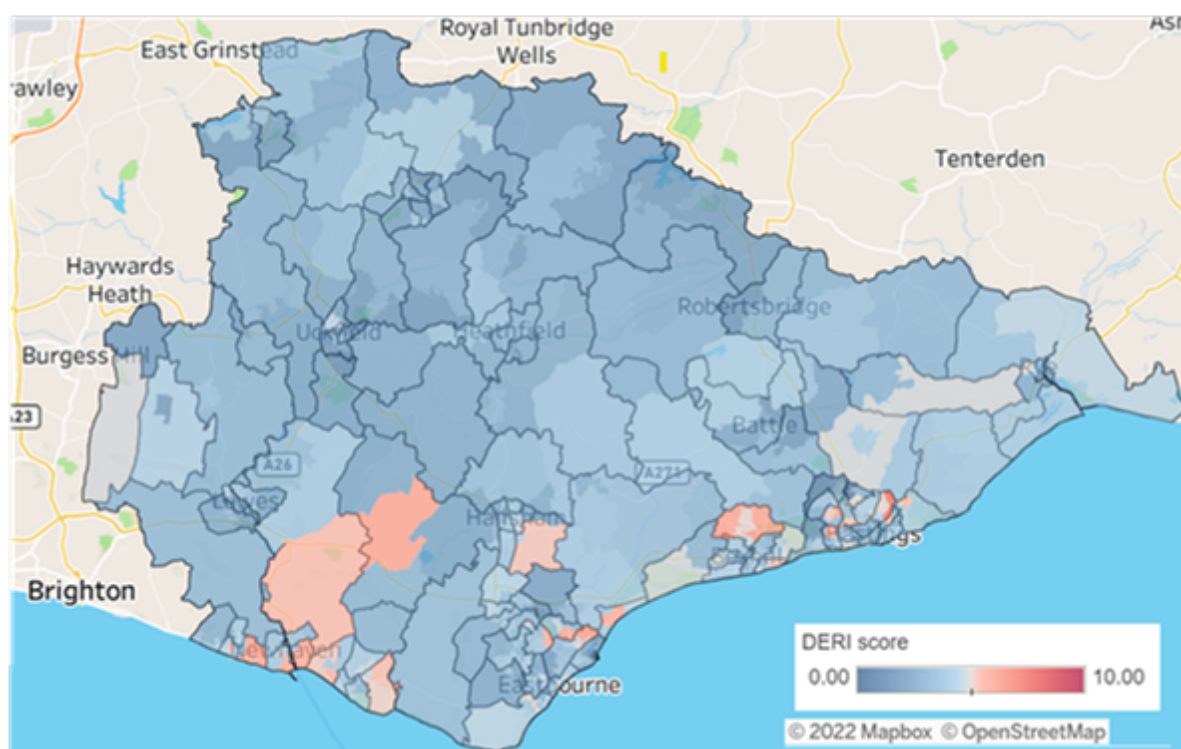
Over 99% of East Sussex premises had access to superfast broadband in 2023, with 68.8% having access to Gigabit capable broadband. 0.42% of properties have less than the Legal Universal Service Obligation (at least 10Mbps).

Digital Inclusion

As more businesses and services use digital channels to engage with residents those

people who are digitally excluded are likely to face increasing challenges. Access to broadband is one part of being able to access digital services. People also need to have the necessary skills and confidence to use digital services, as well as being able to afford the devices and data connections needed for these.

A digital exclusion risk index has been developed by the Greater Manchester Office of Data Analytics that shows where people at higher risk of digital exclusion live. This index is based on a range of data including data on population, relative deprivation and broadband coverage. Areas where people have a higher risk of digital exclusion have a higher score, for East Sussex the areas with the highest risk of digital exclusion scores are in the south of the county. It should be noted that the index includes the proportion of population aged over 65 as one of the risk factors due to national research indicating lower digital skill levels in this age group. We have a large population of over 65s in East Sussex, many of whom will have strong digital skills.



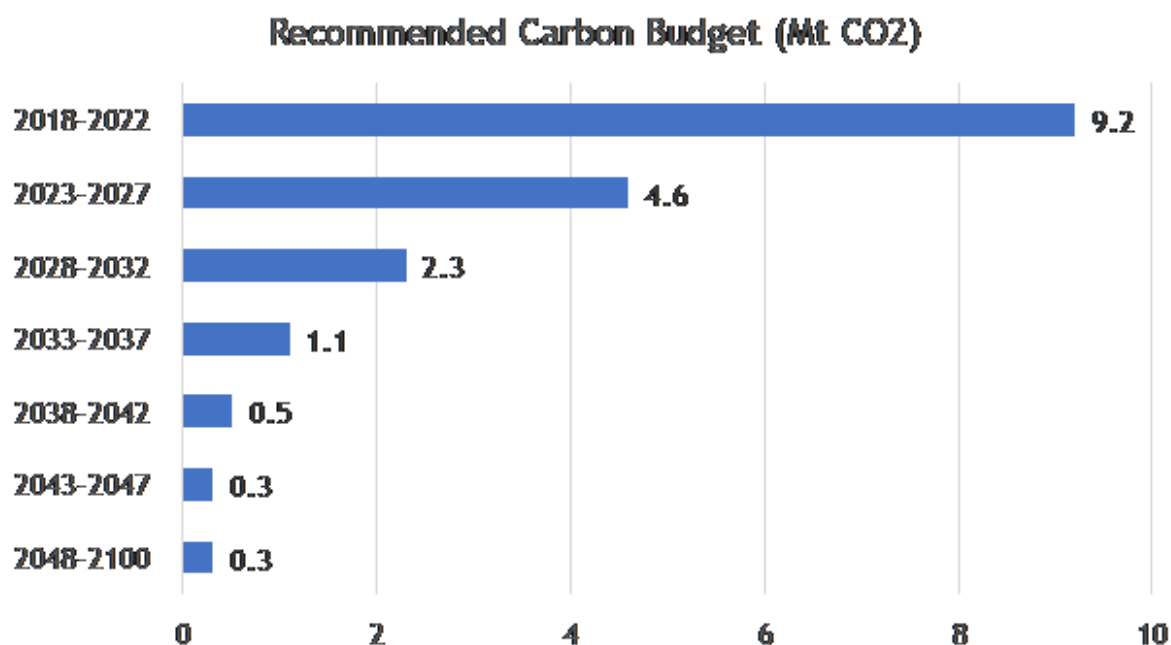
Source: Digital Exclusion Risk Index (Greater Manchester Office of Data Analytics)

Environment

The Cumulative CO_{2e} emissions budget

Emissions of the main greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide (CO₂), in East Sussex fell by 42% between 2005 and 2021, while the population grew by about 8%. This excludes emissions that occur outside the area due to demand for goods and services that are consumed in the county. This reduction is similar to the decrease seen nationally and driven by the same changes (e.g. the switch from coal to gas and renewables to generate electricity).

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change has calculated the emissions reductions necessary for East Sussex (and other local authority areas) to make a fair contribution towards keeping the increase in global average temperature below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This requires cutting emissions from the county area by an average of about 13% per year, which roughly equates to halving total emissions every 5 years.

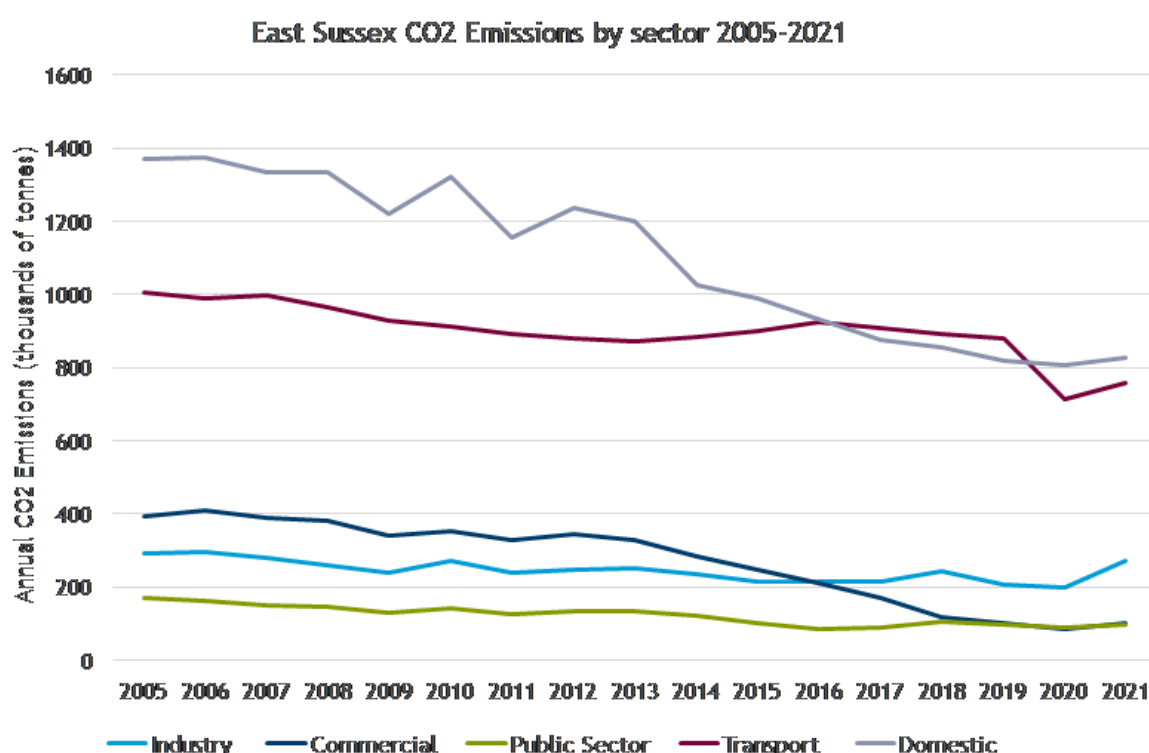


Source: Tyndall Centre for Climate Change, 2022.

Emissions from domestic properties and transport are the greatest contributors to

overall emissions across the county. Domestic emissions fell by 40% between 2005 and 2021. Transport emissions also fell, but at a slower pace. Emissions from all sectors, but especially transport, fell sharply in 2020 due to pandemic impacts, before rebounding in 2021. 2021 also saw a sudden increase in industrial emissions in the Rother district - this may be an error in the data, as we have not been able to match this with any recorded increase in industrial activity.

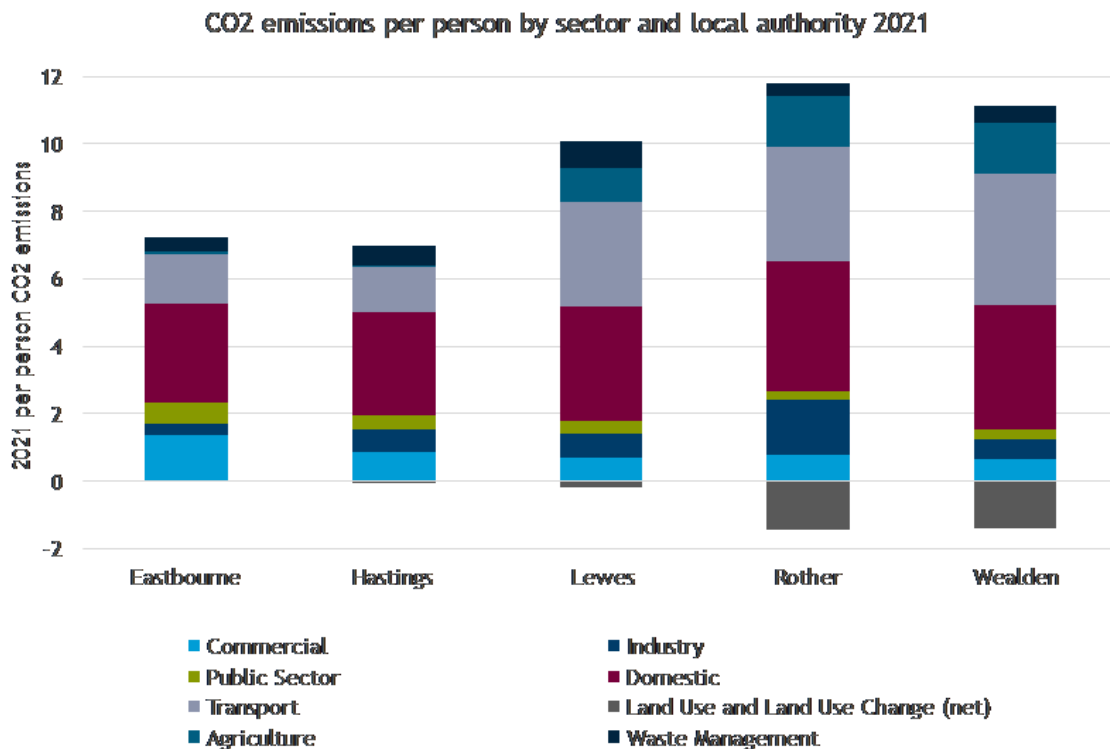
Land use (and land use changes) both absorb and emit carbon, however on an overall (net) basis carbon emissions from land use in East Sussex are negative. Carbon is absorbed by forests and grasslands, while carbon losses occur on existing cropland and when natural land (e.g. grassland) is converted to croplands or settlements. Lewes, Rother and Wealden all have significant (net) negative land use emissions, whilst land use emissions in the urban boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings are negligible.



Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

Domestic emissions make up a larger share of emissions in the county's two urban areas - Eastbourne and Hastings - than the three more rural areas, whilst transport emissions are lower. This is due to the smaller road networks in the urban areas,

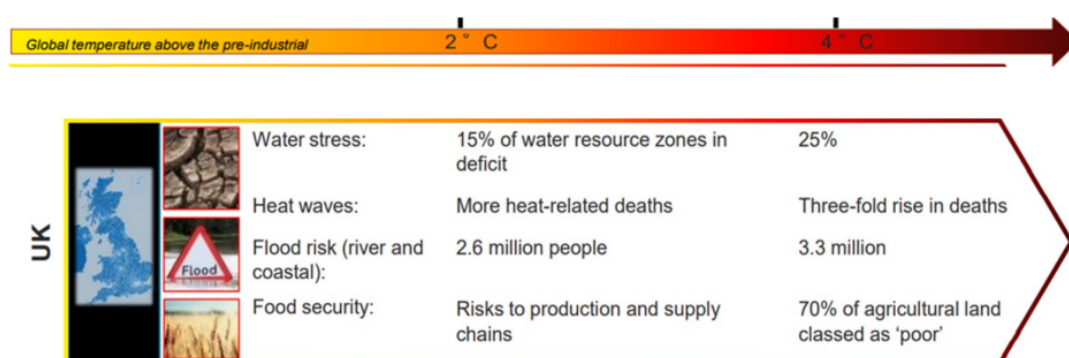
and smaller, higher density housing. Total per capita domestic emissions are higher in the rural areas as houses tend to be larger, and many properties use higher carbon forms of heating such as oil.



Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

Climate adaptation

Even if global warming can be limited to 1.5°C, significant additional investment will be needed in measures to adapt to the effects of climate change that are already locked in due to past emissions of greenhouse gases.

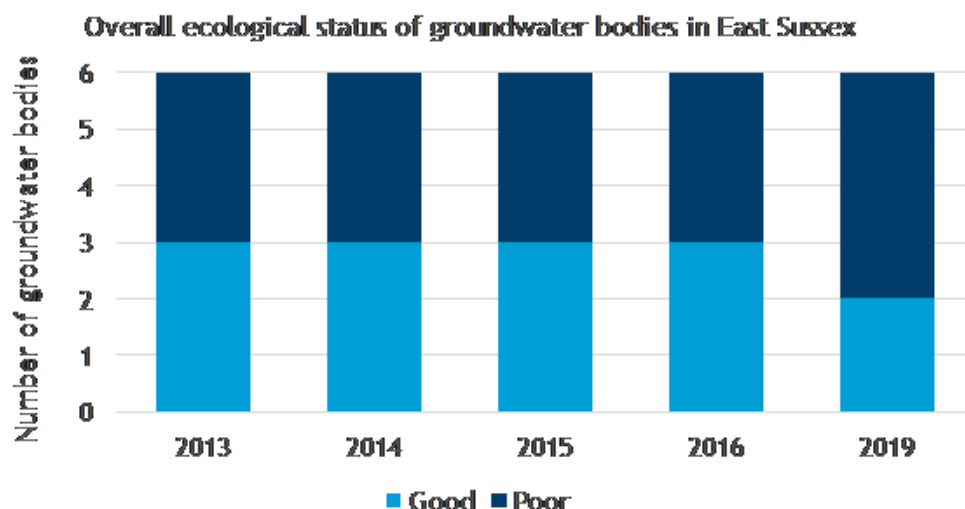


Source: Met Office

UK Met Office predictions of the effects of climate change in East Sussex include hotter and drier summers, milder and wetter winters, more droughts, more flooding, and more intense and frequent storms. This is predicted to lead to an increase in heat-related deaths particularly amongst the elderly, damage to essential infrastructure, increased cost of food, disruption to supply chains and service provision, greater coastal erosion, and impact on coastal habitats.

Water quality

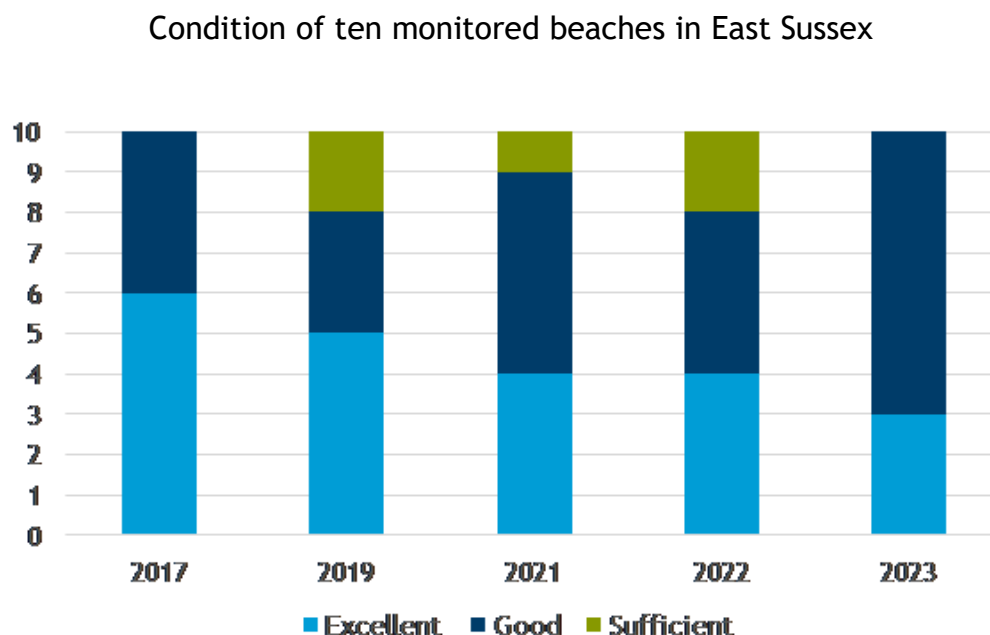
Water pollution is mostly caused by land management practices such as agricultural run-off, wastewater treatment plants, and urban and highway run-off. The most recent data available for groundwater bodies is for 2019. The quality of water bodies in East Sussex has deteriorated slightly in recent years, with the number of groundwater bodies rated as good reduced from three to two between 2016 and 2019. The quality of some ground waters, which provide about 70% of drinking water, have deteriorated due to rising nitrate levels, mostly due to historic farming practices.



Source: Environment Agency

The quality of bathing waters has deteriorated in recent years. Between 2017 and 2023, the number of monitored beaches rated 'excellent' fell from six to three,

although in 2023 no bathing waters were rated below ‘good’.



Source: Environment Agency

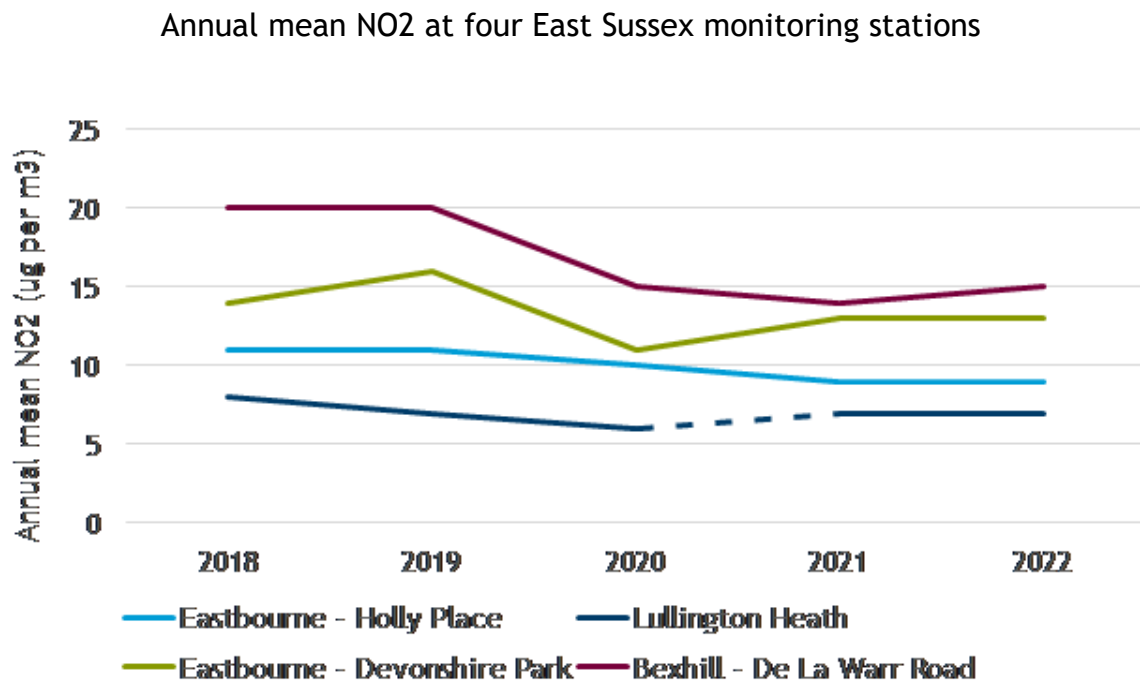
Air quality

Air quality has improved considerably across most of the UK over the last 30 years. However, up to 36,000 deaths per year in the UK are still attributable to exposure to outdoor air pollution (Public Health England, 2017). This makes air pollution the top environmental risk to human health in the UK, and the fourth greatest threat to public health after cancer, heart disease and obesity. The concentration of pollutants in the air is determined by the emission of air pollutants and factors such as building layout and weather conditions.

In East Sussex, the three main pollutants of concern for health are nitrogen dioxide, particulates and ozone. These are monitored by a small number of automatic monitoring stations in the county and the data are published on the Sussex Air website. The latest available data are from 2022.

Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂)

The main sources of NO₂ are road vehicles and domestic combustion. In 2022 the levels of NO₂ monitored at all sites in East Sussex were compliant with the short and long term health-based national air quality strategy objectives. Annual mean NO₂ has trended downwards over the past 5 years, largely due to effective controls on newer road vehicles.



Note that no annual mean was available for Lullington Heath in 2021

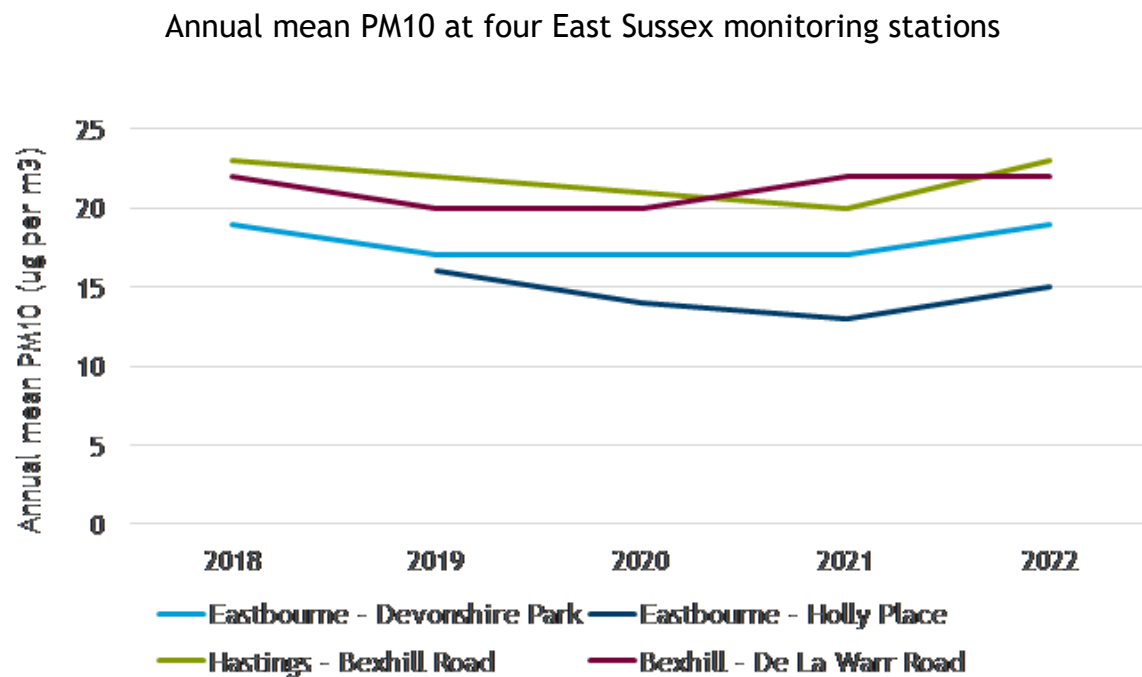
Source: ESCC Communities, Economy and Transport

Particulate matter

Particulate matter is everything in the air that is not a gas and so consists of a wide range of chemical compounds and materials. The main sources of particulates are road vehicles and solid fuel combustion, notably wood. Particulates are measured as either 'PM₁₀' or 'PM_{2.5}', which refers to the diameter of the particulates; the smaller they are the further they can penetrate into the lungs and, potentially, the blood stream. There are no safe levels of particulates.

Figure 6 shows that annual mean PM₁₀ fell at most sites between 2018 and 2021 but rose at 3 sites during 2022. Nevertheless, the levels monitored at all sites in 2022

complied with the health-based national air quality strategy objectives, whilst the PM_{2.5} levels complied with the health-based interim standards required to be met by 2028, as set out in the Environment Act of 2021.

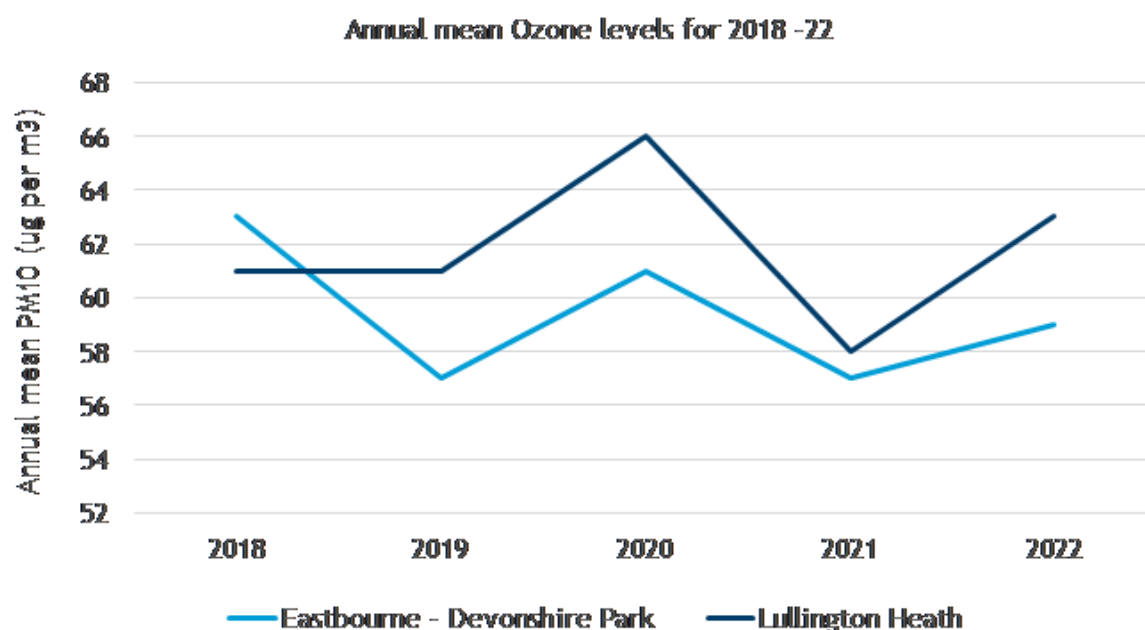


Source: ESCC Communities, Economy and Transport

Ozone (O₃)

Ozone is a secondary pollutant, created when other pollutant gases react in sunlight. It is a long-lived pollutant and tends to affect urban background and rural locations, rather than roadside sites.

Annual mean concentrations of O₃ levels have shown no clear trend between 2018 and 2022, albeit with significant year-on-year variation, largely due to the impact of the weather on O₃ formation.



Source: ESCC Communities, Economy and Transport

The government's Daily Air Quality Index divides air pollution levels into 'low', 'moderate', 'high' and 'very high', based on the potential impact on health. In 2022 there were no days when O₃ levels were measured as being either 'very high' or 'high', and one monitoring site measured 'moderate' levels on 7 days.

Ecology

East Sussex has a rich natural environment, with over two thirds of the county covered by one or more environmental designations. The table below shows how much of the county is covered by which type of designation.

Designated sites and reserves		Area (ha)
International	Ramsar	6,442
	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	7,193
	Special Protection Area (SPA)	5,546
National	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	87,980
	National Nature Reserve (NNR)	321
	National Park	24,365
	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	15,380
	Country Park	692
	Local Geological Site (LGS)	766

Designated sites and reserves		Area (ha)
Local	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1,435
	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	9,382
	Notable Road Verge	47
Reserve/ Property	Environmental Stewardship Agreement	20,121
	National Trust	1,841
	RSPB Reserve	284
	Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserve	1,118
	Woodland Trust	484

Source: Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre

Habitats

The key habitats in East Sussex are grassland, arable farmland and woodland.

Habitat	% of East Sussex
Water bodies	1.5%
Arable	22.7%
Grassland	40.0%
Heathland	0.9%
Intertidal	0.7%
Coastal	0.4%
Built up Areas and Gardens	9.1%
Woodland	19.9%
Other	4.8%

Ecology

Protected Areas

Over half of the county is designated for its landscape value, either as part of a National Park or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are 65 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), covering about 8% of the county, which recognises and protects their biological and or geological value. About half of these SSSIs are additionally designated as being internationally important for biodiversity, either as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive, a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the Birds Directive, or a Ramsar site (an internally

important wetland site).

There are 26 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), four National Nature Reserves (NNRs) - considered to be the “jewel in the crown” of SSSIs, and 285 Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs). About a third of the county supports priority habitats, which are identified as being of principal importance for conservation.

About three quarters of the SSSIs are in favourable or favourable recovering condition and the rest have either been partially destroyed or are in unfavourable condition. About half of the LWSs are currently known to be in positive conservation management.

Assets at Risk

The 2019 Sussex Nature Partnership Natural Capital Investment Strategy identifies some priority habitats as being at high risk, because they:

- a) Are not adequately protected under existing mechanisms.
- b) Are fragile or vulnerable and/or already highly fragmented.
- c) May be of particular significance in a Sussex context.
- d) Are irreplaceable or not easily recreated (either on-site or elsewhere) if destroyed.

The priority habitats most at risk in Sussex are:

- Lowland heath - particularly significant in East Sussex, notably at Ashdown Forest, due to small amounts present in the south of England, the fragmentation of the habitat type (especially outside Ashdown Forest) and it provides a range of benefits, notably clean water.
- Mudflats and saltmarsh - these habitats provide a range of benefits yet are under increasing pressure from climate change, development, and construction of hard sea defences. The national picture is one of medium risk, but the East Sussex context (with high levels of coastal squeeze) increases the risk to these habitats and the benefits they provide. There are small amounts at Newhaven Tide Mills, Cuckmere Estuary and Rye Harbour.
- Vegetated shingle - a globally restricted and internationally important

habitat, for which East Sussex is a stronghold in the UK, mostly at Rye Harbour.

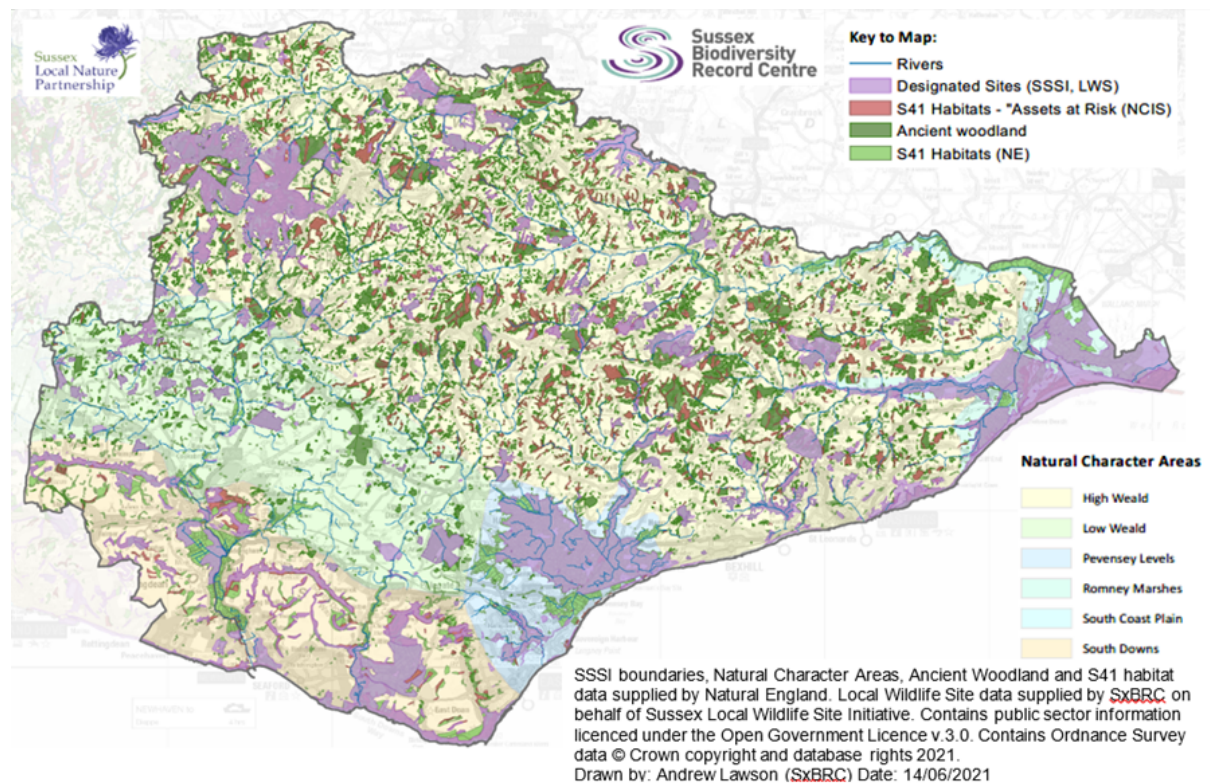
- Reedbed, fen and grazing marsh - small and highly fragmented areas remain in East Sussex, notably at Pevensey, yet they have the potential to provide a wide range of benefits, particularly flood risk mitigation in flood plains and provision of clean water.
- Floodplain woodlands - a fragmented habitat type which plays a very important role in floodplain function.
- Species rich grassland - highly fragmented and those areas outside formal designated areas have little/no protection from further loss. These areas are a priority for loss to development.

Marine Conservation Zones

There are two Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) off East Sussex, with two other offshore sites under consideration. Designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, MCZs protect areas that are important to conserve the diversity of national rare, threatened, and representative habitats and species. These are Beachy Head West, which stretches along the coastline from Brighton Marina to Beachy Head, with a gap at Newhaven, and Beachy Head East which contains two marine Sites of Nature Conservation Importance: the Royal Sovereign Shoals and the Horse of Willingdon Reef. This large inshore area runs to Hastings, out to just beyond six nautical miles from the coast at its furthest points.

Nature Recovery Network Mapping

The map below shows the fragmented state of the most important species rich habitats that are to be conserved under section 41 of the National Environment and Rural Communities Act.



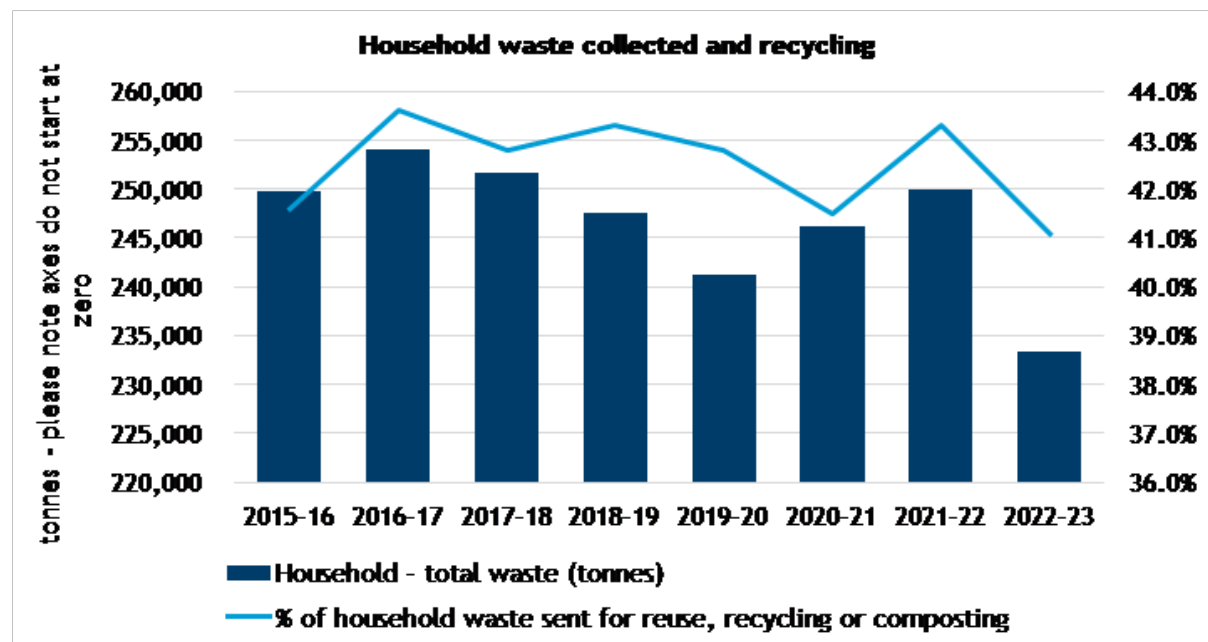
Local Nature Recovery Strategies

The Council has been appointed as the Responsible Authority to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, under the Environment Act 2021. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a mandatory new system of spatial strategies for nature. They are designed to work closely alongside other measures in the Act and will help support delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain, provide a focus for a strengthened duty on all public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity, and will underpin a national Nature Recovery Network.

Waste

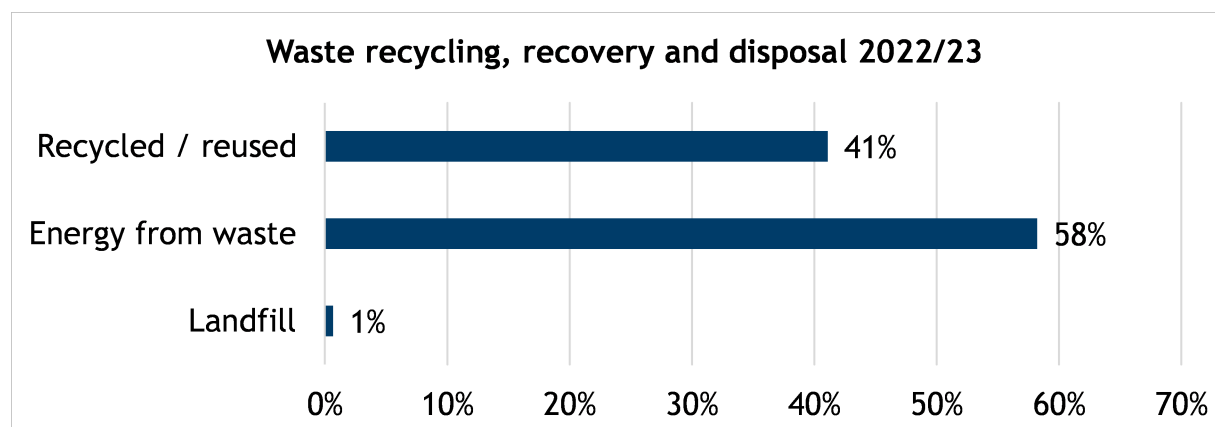
Household waste reduced significantly in 2022/23. This is partly because of increased costs of living resulting in reduced purchasing and reduced waste. Additionally, one of the driest summers in recent times occurred in 2022, leading to a significant drop in green waste.

Chart showing tonnes of household waste collected and percentage of household waste sent for recycling, composting or re-use between 2014-15 and 2021-22



Source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

In 2022/23 41% of our waste was reused, recycled or composted. The drop in green waste contributed to the reduction in the rate of waste reused, recycled or composted in 2022/23. 58% of our waste was sent for energy recovery. Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) supplies power for over 25,000 homes. East Sussex sent only 1% of collected waste to landfill in 2022/23. This was the joint fourth lowest of all county councils in the UK.



Source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Flooding

Flooding is a natural process that shapes our environment, but it can also pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of communities. Flooding can be caused by major rivers, the sea, groundwater and surface water. Overall flood risk is highest to the south of the county and on river flood plains. The highest risk of surface water flooding is in Eastbourne and Hastings.

Settlement	Residential Properties at Risk
Eastbourne	Greater than 1,000
Seaford	500 to 1,000
Newhaven	50 to 150
Peacehaven	150 to 500
Lewes	50 to 150
Hailsham	150 to 500
Bexhill	500 to 1,000
Battle	50 to 150
Hastings	Greater than 1,000
Rye	Fewer than 50
Heathfield	50 to 150
Crowborough	50 to 150
Uckfield	Fewer than 50
Forest Row	Fewer than 50

Note: A comparison of residential properties at risk from a 1 in 30 year surface water flood event (3% chance in any given year) between 2016-2026 Assessments of Local Flood Risk. Source: ESCC Flood Risk Strategy

Settlement	Non-Residential Properties at Risk
Eastbourne	Greater than 200
Seaford	25 to 50
Newhaven	Fewer than 25
Peacehaven	Fewer than 25
Lewes	Fewer than 25
Hailsham	25 to 50
Bexhill	25 to 50
Battle	Fewer than 25
Hastings	Greater than 200
Rye	Fewer than 25
Heathfield	Fewer than 25
Crowborough	Fewer than 25
Uckfield	Fewer than 25
Forest Row	Fewer than 25

Note: A comparison of non-residential properties at risk from a 1 in 30 year surface water flood event (3% chance in any given year) between 2016-2026 Assessments of Local Flood Risk. Source: ESCC Flood Risk Strategy.

Civil Society

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and volunteering

We have a diverse range of VCSE organisations working at every level, neighbourhood, town/parish, and district/borough, there are over 3,000 not-for-profit groups and organisations providing activities and support to residents and communities that bring about positive change and improve people's lives.

Some of the organisations the Council funded or supported during 2023:



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health department

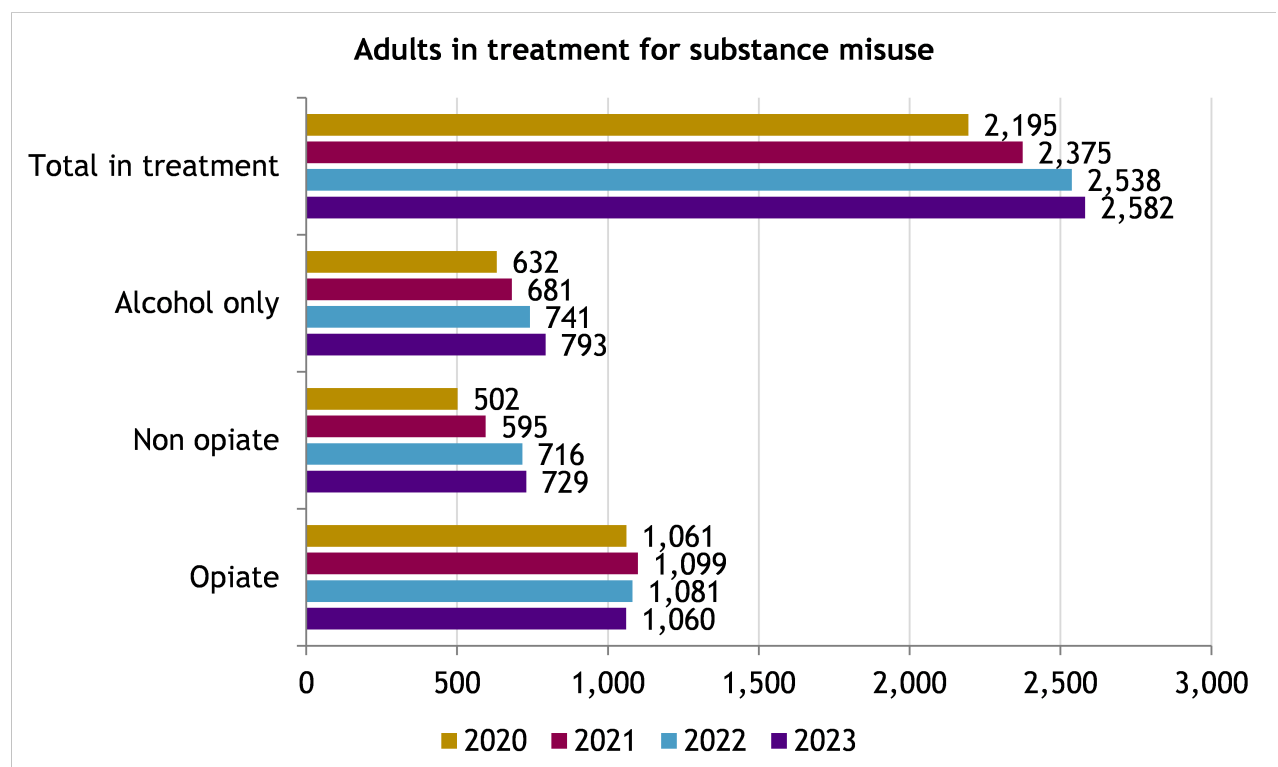
A quarter of the population volunteer at least once a month in East Sussex, giving

their time to local causes, groups, and communities that aim to make communities a better place where helping people themselves is part of everyday life. The sense of community that volunteering brings enables people to feel connected and that they are making a positive difference.

Community Safety

Drug and alcohol-related harm

The number of East Sussex adults in substance misuse treatment in 2023 increased by 1.7% to 2,582, compared to 2022. In England there was an increase of 6.9%. Those in treatment for non-opiate use increased by 1.8% between 2022 and 2023. This is a much smaller increase than seen in earlier years. Opiate users as a proportion of all those in treatment has decreased year-on-year since 2020, being 41% of those in treatment in East Sussex in 2023. Between 2022 and 2023 there was a decrease of 1.9% in East Sussex, compared to a slight decrease in England of 0.06%. The number of people in treatment for alcohol use in East Sussex has increased by 25% between 2020 and 2023, with a 7% increase between 2022 and 2023. Between 2020 and 2023 there was a 23% increase across England in this group.



Source: National Drug Treatment Monitoring System

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive appropriate support. Nationally in 2023, the NRM received 17,004 referrals of potential victims of modern slavery. This is similar to 2022 when there were 16,921 referrals; nevertheless 2023 still represents the highest annual number since the NRM began in 2009. Of all referrals nationally, 76% (12,903) were for males which is down from 78% (13,290) the previous year, and 24% (4,088) for females which is the highest on record. 44% (7,342) of referrals were for children, which is the highest on record, and 51% (8,662) were for adults, which is lower than the previous year. The age category of 6% (950) is unknown. The most common nationality referred was UK (25%), the second was Albanian (24%) and the third was Vietnamese (6%).

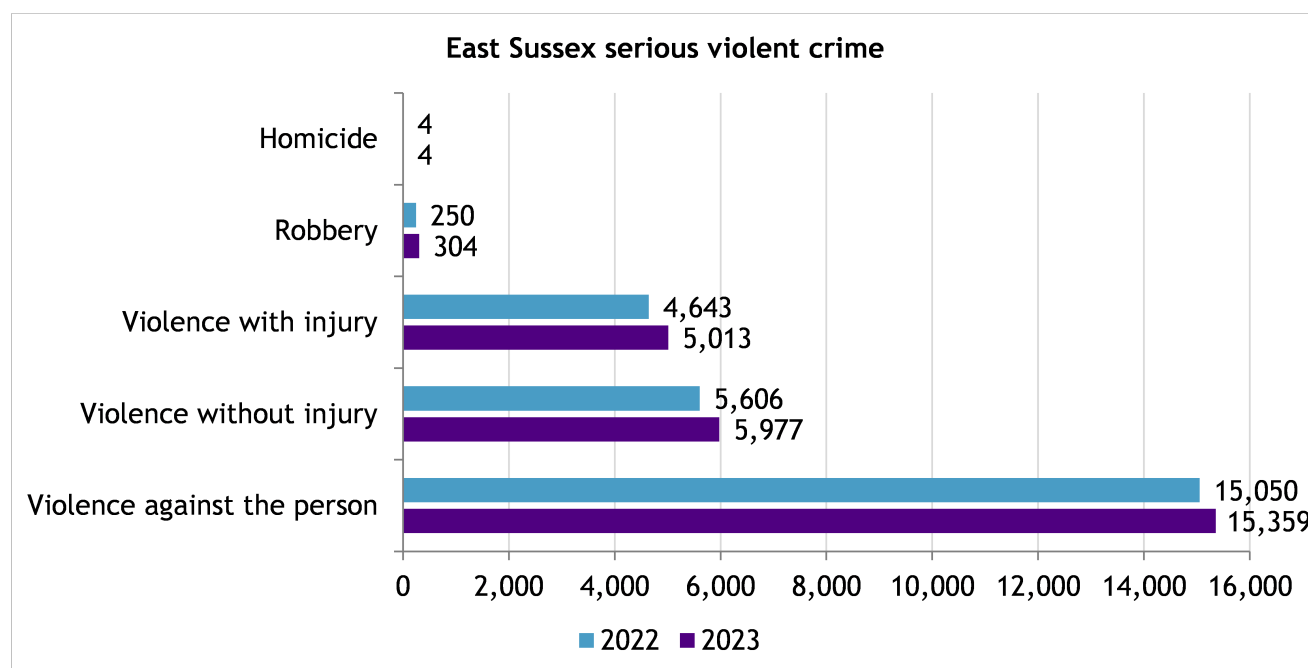
In East Sussex in 2023, 5 adults and 24 children who were potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking were referred by the local authority through the NRM. This compares to 2 adults and 9 children in 2022. (Source: National Referral Mechanism statistics)

Sussex Police made 69 NRM referrals in East Sussex during 2023, this compares to 63 for 2022. (Source: Sussex Police)

Serious Violence

Serious violence is one of the areas that is under increasing national scrutiny. We have an active focus on this through our partnership working, however rates of serious violence in East Sussex are low.

Between 2022 to 2023 there was an increase in serious violent crime in East Sussex. The largest increase has been in robbery with a 22% increase. Violence with injury increased by 8%; violence without injury increased by 7% and violence against the person increased by 2%. The number of homicides has remained the same.



Source: CSP Report December 2023, Sussex Police

Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation

Between April 2023 and March 2024, 68 East Sussex children were experiencing either criminal or sexual exploitation or both. This is an increase on the 56 children experiencing exploitation between April 2022 and March 2023.

Eighty-four percent of children experiencing exploitation were male and 75% were aged 15 or older. 38 children were removed from the Safeguarding Adolescents From Exploitation and Risk (SAFER) group during the year and the average time it took for a child to be removed from SAFER due to a lowering of their risk level was seven months.

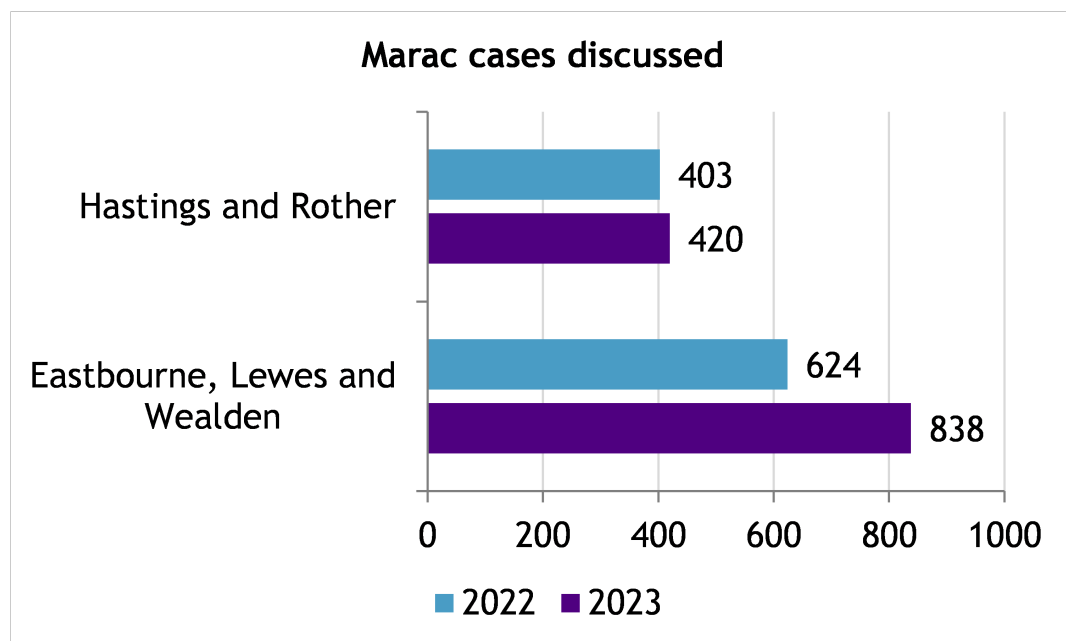
Domestic violence and abuse

Multi-Agency Risk Conferences (MARACs) are meetings that discuss the highest risk domestic abuse cases. In East Sussex during 2023 there was a 24% increase in the number of cases discussed at MARACs compared to the previous year.

The Eastbourne, Lewes & Wealden (ELW) MARAC saw a 37% increase in the number

of cases discussed between 2022 to 2023, whilst Hastings & Rother (HR) saw a 6% increase.

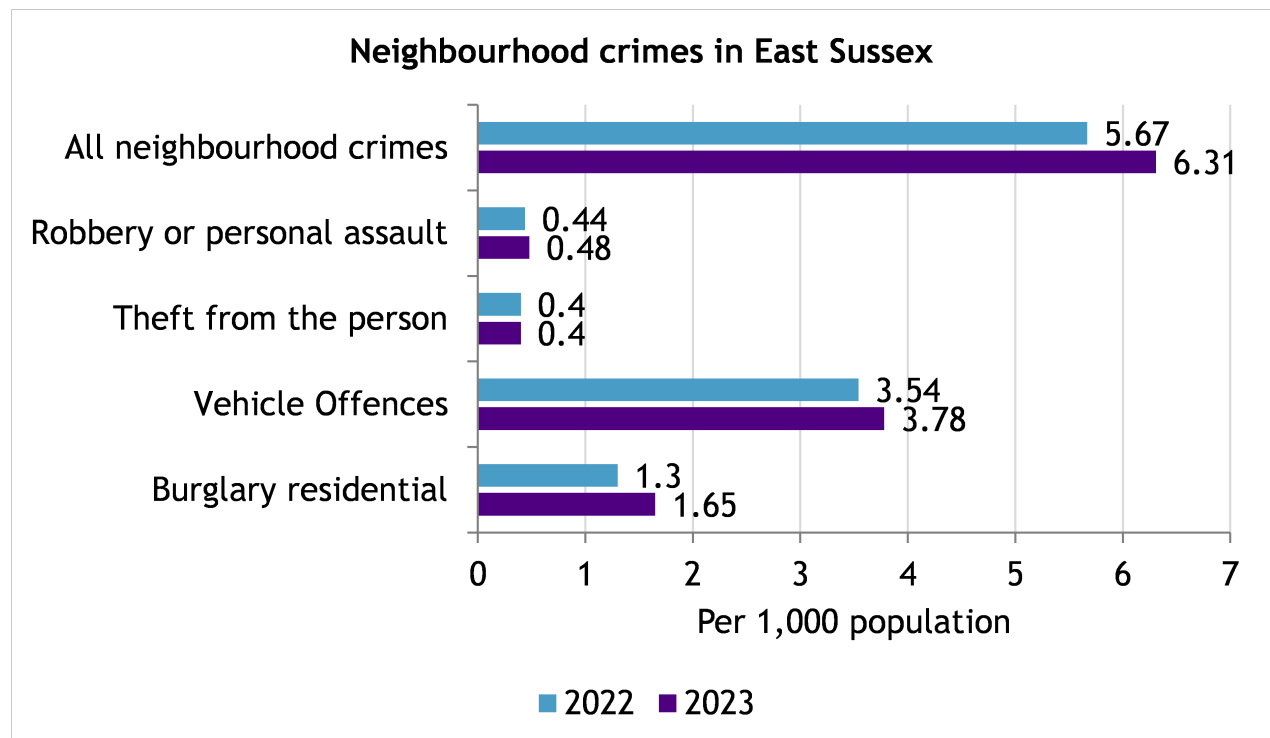
East Sussex has historically had a high number of referrals into MARAC and both ELW and HR MARACs remain over the recommended number of 40 cases per 10,000 population.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Neighbourhood Crime

Neighbourhood crime rates in East Sussex are lower than the national average across all categories. Neighbourhood crime includes residential burglary, vehicle offences, theft from the person and robbery of personal property. In total, there was an 11% increase in neighbourhood crime in East Sussex between 2022 to 2023. The biggest increase was in residential burglary with an increase of 28%; however, the actual figure remains low with 1.65 crimes per 1,000 population in 2023.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Road Safety

The rate of people being killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions in East Sussex has historically been higher than the average for England. For the three-year period 2017-2019 (the latest period not impacted by the national Covid-19 lockdowns) the average rate of people killed or seriously injured for East Sussex was 68.1 per 100,000 population compared to 43.2 in England.

Although East Sussex has had higher rates of people killed or seriously injured than the national average and many other areas, direct comparisons between rates are unreliable due to both methods of data collection and recording across police forces, and the differences in road networks and infrastructure.

The number of people killed or seriously injured in East Sussex has fluctuated in recent years. Please note the 2020 and 2021 figures were affected by COVID-19 restrictions/lockdowns. The figures also include crashes on the Strategic Road Network which is managed by National Highways.

Number of people killed or seriously injured in East Sussex

State of the County 2024: Focus on East Sussex

Year	Seriously injured	Fatalities	Total
2023	349	13	362
2022	379	20	399
2021	321	18	339
2020	279	17	296
2019	395	14	409
2018	334	21	355
2017	344	26	370

Source: Sussex Safer Roads Partnership

Data

We use a wide range of data to help us understand the context for our plans and the impact we are having through our work and in partnership. A selection of this data is listed below. Years are financial (April-March) or academic (September-August) unless otherwise stated.

Key: CY - calendar year (January-December), NA - data not available.

Measure	2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 Outturn	2022/23 England
Percentage of working age residents (16-64 year olds) with a level 3 or higher qualification (HNC, HND, degree etc.) (CY)	N/A	33.8% (Census 2021)	37.1% (Census 2021)
Percentage of working age residents (16-64 year olds) with no qualifications or qualified only to NVQ1 (CY)	N/A	10.6% (Census 2021)	12.4% (Census 2021)
Annual gross full-time earnings, median average (residence based)	£31,259 (2022)	£34,028 (2023)	£35,100 (2023)
Percentage of working age population (16-64 year olds) in employment	77.1% (2022)	73.1% (2023)	75.7% (2023)
People claiming unemployment benefits (JSA and Universal Credit) percentage of population 16-64 year olds at March	3.6% (2023)	3.5% (2024)	3.9% (2024)
New business registration rate per 10,000 people over 16 (CY)	52.2 (2021)	47.5 (2022)	64.6 (2022)
New houses built, total completed / total affordable	1,606 /359 (2021/22)	1,702 / 714 (2022/23)	N/A
Average Attainment 8 score per pupil state funded secondary schools	46.5	43.6	46.4
Average Progress 8 score for state funded secondary schools	-0.11	-0.19	-0.03

Measure	2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 Outturn	2022/23 England
Percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-5 pass in English and maths GCSEs	46.3%	41.0%	45.3%
Average point score (APS) per entry for level A levels (age 16-18)	36.19	32.46	34.16
Attainment of A level students (age 16-18) average point score (APS) per entry, best 3	34.81	31.27	34.68
Attainment of A level students (age 16-18) % achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitation subjects	12.3%	9.18%	15.8%
Rate per 10,000 (aged 0-17 population) of Looked After Children	61	62	71
Rate per 10,000 (aged 0-17 population) of children with a Child Protection Plan	50.1	64.8	43.2
Percentage of children who ceased to be looked after adopted during the year ending 31 March	8%	7%	9%
Proportion of people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital	89.7%	91.2%	82.3%
Suicide rate per 100,000 of population, three-year average	12.1 (2019 - 2021)	11.6 (2020 - 2022)	10.3 (2020 - 2022)
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children aged 0-14 years, rate per 10,000 resident population	99.8 (2020/21)	107.6 (2021/22)	84.3 (2021/22)
Percentage of children aged 4-5 years with excess weight (overweight or obese) LA by postcode of child	19.8%	22.1%	21.3%
Percentage of children aged 10-11 years with excess weight (overweight or obese) LA by postcode of child	32.8%	32.6%	36.6%

Measure	2021/22 Outturn	2022/23 Outturn	2022/23 England
Percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese	64.9%	62.7% (2021/22)	63.8% (2021/22)
Percentage of children aged 4-5 years who are underweight	0.7%	0.5%	1.2%
Percentage of children aged 10-11 years who are underweight	1.6%	1.3%	1.6%
Long-term support needs of younger adults (aged 18-64) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population per year	10.8	13.9	14.6
Long-term support needs of older adults (aged 65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population per year	494.2	488.2	560.8
Proportion of older people aged 65 and over who received reablement services following discharge from hospital	1.6%	1.4%	2.9%
The outcome of short-term services: sequel to service: proportion of people who received short-term services during the year, where no further request was made for ongoing support or support of a lower level	93.7%	94.7%	77.5%
Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over per 100,000	2,314 (2020/21)	2,523 (2021/22)	2,100 (2021/22)
Number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads (CY)	399 (CY 2022)	362 (CY 2023)	N/A

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National and Local Policy Outlook 2024

1. Introduction and Contents

1.1. This appendix provides an overview of the key developments in the national and local context that will influence and inform our future service and financial planning through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process for the 2025/26 financial year and beyond. It also provides an update on work to deliver the County Council's local priorities and summarises key strategic challenges for our services.

1.2. Recent developments in national policy and the Council's broader operating context have been significant and continue to evolve. With a general election imminent, there is uncertainty about the general direction of government policy beyond this time, including which current priorities and policies would be upheld by any new administration. There is potential for rapid policy shifts post-election which we would need to respond to, both in terms of immediate impacts and implications for future planning. The position on key national reforms in major service areas experiencing significant pressures, such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services, will also need to be clarified, although it is likely that progress in these areas will continue to be more limited than we would want in the short term.

1.3. Locally, significant work is taking place, as an organisation and with our partners, to respond to national developments, to progress our local priorities and to prepare for future challenges. Detail on this work is set out below.

1.4. This appendix has been written to be easily navigable to specific sections for future reference (using the below contents list), as well as providing a comprehensive single overview of developments. It includes information on:

Section 2 – Overall Context (pages 3-7)

- The national political context (pg 3)
- The national economic outlook (pg 3)
- Local Government finance outlook (pg 4)
- Productivity (pg 5)
- Levelling Up and devolution (pg 5)
- Updated inspection regime (pg 6)
- Oflog (pg 6)

Section 3 – Adult Social Care (ASC) and Public Health (pages 7-16)

- People at the Heart of Care and charging reform (pg 7)
- ADASS roadmap and Social Care Future vision (pg 8)
- Care Workforce Pathway and local workforce strategy and programme (pg 8)
- Care Data Matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care (pg 9)
- Right Care, Right Person (pg 9)
- Adult Social Care Strategy: What Matters To You (pg 9)
- Prevention strategy (pg 10)
- ASC market – including market sustainability and net to gross payments (pg 10)
- Safeguarding Adults Board strategic plan 2024-27 (pg 11)
- Housing (pg 11)

- ASC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy (pg 12)
- Health and Social Care Integration – national and local, including Health and Wellbeing Board, Integrated Community Teams, and hospital discharge (pg 12-14)
- Public Health priorities (pg 14-16)

Section 4 – Children’s Services (pages 16-21)

- National reform to children’s social care (pg 16)
- Service demand (pg 17)
- Youth service developments (pg 18)
- Special educational needs and disability (pg 19)
- Schools policy (pg 19)
- Education attainment and attendance (pg 19)
- Local education priorities and strategic challenges (pg 20)
- Home to school transport (pg 20)

Section 5 – Migration (pages 20-22)

- National policy developments – including the Illegal Migration Act (pg 20)
- Local response (pg 21)
- Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (pg 22)

Section 6 – Communities (pages 22-26)

- Financial Inclusion Programme and Household Support Fund (pg 22)
- Working with the VCSE and community networks (pg 23)
- Community Safety developments – including drug and alcohol misuse, domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, serious violence, modern slavery (pg 23-25)
- Trading Standards (pg 25)
- Local resilience arrangements (pg 25)
- National planning reforms – including infrastructure funding arrangements (pg 25)

Section 7 – Highways and Transport (pages 26-30)

- Highways maintenance (pg 26)
- Refresh of the Local Transport Plan (pg 26)
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (pg 27)
- Active travel (pg 27)
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (pg 28)
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- Road safety (pg 28)
- Strategic Road Network (A27/A21) (pg 29)
- Local highways programme – Major Road Network (pg 29)
- Rail services (pg 29)

Section 8 – Economy (pages 30-33)

- Transfer of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) functions (pg 30)
- East Sussex Economic Strategy (pg 30)
- Economic growth funding – including UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Levelling Up Partnerships and Long Term Plan for Towns (pg 31)
- Local work on, and national reforms to, skills provision (pg 32)
- Culture and tourism (pg 32)

Section 9 – Environment and Climate Change (pages 33-37)

- Climate change national policy context (pg 33)
- Local action on climate change (pg 34)
- Environment Act impacts – including Local Nature Recovery Strategy, biodiversity, waste and air quality (pg 34-36)
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- Emissions trading scheme (pg 36)

Section 10 – Supporting Services (pages 36-39)

- Modernising Back Office Systems programme (pg 36)
- Workforce and pay challenges (pg 37)
- Property Asset Management (pg 38)
- Technology supporting productivity (pg 38)
- Procurement – including impact of the Procurement Act (pg 38)
- Local elections (pg 39)

2. Overall Context

2.1. The following section provides an overview of the overall economic, fiscal and policy context the County Council is operating and planning within.

National political context

2.2 There is significant policy uncertainty looking forward due to the general election to be held on 4 July 2024. The commitments already set out in political parties' manifestos make clear that the election holds potential for significant policy change affecting ESCC services and the county more broadly. Once the outcome of the election is known, we will analyse in more detail the implications of relevant policy positions for the Council. The King's Speech on 17 July 2024 will set out the post-election Government's initial legislative and policy priorities.

National economic outlook

2.3 Following weaker than expected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the fourth quarter of 2023, the UK economy had experienced two successive quarters of falling output, meeting the definition of a technical recession. However, in the first quarter of 2024 the UK economy grew by 0.6% and came out of recession, although growth is still expected to remain weak. In April 2024 the International Monetary Fund downgraded its forecasts for UK GDP growth, now projecting growth of 0.5% in 2024 and 1.5% in 2025. Following an extended period of excessively high inflation, Consumer Price Index inflation has fallen more sharply than had been forecast by the OBR in November 2023. This is largely because of falling gas and electricity prices as a result of a drop in the energy price cap. In April 2024, Consumer Price Index inflation stood at 2.3%, the lowest level since September 2021, and the OBR forecasts that quarterly inflation should fall to the Bank of England target of 2% in the second quarter of 2024. In response, the Bank of England has maintained interest rates at 5.25% since August 2023, with cuts to the base rate considered likely in coming months.

2.4 Inflation falling faster than expected also led the OBR to improve its forecast for living standards, with real household disposable income per person set to recover to its pre-pandemic peak by 2025-26, two years earlier than its November 2023 forecast. However, this follows historic falls in living standards in 2022-23 which saw sharp increases in the cost of living being experienced by residents and businesses, and pressures still remain. In light of this, the Government announced in the Spring Budget the extension of the Household Support Fund for a further six months until September 2024.

2.5 Data on the East Sussex economy, cost of living and labour market are set out in Appendix 1 – Focus on East Sussex. Output of the East Sussex economy remains below the national average; Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour in East Sussex (a measure of the goods or services produced in an area per hour worked in that area) was 20.4% below the England level in 2021 (£30.97 per hour, against £38.91 per hour in England). The unemployment rate for March 2024 was 3.5% for East Sussex, lower than the national average of 3.9%, but above the regional average of 3.0%. The youth unemployment rate (those 18-24 claiming unemployment related benefits) was 6.1%, higher than the England rate of 5.2%, and above pre-pandemic levels. Further information on the national labour market picture and recruitment and retention challenges this presents for ESCC are set out at 10.6-10.13.

Local government finance

2.6 The outlook for local government funding remains unclear and very challenging. Funding that ESCC will receive from central Government between 2025/26 – 2027/28 is yet to be confirmed. The timing of the forthcoming general election, earlier than anticipated, means that there may be more time for any incoming Government to seek to understand and address Local Government funding issues. However, the likelihood of another one year financial settlement for 2025/26 remains high given the time needed to complete a full Spending Review post-election. Long awaited reform to the system of local government funding has been deferred beyond the election and both the timing and nature of any proposed reforms remain unclear, although it is likely that a post-election government would struggle to implement any significant funding reforms within the current medium term financial plan period.

2.7 In recent Budget Statements the Chancellor indicated that the Government's focus was on driving economic growth and reducing taxation, rather than increasing spending on public services. There has been no change in the overall planned increase in Government department spending limits of 1% in real terms. The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimates this would result in real-terms cuts in funding for unprotected budgets in the years ahead, which includes most of local government. Recent commitments by political parties to increase defence spending in response to increasing global conflict will place further pressure on the public purse.

2.8 At a local level, key risks for the Council continue to be growth in demand and complexity in children's and adults' social care and special educational needs and disability. The resulting increases in costs are largely outside of local control, particularly given market conditions in these sectors and the impact of Government-determined increases to the National Living Wage. Combined with increased costs across other services, and the uncertain impact of national reforms, we can expect to see ongoing significant and sustained pressures on services and budgets which will impact on our medium term financial plan and ability to meet needs.

2.9 The ongoing impact of cost of living pressures and Covid legacy will continue to play out both in demand for services and in the income we receive. 2023/24 saw the level of debt continue to rise, particularly for Adult Social Care contributions, and it is expected that this trend will continue in 2024/25. Ongoing impacts on the collection of business rates and council tax continue to be fully assessed, as do the impact of recent changes to district and borough Council Tax Reduction Schemes and the potential for increased income from their new ability to apply Council Tax to second homes.

2.10 For the Capital Programme, there remain challenges in the supply chain for materials and price pressures within existing contracts. Changes to the Infrastructure Levy have added a level of uncertainty to the value of future developer contributions, which remain an important

funding stream for the programme. The challenging revenue budget position for 2024/25 required the capital programme to be reviewed to minimise the borrowing costs of the overall programme within Treasury Management and the revenue budget. The review reduced and re-profiled programmes and schemes over the 10 year programme. Further review will be required in light of the significant financial gap over the medium term, as the level of investment in assets that support the objectives of the Council Plan must be considered in the context of its impact on the revenue budget and wider Council financial position.

2.11 A lack of sufficient Government funding to address pressures in social care, instead asking councils to use reserves to mitigate pressures, means that we are using significant reserves to balance the budget for 2024/25, which will constrain the Council's ability to use reserves to manage future financial risk. Furthermore, the Council has had to abandon its usual approach of maintaining reserves to help future proof Council services from unforeseen risks. While the Council's reserves have been applied within a robust reserve policy, the Council will need to instigate work to identify a range of actions that it will need to take to set a balanced budget for 2025/26, without the need to draw further on reserves.

Productivity

2.12 The Government has set a target of 0.5% annual productivity improvements in the public sector and committed £4.2bn of funding (primarily for the NHS) to a Public Sector Productivity Programme intended to start to deliver the next phase of reform of public services. Relevant government departments will develop detailed productivity plans over the coming months ahead of the next Spending Review.

2.13 As part of the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25, additional funding of £500m nationally (£5.4m for ESCC) was provided to support the delivery of social care. This additional funding came with an expectation that local authorities would produce productivity plans for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) by July 2024. A Long Term Sustainability Panel, made up of sector representatives and technology and transformation experts, is to be established from summer 2024 to review common themes and evidence arising from the plans and to consider national policy implications, the role of Government in supporting change and the role of the sector itself, including how it can achieve further productivity gains.

Devolution and Levelling Up

2.14 The Levelling Up agenda, which aims to address disparities in economic prosperity and quality of health across the UK, has remained a focus for the Government. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 contains a number of key reforms, including a system of brownfield-first development; the introduction of joint Spatial Development Strategies; reduced 'top down' housing targets; streamlining the local plan process; a new Infrastructure Levy; and measures to deliver on plans for increased devolution in England.

2.15 Devolution has remained central to the Levelling Up agenda. The Government has maintained its commitment to agreeing a devolution deal with any area of the country that wants one by 2030. A number of further deals have been published by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which are at Level 2 and Level 3 of the Devolution Framework as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper. Level 3 involves adopting a directly elected mayor or leader, although in some areas this has been met with local resistance. In addition, the Government has continued to progress two 'trailblazer' deeper devolution deals with the combined authorities of Greater Manchester and the West Midlands, intended to be a blueprint for deeper devolution across the rest of England.

2.16 ESCC will continue to monitor how the various devolution deals progress to better understand the opportunities and risks associated with them, and to review future government policy in this area following the general election.

Updated inspection regime

2.17 In 2023 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) began assessing local authority Adult Social Care departments on how they are discharging their duties under the Care Act 2014. The CQC plans to assess all authorities by 2026. We anticipate that our Adult Social Care services are likely to be assessed by April 2025. In preparation for this, the department has undertaken a peer review with the Local Government Association and will be responding to the findings from this review to clarify our strengths and areas for development. Our response, as well as preparations for CQC assurance, will be guided by our departmental priorities (outlined in the Adult Social Care and Public Health section below) and the four CQC assurance themes: working with people; providing support; ensuring safety within the system; and leadership.

2.18 Our Children's Services Department was inspected by Ofsted under the framework and evaluation schedule for Inspections of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS), which focuses on children's social care services, in December 2023. Our services were judged to be 'good' overall and 'outstanding' for the experiences and progress of children in care. The post-inspection action plan, agreed in response to the areas for improvement identified, has been shared with Ofsted and actions will continue to be taken forward to further develop our services.

2.19 Ofsted and CQC's new joint framework for inspecting provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) took effect from January 2023. The new framework focuses on the effectiveness of a local area partnership's arrangements, and whether these are delivering improved outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND. It also includes an evaluation of commissioning and oversight arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision, something the previous framework did not do. We await an Ofsted local area SEND inspection under this framework in due course. HM Inspectorate of Probation recently undertook an inspection of our youth justice services and we await the report and recommendations which will inform future service development.

Oflog

2.20 The [Office for Local Government](#) (Oflog), established in July 2023 to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about local government performance, continues to develop. Oflog is currently part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), although the Government committed in the Levelling Up White Paper that Oflog would ultimately be independent.

2.21 Oflog has published and consulted on its draft Corporate Plan 2024-2027 which outlines its purpose to:

- Inform - increasing understanding about data on the performance of local authorities;
- Warn - helping to identify authorities at risk of serious failure who have not already raised the alarm themselves; and
- Support - helping local authorities with organisational improvement.

2.22 Oflog will publish its final Corporate Plan later this year. Its business plan for 2024-2025 sets out key activities and objectives for the next year, including to publish more metrics on its local authority performance data explorer, develop the desk-based component of its new early

warning system, start conducting Early Warning Conversations with local authorities who may be at risk of failure, and establish where it can best add value in providing support to councils.

3. Adult Social Care and Public Health

3.1 Whilst major reforms to Adult Social Care (ASC) charging have been postponed until 2025, other national reforms have progressed which impact on how social care is delivered locally. Teams across the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Department are continuing to respond to a range of national and local developments, set out in more detail in this section. These include working with health partners to progress local health and social care integration and implementing initiatives to facilitate hospital discharge. Work to deliver local priorities and respond to strategic challenges, including market sustainability, workforce, supporting the resilience of local communities and addressing threats to health is also covered here.

People at the Heart of Care

3.2 The Government's [Next steps to put People at the Heart of Care](#), published in 2023 as part of the [People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper](#), sets out the latest key milestones for the national development of ASC. This includes:

- Funding local authorities to increase care capacity and the workforce, including volunteers;
- Introducing a new Care Certificate qualification as a baseline for care workers;
- Implementation of the digital skills passport for carers' training;
- New systems to share patient care data across settings;
- Improvement of national data collection and availability to increase personalisation in care;
- Using evidence on technologies that can improve safety and quality of care; and
- Assessment of all local authorities by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) (see 2.17 above).

3.3 The ASCH Department has a number of work programmes that will support us to implement these national reforms including our workforce programme, work to maintain a sustainable care market, and work to optimise use of data and technology. As part of preparations for CQC assessment, and in response to our Local Government Association peer review, the following set of priorities for ASCH have been agreed for 2024/25, which align to our Adult Social Care Strategy: 'What Matters to You' and the Council's four priority outcomes:

- Prevention
- Waiting times
- Safeguarding
- Quality
- Value for money

Charging reforms

3.4 The major national reforms to adult social care charging (originally reported at State of the County 2022) have been postponed until 2025, and there remains some uncertainty about when or whether they will be rolled out. If implemented, the reforms pose a significant risk to ESCC in terms of affordability, in the absence of assurance that Government funding will increase to meet the associated costs. They would also pose considerable risks operationally, as the reforms would increase demand on ASCH assessment teams, which already face significant demands on their services. ASCH undertook some initial preparation for delivery of charging reforms, such as identifying where increases in workforce capacity would be needed to manage risks of increased demand on operational services. ASCH remains ready to further those preparations, as and when Government expectations about the timing and implementation of charging reform become clear.

ADASS roadmap and Social Care Future vision

3.5 The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) has published a [roadmap to reforming care and support in England](#) which sets out recommendations for improving and reforming adult social care over the short, medium, and long term future. Its 'agenda for action' for local authorities sets out proposed changes, including a shift towards co-producing plans, improving assessments, developing digital tools, investing in community support, and improving work in care and support.

3.6 ADASS recognises that funding remains a significant barrier to the implementation of its vision and recommend that funding is used to stabilise and transform the sector. The report suggests other barriers can be tackled immediately, including setting attitudes at a leadership level, encouraging positive risk taking, and considering clients as people and not patients. ASCH will be using the roadmap to inform our departmental plans.

3.7 The ADASS roadmap also recommends that a shared vision for social care is achieved and the Social Care Future vision is adopted. We have adopted this as our vision where we want everyone in East Sussex to "live in the place we call home, with the people and things we love, in communities where we look out for each other, doing the things that matter to us" and has joined the national Social Care Future Community of Support.

3.8 Achieving this vision will be supported by work aligned to both our priorities for ASCH for 2024/25 and the six residents' priorities in our Adult Social Care Strategy: 'What Matters To You'. The learning from Social Care Future community will also help us deliver specific commitments in our local strategy.

National Care Workforce Pathway

3.9 The Government, through the [National Care Workforce Pathway](#), has outlined plans to improve the career prospects of the domestic care workforce through training, qualifications, and a clearer care career path. Included within the pathway are suggested learning opportunities to help the workforce develop knowledge and skills within a role or specific area of practice. As further parts of the pathway are launched, additional learning opportunities will provide the ASCH Workforce Board with an opportunity to build on existing priorities aimed at both recruitment and retention, ensuring our workforce is trained and responsive to the needs of East Sussex residents.

Local Workforce Strategy and Programme

3.10 Locally, the ASCH Workforce Programme is entering its third year. Recruitment continues to be a challenge nationally and locally and is the focus for one of the six projects within the programme. Our priorities for recruitment include finding new ways to appeal to diverse candidates, promoting opportunities through local colleges and careers fairs, and streamlining our application process. We will build on the recruitment of a new cohort of social workers and support others to undertake social work apprenticeships.

3.11 Other aspects of the ASCH Workforce Programme include the Wellbeing Project which is working with Brighton University to improve the musculoskeletal health and wellbeing of ASCH staff and reduce musculoskeletal related absence; the Social Justice in the Workforce project which has launched the Equality Allies network to enable discussion about inclusion and help colleagues improve practice and services; the Leadership and Management Project which has rewritten the ASCH supervision policy and will signpost supervisors to tools and resources to support effective supervision with staff; the Strategic Workforce Planning project which has provided ASCH with an improved understanding of variations in retention rates across ASCH;

and the Retention Project which is piloting new exit interview processes. A consultation with staff aged 55 and over will help shape the support we provide to help them remain working for longer.

3.12 These projects will improve how we use resources by adapting our support to staff through change of practice, rather than using additional funds.

Care Data Matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care

3.13 [Care Data Matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care](#), published in 2023, sets out the Government's plan for developing data collection and sharing across adult social care. This will be done by improving data collection across regions, increasing digitisation and data sharing to improve joined up working, and working in partnership to understand current gaps and data needs.

3.14 Locally, ASCH is working to develop new ways of reporting and baselining our performance in line with revised definitions of measures in the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework. Once national data is released in October 2024, we will benchmark these measures locally to understand our comparative performance.

3.15 The Council must start using new sources of data under the Client Level Data collection. ASCH has developed in house reporting for Client Level Data and will ensure our national measures align to new methodologies as well as the new dataset. Work will continue to improve data quality and develop further analysis and understanding of it.

Right Care, Right Person

3.16 [Right Care, Right Person](#) is a national partnership agreement between the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), NHS England, and the Police. It aims to reduce police callouts where another body is better placed to respond, such as those for mental health crises, welfare checks, and to people who do not attend medical appointments. Right Care, Right Person began a phased roll out in East Sussex from April 2024.

3.17 Right Care, Right Person could increase demand for Council services, including those within ASCH Operations, and safeguarding referrals. An ASCH action plan has been agreed to mitigate these risks including: continuing to engage with Sussex Police and partners to influence implementation; reviewing policies and procedures and establishing monitoring arrangements to measure the impact on ASCH; and informing independent sector providers of any developments.

Adult Social Care Strategy: What Matters To You

3.18 Following the launch of our [Adult Social Care Strategy: 'What Matters to You'](#), ASCH has developed an action plan with partners for 2024/25. The action plan addresses the 15 'We will' statements in the strategy as well as our commitment to deliver the six residents' priorities that emerged from engagement. The detailed action plan will inform key local policy and practice; consisting of 64 tasks led by 16 teams across ASCH. Monitoring of the strategy will take place quarterly and include actions to address findings from the strategy's Equality Impact Assessment. Twice yearly progress reports on the action plan will be prepared and disseminated widely. The plan is iterative and will be updated to inform future steps required to deliver the strategy beyond March 2025. To better understand the outcomes of our activity, we will be developing an evaluation framework to demonstrate the impact of the strategy across each priority area.

Prevention strategy

3.19 ASCH will develop a Prevention Strategy to focus specifically on work to help people be more proactive about their health and wellbeing and to improve or maintain their quality of life and independence. We will map existing activity that prevents, reduces, and delays the need for care and support to identify priorities to enhance our preventative activity. The Prevention Strategy will aim to strengthen asset-based approaches, integration with health and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector, a systematic focus on prevention, evidence of impact, and innovation. Consequently, the strategy will help the Council and partners meet the needs and aspirations of a changing and aging population. The strategy, and activities that will result, will be co-produced with a range of stakeholders, including statutory partners, the VCSE, residents, and businesses.

ASC market

Market sustainability

3.20 The sustainability of the care market continues to be a significant issue nationally and locally. The Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) is intended to support local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care services, to build capacity and improve market sustainability. £5m of additional funding will be allocated to providers from the MSIF, meaning a total of £11m will be allocated in East Sussex to support sustainability of the adult social care market during 2024/25.

3.21 National and international economic conditions continue to increase the cost of providing services. Workforce capacity, and the ability to sustain capacity with overseas workers, is also a key factor for market sustainability. Government changes to the Skilled Worker Visa will restrict entry through skilled worker routes and restrict workers bringing dependents to the UK which may pose further workforce challenges; we will continue to review the impact of this change and care worker visa approvals more generally. The ASCH Market Support Team continues to work closely with local providers and the Care Quality Commission to support and strengthen the independent care and support market. The ASCH Supply Management Team will run the Market Oversight Panel, with support from across the department and NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board Clinical Quality Nurses, to ensure oversight of market quality, risks, and impacts on the wider market. The Supply Management Team will also co-ordinate and deliver support to providers in response to market pressures.

3.22 ASCH has updated our [Market Position Statement](#) which sets out our latest assessment on market supply and demand, our commissioning intentions, and the support available to providers. The statement is published on our website and will be updated regularly to help new, existing, and prospective providers understand the market context for East Sussex.

Net to Gross payments for care

3.23 ASCH currently pays residential and nursing home providers net of their client contribution towards the cost of care. We are exploring moving to paying gross, which would align our approach with neighbouring local authorities. It is anticipated that this change of policy would support providers, as the Council would take on the invoicing of clients and the risk of non-payment. This would create better sustainability for the market, as providers will not face the burden of securing payments for client contribution. It would also help ASCH to make placements with providers going forward, who may have been deterred from accepting ASCH clients and collecting client contributions on our behalf. However, it would increase budgetary risk to the Council, as we would hold client invoices and any resulting non-payment.

Improvements to our debt recovery process would be implemented to mitigate against this and to improve residents' understanding on how to pay for care and support.

Safeguarding Adults Board strategic plan 2024-27

3.24 The East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) has developed a refreshed Strategic Plan which sets out how the Board will seek to prevent abuse and neglect and how it will help and protect adults with care and support needs from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The updated Plan will be considered for agreement by the SAB in July.

3.25 The following strategic themes have been identified for 2024-2027:

- Leadership and partnership working
- Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Performance, quality and audit
- Prevention and engagement
- Organisational learning and workforce development

3.26 The SAB priorities proposed for 2024-2027 are:

- Self-neglect - Improve and develop multi agency working and practice
- Prevention and early intervention - Ensure unpaid carers have an understanding and awareness of adult safeguarding and what support they and the person they are care for can access
- Safeguarding and homelessness - Promote positive practice with professionals working at the interface of multiple exclusion homelessness and adult safeguarding

3.27 A key area of identified learning in many Sussex commissioned Safeguarding Adult Reviews is the need for more effective partnership working in order to protect the adult. Multi-agency working will be promoted and embedded within these priority areas of work over the next three years.

Housing

3.28 East Sussex is facing a shortage of affordable housing, and developments for all tenures are failing to keep pace with local housing needs. Housing is one of the key '[Building Blocks of Health](#)' (identified wider detriments to health) and where it is missing, there are complex and profound impacts on the whole system. Rising demand for homelessness services, particularly temporary accommodation, is placing significant financial and capacity pressures on local housing authorities and public sector services.

3.29 Partnership arrangements within the local housing sector in East Sussex have been refreshed and now comprise a multi-agency strategic group of the five local housing authorities (district and borough councils); housing providers; Public Health; the NHS; Adult Social Care; Children's Services; the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector; Probation; and representatives of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Homes England. The partnership will be developing a medium and longer term vision for the sector in East Sussex, including lobbying Government and ensuring housing specialisms are represented at local, regional and national partnerships and forums.

3.30 A Partnership Housing Strategy is being developed and is due to be adopted in autumn 2024. The strategy will provide a framework for cross-sector collaboration, supporting partners to make the best use of capacity, expertise, and resources within the sector. Emerging themes include supporting sustainable delivery of housing and accommodation, making the best use of

existing housing stock, reducing reliance on temporary accommodation, de-carbonisation of the housing stock, and healthy homes and communities. Whilst the strategy is being developed, the partnership will work on additional investment in homelessness prevention, development of a local retrofit strategy and preparing for new social housing reforms. The partnership will work with the Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex (SPACES) Programme to identify public sector assets which could be redeveloped to provide future accommodation, as well as funding opportunities to enable this. The partnership will also work with the NHS to improve hospital discharge and develop Integrated Community Teams.

3.31 The creation of a new Multiple and Compound Needs Board is providing oversight of a range of programmes which support housing needs, as well as preparing for the closure of grant funded activity which ceases in March 2025 and may lead to increased pressure on services. Grant funded activity includes the East Sussex Rough Sleeping Initiative and the pan-Sussex Changing Futures programme.

3.32 An evaluation of the Homelessness Prevention Programme, which supports people into employment and signposts to health and wellbeing support, will be evaluated to inform an investment to save approach beyond the current funding to December 2025.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy

3.33 ASCH's updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: *Inclusive by Design* sets out a framework for the actions we will take and the values we will be guided by. In 2024 we will be using the Local Government Association Diverse by Design self-assessment tool to help us track our strategy action plan and use metrics to evaluate the impact of those actions. By doing so, we will create indicators to track progress in improving equality, diversity and inclusion.

Health and Social Care Integration

National Health and Social Care Integration

3.34 Under the Health and Care Act 2022, 42 Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) in England have come into being. Nationally all ICSs will be working to build on their initial Joint Forward Plans (in Sussex this is known as the Shared Delivery Plan); set out the steps they will take to address the most significant causes of illness and disease and premature death; and improve the co-ordination of services to reflect the growing numbers of people with two or more long term conditions. This includes steps to:

- Expand evidenced-based approaches to population health;
- Join up care closer to home, including through integrated neighbourhood teams and other place-based arrangements;
- Integrate and streamline Urgent and Emergency Care pathways; and
- Drive improvements in productivity and operational effectiveness.

3.35 The Government is planning to publish a national Major Conditions Strategy which ICSs will be asked to take account of. The best model of delivery for each ICS will consider:

- Integrated neighbourhood teams to improve timely access to primary care and community services to deliver proactive care and avoid exacerbations of ill health and improve the quality of care for older people;
- Further development of place-based partnerships to deliver Joint Forward Plans through Health and Wellbeing Boards and working with wider partners; and
- Changes to commissioning, planning, and provider collaboratives.

Local Health and Social Care Integration

3.36 The Council plays a key role in the statutory arrangements for the Sussex ICS, with representation on the Integrated Care Board and the joint Integrated Care Partnership, which is known as the Sussex Health and Care Assembly (the Sussex Assembly). The Sussex Assembly is a statutory joint committee between ESCC, West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and NHS Sussex.

3.37 The five year Sussex Integrated Care Strategy '*Improving Lives Together*' sets out our shared ambition for a healthier future for everyone in Sussex and three overarching strategic priorities:

- Developing a joined-up approach to neighbourhood delivery through the Integrated Community Teams (ICTs)
- Growing and supporting our health and care workforce
- Improving the use of digital technology

3.38 A supporting Shared Delivery Plan was agreed in June 2023, and both the Strategy and the Shared Delivery Plan build on our understanding of population health needs in East Sussex, outlined in the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Strategy '*Healthy Lives, Healthy People* (2022-2027)'. The Shared Delivery Plan will undergo a refresh and include delivery plans that reflect the Health and Wellbeing Board priorities of children and young people, mental health, integrated community teams, and improving health outcomes.

East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board and Partnership

3.39 We will be strengthening the way the Council strategically aligns partnership working around the Health and Wellbeing Board and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment within the Sussex ICS. This will be informed by the feedback from our recent Local Government Association Peer Reviews, in particular our role to facilitate strategic leadership to achieve best value out of collective resources. Expected changes within NHS Sussex system architecture will also be considered, such as new NHS provider collaboratives. Proposals will be developed for the Health and Wellbeing Board to phase in during 2024/25 and will be based on driving improvement through joint commissioning, integrated care and the development of integrated community teams.

Integrated Community Teams

3.40 A strategic social care and health integration priority is the development of integrated community teams that will be made up of professionals working together as a 'team of teams' across health, social care, housing, VCSE partners and local communities. A core offer will be agreed for all integrated community teams in Sussex to proactively care for the most complex needs and vulnerable people. It was agreed that our integrated community teams' footprints will align with borough and district boundaries, and [data and insight packs](#) will be used to inform and address health and care needs and inequalities in local communities.

3.41 Establishing integrated community teams will build on progress we have made in working with communities in East Sussex over recent years. Hastings will be our community 'frontrunner' area for developing the Integrated Community Team model, with frontline teams and services, and similar engagement will take place across Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother and Wealden in the first half of 2024/25. As part of this engagement, each area will identify specific challenges to test the new approach.

3.42 The approach will continue to be tested and refined over the time frame of the Improving Lives Together strategy and Shared Delivery Plan. The aim is that by 2028, integrated community teams will be fully established in East Sussex.

Hospital discharge funding and initiatives

3.43 Health and social care services have implemented Discharge to Assess (D2A)/Home First pathways to safely speed up discharges from hospital to assess people in their own homes or temporary bed. The Council and ICS partners will continue to participate in the national discharge frontrunner programme to collaborate and support improvements to avoid hospital admissions expedite discharges. East Sussex was allocated c£5m as part of the national Government Discharge Fund Grant for 2024/25. This fund will support ASCH to build additional adult social care and community based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays.

3.44 Locally, ASCH commissions D2A beds for East Sussex and will work with approved home care providers, use block hours, and work with the Joint Community Reablement Team to ensure timely discharges. ASCH will also continue to jointly commission the British Red Cross Assisted Discharge and Home from Hospital schemes.

3.45 At the request of NHS partners, ASCH's dedicated Hospital Discharge Team is returning to undertaking assessments in acute hospital settings and in the community. With additional support from discharge funding, ASCH has increased the number of assessment staff based in hospitals, including weekend discharge support through the Joint Community Reablement In-Reach Team at Conquest Hospital.

Public Health priorities

Reducing health inequalities

3.46 As a local authority, ESCC can influence many of the identified [Building Blocks of Health](#) which contribute to preventing death and ill health in East Sussex, and are often key drivers of health inequalities. These include access to services, education, work, social networks, tobacco and alcohol use, unhealthy food, and exercise. The Building Blocks of Health is a toolkit which aims to increase understanding of the role that wider determinants play in our health, as well as support to address them. Public Health will aim to maximise the positive impact we have on health inequalities through the promotion of a 'health-in-all-policies' approach across services delivered by the Council.

Smoking legislation

3.47 The [Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#), presented before the House of Commons in March 2024, proposed raising the age of sale for all tobacco products one year every year from 2027 onwards. This would mean that children who turn fifteen this year (2024) or younger would never be able to purchase cigarettes. Disposable vapes would be banned and illegal vape sales to children would attract a £100 fixed penalty fine for shops in England and Wales. Vape flavours would be restricted and new conditions for display would reduce the appeal of vapes to young people.

3.48 The legislation was not enacted prior to the dissolution of parliament for the general election and its future is now unclear. At an East Sussex level we will continue to work to reach our key smoking populations, offering individuals innovative support and interventions to stop smoking using smoking cessation responsive to their needs. Public Health will continue to work

with Trading Standards to disrupt the supply of illegal tobacco and underage vape sales and will work with local businesses during any period of transition should the legislation progress.

Women's Health Strategy for England

3.49 While women in the UK on average live longer than men, women spend a significantly greater proportion of their lives in ill health and disability, and historically the health and care system has been designed without women's voices or needs adequately represented. Public Health is continuing to work closely with NHS Sussex on development of the local response to the ['Women's Health Strategy for England'](#) strategy, including insight work with underrepresented groups and better understanding of data. We will also review the services we commission to improve outcomes for women.

New opportunities for NIHR funding

3.50 The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) is funding innovative research collaborations between local government and the academic sector to focus on improving wider determinants or drivers of health. In partnership with the University of Brighton, we have established a Research Collaborative Hub to attract research investment and interest, positioning the local authority in a competitively advantageous position. Academics, NIHR funded staff, and Public Health team members will work together on a variety of research projects with the aim of achieving publishable findings that will positively influence council policy. The hub will provide research training for council and wider public health staff to improve the potential to apply for, and secure, research funding from the NIHR and other organisations.

Commitment to becoming a Creative Health County

3.51 Creative Health refers to the broad range of opportunities that the arts, creativity, heritage, and culture contribute directly or indirectly to improving the population's health. Based on evidence showing benefits to population health, Public Health has embraced creativity as a health determinant and has developed an action plan informed by the county's first position paper on Creative Health. The Action Plan focuses on take up of creative health by both individuals and the community, with support from across the system. This includes work linked to population level health improvement; mental and physical health and wellbeing; social prescribing; early intervention; participation and youth voice; economic development; employment education; and training.

Suicide Prevention

3.52 Public Health will continue to work with colleagues across Sussex to implement the recently published Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan 2024-27. This includes plans to increase the involvement and collaboration of people with lived experience, identifying prevention activity, co-ordination and provision of training, improving the support provided to those bereaved and affected by suicide and self-harm prevention in children and young people. In East Sussex a multi-agency group oversees our East Sussex Strategy and Action plan, which aims to address key risk factors for suicide. We use the same approach to address drug-related deaths and self-harm in East Sussex. We are also developing local innovative projects aimed at addressing key risk factors for suicide.

3.53 This year we will pilot a new Beachy Head Ambassador scheme with volunteers promoting the area and its attractions, as well as providing an extra pair of eyes for those who may be vulnerable and in need of help. We will also complete an ecological assessment to ascertain the potential to use land management techniques (such as planting and grazing) to influence behaviour at the cliff edge.

Climate Change and Health

3.54 People with poorer health, and/or are otherwise disadvantaged by age, economic income, and housing for example, suffer the greatest consequences from climate change. We are commissioning a Health Impact Assessment to identify health impacts from climate change, how and where they impact the county and to support the climate change, health and social care agenda. The assessment will review the health impacts of policies, projects, practice, and decision-making, in relation to vulnerable people and health inequalities, and align to place based approaches within the Integrated Care System.

4. Children's Services

4.1 This section outlines ongoing reforms in children's social care following publication by Government of a number of strategies in response to independent reports on the urgent issues within the system. The implementation of reforms set out in the national SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan in 2023 is also progressing along with wider developments in the education system.

4.2 This section also summaries priority focus areas for Children's Services locally, including developing family support and improving placement sufficiency for the children we care for. In addition, there is information on demand led service pressures; work with schools to improve post-pandemic educational recovery and school attendance; and increases in demand for home to school transport.

National reforms to children's social care

4.3 In early 2023, the Government published an implementation strategy and consultation on reforming children's social care in England. The [Stable Homes Built on Love](#) strategy is based on, and formed by, the Government's response to three independent reports published in 2022. The strategy sets out reforms across six pillars which are intended to be implemented in two phases. In the first phase, currently underway, the Government is investing £200m in addressing urgent issues and laying the foundations for whole system reform. In phase two, the Government will focus on embedding reform everywhere.

4.4 Families First pathfinders, part of new a Family Help model, were piloted in three local authorities in 2023, with a further nine local authorities running pilots from April 2024. These pathfinders are testing new approaches to delivering Family Help, including removing the distinction between targeted early help and children in need and providing intensive multi-disciplinary support. There is also change to front line child protection practice, including some child protection functions being led by a group of multi-agency staff. Early learning from these pathfinders is being shared with all local authorities and is informing our planning.

4.5 Alongside the ambitious reforms taking place as set out in Stable Homes, Built on Love, from April 2024, the Department for Education (DfE) is bringing together the spectrum of Family Help reforms, including ownership of the Supporting Families programme. The move to the DfE should mean a more joined up, cross-government approach to family policy.

4.6 As part of the reforms, a National Kinship Care strategy: [Championing Kinship Care](#) has been published which commits £20m in 2024/25 to improve the lives of children in kinship care. This includes a £16m pilot giving a financial allowance to special guardian kinship carers; caring for children previously looked after by the local authority; guidance for employers on how kinship carers can be supported at work; and an expansion in the role of Virtual School heads to promote the education of children in kinship care.

4.7 ESCC Children's Services has a strong track record promoting family networks and supporting kinship care through our Connected Practice approach and family group conferencing. Many of the recommendations in the strategy are already being delivered and we will work to take forward the wider recommendations in 2024.

4.8 There are further elements of national reform which we will be taking forward locally with our partners:

- [The Social Care National Framework](#) brings together the purpose, principles, enablers, and outcomes that children's social care should achieve so children, young people and families can thrive. The framework sets out a vision that sees local authorities and all partners, particularly health, police and education, working together to achieve the reforms in Stable Homes Built on Love.
- The national multi-agency statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) has been updated and sets out a framework for how local safeguarding partners (the local authority, Integrated Care Board, and police) should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. The new partnership arrangements have been agreed by the Pan-Sussex lead strategic partners and the delegated safeguarding partners and will be implemented from September 2024.
- The [Children's Social Care: Data and Digital Strategy](#) sets out the DfE's long term plan to transform data in children's social care. It provides information on the foundations needed to improve information sharing and the evaluation and improvements to data services. The DfE is also working on a Children's Social Care dashboard which will bring data together in one place to understand progress towards the outcomes of the National Framework.

4.9 In response to Stable Homes Built on Love, the DfE has rolled out Early Adopters for the Early Career Framework for social workers. After a competitive application process, ESCC was chosen to be part of this programme which will explore how local authorities deliver their:

- assessed and supported year in employment programme, which gives newly qualified social workers extra support during their first year of employment;
- second year programmes; and
- Professional Practice Development Programme to train experienced practitioners and managers to support early career social workers to develop their emotional wellbeing and practice behaviours.

Service Demand

4.10 Children's Services, both nationally and locally, continue to see a sustained high level of demand and complexity in the needs of children and their families. The continued increase in demand is impacted by children's, young people's and parents' mental health and emotional wellbeing (with issues relating to neurodiversity increasingly a factor); cost of living challenges; an increase in the number of families in temporary accommodation; and domestic abuse and substance misuse.

4.11 Over the past two years, ESCC has experienced a 23% increase in the number of social care assessments being undertaken with children and families, and a 28% increase in children subject to child protection planning. We have also seen a 3% increase in the number of looked after children (not including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children). This demand has undoubtedly put pressure on services, and we will need to ensure we have sufficient capacity to meet our statutory duties. We are addressing these increased demands through a number of preventative approaches.

4.12 Our 11 Family Hubs, opened in 2023/24, are a vital part of our Early Help offer to families, providing early support and advice from midwives, health visitors, early communication support workers, early years practitioners and more. East Sussex is one of 15 authorities awarded trailblazer status, with a focus on parent/infant relationships and perinatal mental health. We have been selected for the national evaluation of Family Hubs Trailblazers with particular interest in our triage offer for perinatal mental health and parent infant relationship support. The pilot and funding cease in March 2025 and we will focus on making this key preventative service sustainable.

4.13 In January 2024, our Connected Families Service launched a new multi-disciplinary team, Connected Families Intervention Practitioners. The team draws upon the evidence based family safeguarding approach and is made up of specialist practitioners who deliver support and interventions to parents/carers experiencing domestic abuse, problematic mental health and/or problematic drug and alcohol use. Supported parents/carers have children on Child in Need or Child Protection plans. The aim is to provide dedicated help to parents/carers, enabling more children to live with their families to support their wellbeing and life chances. This is a major development for 2024-25 as we seek to contribute positive, sustainable change in the lives of the children and families we work with. It is also aligned with the national vision of multi-disciplinary, whole family working set out in Stable Homes Built on Love.

4.14 Throughout 2023, Children's Services worked with IMPOWER consultancy on improved forecasting and shaping of placement sufficiency for the children we care for. Ambitious targets are in place to achieve reduced spend, but only by meeting children's needs more appropriately. In 2024/25 we will take forward and embed:

- The Valuing Care approach to enhance our ability to secure the right care for the right child for the right length of time;
- An enhanced in house foster carer offer and increased capacity in commissioning to achieve effective market management and shaping of sufficiency; and
- The reunification framework to support children to return home where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

4.15 As part of the South East Regional Fostering Recruitment and Retention programme, foster carers are supported locally on their journey from initial enquiry, to application, through a centrally run front door. A regional recruitment campaign is being launched to boost the number of initial enquiries through Recruitment Support Hubs. We will embed new ways of working through the South East Regional Recruitment Hub whilst maintaining a focus on local need, targeted recruitment activity and maintaining our retention offer. We will be delivering the evidence based Mockingbird model of support to a group of foster carers which aims to build strong and supportive relationships among groups of foster carers and children in an area.

Youth Service Developments

4.16 We have been successful in securing more than £7m in funding through the Government's Youth Investment Fund to significantly improve youth centres in Heathfield and Peacehaven over the next year.

4.17 ESCC has also secured funding through the Home Office Youth Endowment Fund to test how multi-agency partnerships can keep young people safe from violence and criminal exploitation. The Youth Justice Service will be leading this work over the next 18 months and is implementing a family support model, delivered by a multi-disciplinary team who will work with the local community and tailor support to local need. This is part of piloting approaches from the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and will be independently evaluated. Subject to

positive findings from the initial evaluations, it is intended that these multi-agency teams will be funded and evaluated for a further two to three years.

4.18 We have secured resources from NHS Health Inequalities to support positive activities for children and young people in a number of Primary Care Network areas. Using a social prescribing approach, the activities will benefit children who have left care, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and Ukrainian children.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

4.19 The [SEND and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Improvement Plan](#), published in March 2023, sets out the Government's planned national reforms to the SEND and AP system. At the centre of the plan is an ambition to improve inclusive practice in mainstream schools so that more children and young people with SEND can be supported in their local mainstream school, without the need for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The development of new guidance for all schools is not expected to be complete until 2025. The Government introduced the SEND and AP Change Programme Partnership in September 2023 which will inform the guidance and test some of the proposed changes to the system for supporting children and young people with SEND. East Sussex is part of the Change Programme Partnership in the south east, along with West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and Portsmouth.

4.20 In line with the national picture, East Sussex continues to see significant increases in demand for statutory assessments and specialist provision for children and young people with SEND. We will continue to work proactively, analysing data to project future demand, and working with schools and trusts to develop inclusive practices and more specialist provision where appropriate. May 2024 marked the midway point of our [2022-2025 East Sussex SEND Strategy](#) which sets the strategic direction for SEND in East Sussex. The strategy represents a joint approach to provision and commissioning across education, health, and care, focused on meeting the needs of children, young people, and families.

Schools policy

4.21 The Department for Education (DfE) has remained committed to the aspiration that all schools become part of Multi Academy Trusts. The Council continues to work with the Joint Primary and Secondary Board to shape a strong and cohesive school landscape across all phases. We play a critical role in facilitating strong local partnerships between schools, including through the development of Multi Academy Trusts.

4.22 In 2022, the DfE confirmed its intention to pass legislation which will see local authorities maintain a register of children of compulsory school age who are not enrolled at specified categories of schools. In October 2023, the DfE published a revised version of this plan for consultation, recommending that local authorities should operate the scheme as voluntary. The consultation closed in January 2024 and we await further information.

Educational attainment and attendance

4.23 East Sussex has been identified by the Government as an Education Investment Area, and Hastings as a Priority Investment Area. As an Education Investment Area, Multi Academy Trusts that are interested in expanding or setting up in East Sussex are prioritised for development funding from the DfE. As a Priority Investment Area, Hastings schools are receiving funding up to August 2025 to improve educational outcomes.

4.24 The pandemic had a significant adverse impact on school attendance, both nationally and locally. The proportion of children persistently absent (missing more than 10% of sessions)

has doubled. In May 2022, the Government published attendance guidance to clarify responsibilities for local authorities, schools, parents, and carers. This outlines the expectation that all councils should strengthen their oversight of attendance through regular individual dialogue with all schools. Councils should also provide whole family early help support, free of charge, to schools and families with children whose attendance is less than 50%. This guidance will become statutory in August 2024.

4.25 Locally, there will be a continued focus on working with schools to improve engagement with families who may need extra support with attendance. Supported by an additional annual investment of £1.5m to deliver the expectations set by the Government in its new guidance, a new Level 2 Early Help Key Work service has been in place from September 2023 to work with children and young people and their families where attendance is below 50%.

Local education priorities and strategic challenges

4.26 East Sussex has high levels of suspension and exclusion, and these are rising further in line with national trends. School leaders are experiencing increased levels and complexity of need, and the demand for support services remains high. The Council will continue to work with schools to develop effective strategies and joined up approaches to meeting children and young people's needs, to increase engagement in learning, and reduce exclusions.

4.27 Education reduces risks to children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. A key area of our school improvement strategy includes opportunities for schools and settings to develop communities which promote good mental health and wellbeing. Mental Health Support Teams, funded by the NHS and managed by the Council, will continue to be integrated into schools in East Sussex. Currently, 75 schools are supported by Mental Health Support Teams; this number is due to increase by approximately 20 schools by September 2024.

4.28 We have expanded the offer of support and training for all schools across the county as part of a whole school approach to mental health and emotional wellbeing. There are three Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Advisers who work across three localities, offering support with mapping provision, delivering training and sharing best practice. Support for parents and carers in relation to mental health and emotional wellbeing is also provided.

Home to school transport

4.29 Recent rises in fuel costs and driver shortages have led to exceptional increases to the cost of contracts providing taxis for pupils requiring home to school transport. The majority of spend for home to school transport relates to children with special educational needs and disability. The number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is forecast to rise in East Sussex by 24.2% over the next three years, having increased by 25.7% in the last three years. Increased complexity of needs post-pandemic and geographical spread, both reducing the possibility of taxi sharing, are also driving cost increases. Current market conditions are also leading to fewer providers bidding for routes and increased contract prices.

5. Migration

5.1 Significant national developments on legislation in relation to immigration, asylum and refugee resettlement, as well as increased demand for support, have led to additional pressures locally. This section outlines key national developments as well as our local response.

National policy developments

5.2 The Government has developed new policy and legislation in relation to immigration, asylum and refugee resettlement in efforts to reduce pressures on current systems and

services. National policy developments include: a 'full dispersal' asylum system whereby local authorities are expected to be asylum dispersal areas; streamlining the asylum process; new large asylum accommodation sites to reduce use of contingency hotels; funding and policy measures to support the resettlement and accommodation of Afghans and Ukrainians; the [Illegal Migration Act 2023](#) to change law on people arriving outside prescribed routes claiming asylum in the UK; and an 'asylum partnership arrangement' with Rwanda to resettle people who would claim UK asylum. A new Cap on Safe and Legal Routes, based on consultation with local authorities, is due to be set in summer 2024, and to be in operation in 2025.

5.3 The Government also announced changes to visa routes from Ukraine earlier in 2024. This included closing the Ukraine Family Scheme; reducing the Homes for Ukraine visa from three years to 18 months for new applicants; and creating a new Ukraine Permission Extension scheme. The Ukraine Permission Extension scheme will allow Ukrainians in the UK to apply for a further 18 month stay after initial visas expire. Continued funding for new arrivals and host 'thank you' payments for the initial visa period under Homes for Ukraine has been confirmed.

5.4 The Council and partners will continue to shape local implementation of national policies and schemes and help arrivals in the county access safe accommodation, services and support.

Local response

Asylum Dispersal

5.5 By early 2023 hotels in East Sussex used for 'contingency' accommodation for people seeking asylum were closed as part of Government plans to phase out this accommodation. The Council meets partners regularly to review legacy issues and support those affected. Some of those previously accommodated in contingency hotels received refugee status prior to hotel closures and therefore may require ongoing local support, including with housing, employment, benefits and other support services. We expect some people who moved to other asylum sites will return to East Sussex on receiving refugee status if they have established links to the area.

5.6 The Home Office is exploring the use of large sites, including the Northeye site in Bexhill, to reduce the use of hotels. Welfare and service capacity concerns for specific sites continue to be discussed with partners and the Home Office to inform planning and decision making. Regular Northeye Multi-Agency Forums continue and, whilst a final Home Office decision on its use is pending, the Council will continue to engage to plan next steps and ensure our local context is understood.

5.7 Implementation of the Government's new dispersal plans will require Home Office procurement of suitable accommodation, and progress with this has been gradual in East Sussex. Local authorities will actively highlight the risks to local services and infrastructure of additional asylum accommodation in the south east. Housing authority areas will be allocated target dispersal numbers and local housing authorities will be funded per dispersal bed.

5.8 The streamlined asylum process seeks to accelerate processing all asylum claims to reduce and clear the backlog. For successful claims, people will become eligible for housing and other support which may temporarily increase pressure on services.

Refugee Resettlement

5.9 The Government has established two resettlement schemes for Afghan citizens and provides a standard integration funding package to councils which support resettlement through these schemes. In East Sussex, this is led by district and borough councils. Eligible Afghan

families may be temporarily accommodated before accessing long term accommodation. The Council and our partners will continue to ensure people temporarily accommodated locally receive support and that statutory duties are met.

Visa schemes

5.10 Government visa schemes enable people from certain states to apply for visas, enter the UK, and access services, some benefits, and rights to work. Locally, we are seeing some people on work visas, who are not entitled to most benefits, struggling to maintain their independence, leading to financial problems and the need for voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) support. The Council will continue to engage with the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration and partners to secure funding, ensure access to support, and enable the integration of people living in East Sussex.

5.11 The Homes for Ukraine programme and partnership will continue to support the arrival, settlement, integration and independence of Ukrainians in East Sussex. The Council and partners will assess the impact of 2024 changes to visa routes for Ukrainians to ensure people receive the support they need.

Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

5.12 The Council remains committed to the [National Transfer Scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children](#). Children are well supported by a specialist team of practitioners who are experienced and skilled in understanding their needs, and the impact of their earlier life experiences. Whilst the National Transfer Scheme ensures funding for under 18s, there are significant budget pressures associated with those who become care leavers who often, due to complexities relating to their immigration status, require support until they reach the age of 25.

Future support

5.13 With developing national policy and legislation, as well as expected increased numbers of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in UK due to climate change and international conflicts, the Council anticipates needing to provide significant support to refugees and asylum seekers over the long term. This will require the continued development of local resources, knowledge, new and existing partnerships, and a strategic local and regional approach.

6. Communities

6.1 The following section outlines the Council's ongoing partnerships and work with local communities and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector to connect people and places, build and develop a thriving VCSE sector and meet community needs, including keeping communities safe.

Financial Inclusion

6.2 The multi-agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group aims to enable all partners to better understand, develop and respond to the financial pressures that residents are experiencing. Our Financial Inclusion Programme priorities continue to include providing central information on finance support; working with partners to deliver the East Sussex money guiders training programme; promoting the Low Income Families Tracker to identify those most in need of support; commissioning and delivering relevant targeted services; and using research and insight to ensure efficient use of collective resources and targeting of support.

Household Support Fund

6.3 The Financial Inclusion Programme manages the Department for Work and Pensions' Household Support Fund in East Sussex. The Council and delivery partners ensure the funding

received from Government reaches vulnerable households through a number of initiatives, including food vouchers for 2-19 year olds eligible for free school meals over school holidays; targeted campaigns; and work with departments and partners to deliver funding and information. The national extension of the Household Support Fund will continue to provide this financial support to low income households in need until September 2024.

Working with the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector

6.4 Our Third Sector Support programmes (Volunteering, VCSE Infrastructure, Patient and Resident Voice) connect people and places, build and develop a thriving VCSE sector, and promote a preventative approach to meeting community needs. The Council invests in the VCSE Alliance and will continue to work with it and Partnership Plus on programmes including: Tackling Loneliness Stewardship; VCSE Commissioning Excellence; Community Networks Support; and Multi-Agency Financial Inclusion. The Council invests in two major strands of activity linked to volunteering: encouraging and nurturing volunteering via Generic VCSE Infrastructure Services; and a platform to support/promote organisations that engage volunteers and to help people view local volunteering opportunities.

Community Network Support Programme

6.5 The Council will continue to work with partners on the Community Network Support Programme to develop the 66 networks across the county and determine factors and measures that comprise successful community networks. The programme will support networks with governance, operations, resourcing, communication, and partnership working. The programme will signpost to existing support and co-develop and test new support with partners.

Community Safety

Drug and Alcohol Misuse

6.6 The Government's 10 year combatting drugs strategy [From Harm to Hope](#) will continue to shape the local response to drug and alcohol misuse. The strategy has three main aims: to break drug supply chains; to deliver a world class treatment and recovery system; and to achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs.

6.7 Locally, this work is overseen by the Harm to Hope Board and the different strands of work are addressed by specialist sub-groups. The work will contribute towards increasing the number of people in structured treatment, a reduction in drug-related deaths, and an increase in people leaving prison and transferring to community treatment. It will take a systemic, multi-agency approach, drawing on local partners including health and Sussex Police. Due to additional ring-fenced funding ending in March 2025, some services may be decommissioned and work to re-model treatment and recovery services will be the focus for the year ahead.

Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls

6.8 The pan-Sussex Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will lead on conducting the full needs assessment and strategy for 2024 to identify local gaps and priorities for commissioning domestic abuse safe accommodation support. The results of the 2024 Needs Assessment will inform Council planning, policy, commissioning and budgets. The new burdens funding granted for 2021-2025 will continue to support council programmes and projects for victims/survivors.

6.9 The [Victims and Prisoners Act](#), passed before parliament was dissolved for the general election, will put specialist domestic and sexual abuse advocates on a statutory footing and will require commissioning authorities to collaborate in the commissioning of victim services. This

will support the Council's existing joint commissioning of specialist victim services with the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and NHS Sussex.

6.10 The Home Office is due to launch a public consultation on the Domestic Homicide Review statutory guidance in 2024. Expected changes include updated guidance for cases of suicide, which may impact Council commissioning, and coordinating domestic homicide reviews, which may have planning and resource implications for the Council and partners.

6.11 The Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office is conducting a year long Domestic Homicide Oversight Mechanism pilot, with East Sussex as a pilot site to inform national roll out. The pilot will aim to understand ways to bring greater oversight from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office to the implementation of domestic homicide review recommendations.

6.12 The Council has reinstated our White Ribbon accreditation, following a successful application in 2024. As part of this accreditation we will deliver an ambitious action plan by February 2027 to demonstrate our commitment to ending violence against women and girls.

Serious Violence

6.13 Councils play a key role in tackling serious violence, and the Safer Communities Partnership evidence based needs assessment and Serious Violence Strategy 2023 will continue to focus on four key areas: early intervention and approaches; support for young people and vulnerable adults at risk of exploitation; supporting exploiters and high harm offenders to change their behaviour; and work with communities in areas most at risk.

6.14 Home Office funding for interventions to tackle serious violence is due to end in March 2025. This raises concerns about the sustainability of funded interventions in Children's Services, such as work to divert young people away from knife crime, and child exploitation interventions including keywork, groupwork, and support to parent mentors. The Government has announced £75m for Violence Reduction Partnerships, however this is subject to the Spending Review to take place after the general election.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

6.15 The Council will continue to play a key role in tackling modern slavery including identifying, referring and supporting victims; with community safety services and disruption activities; and by ensuring supply chains are free from modern slavery. There will be new recommendations arising from the [Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act](#) which could have implications for the Council around the need to ensure transparency in supply chains. Organisations in council supply chains and commissioned organisations are legally required to publish a slavery and human trafficking statement on how they will address Modern Slavery. We will be assessing compliance with legislation through the Local Government Association Modern Slavery 'maturity matrix'.

Preventing Violent Extremism

6.16 The threat to the UK from terrorism remains substantial (meaning an attack is likely). The Home Office has refreshed the [Prevent Duty toolkit](#) to support local authorities in meeting the Prevent Duty. The benchmarks within the toolkit will form part of an annual assurance process on the local delivery of Prevent. It is anticipated the Council will successfully meet all benchmarks in the 2024 annual assessment.

6.17 The Council will convene the Prevent Group to implement the recommendations in the [Independent Review of Prevent's report and government response](#). The Safer Communities

team will work alongside the Estates Team to ensure alignment with the [Protect Duty](#) which introduces new security requirements for certain public locations and venues to ensure preparedness for, and protection from, terrorist attacks.

Home Office Review of Community Safety Partnerships

6.18 The Home Office reviewed the role of Community Safety Partnerships and antisocial behaviour powers in 2023. Two changes arising from the review may impact the Council: the lowering of the age of a Community Protection notice and extending Drug Testing on Arrest powers to beyond the custody suite.

Trading Standards

6.19 Two new pieces of national legislation include additional statutory duties for Trading Standards. The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024, passed immediately before parliament was dissolved for the general election, will regulate areas such as online marketplaces and deal with issues such as fake reviews and will give Trading Standards, along with the Competitions and Markets Authority, powers to investigate, intervene and enforce.

6.20 The Tobacco and Vape Bill 2024, intended to ensure anyone who turns 15 or younger in 2024 will never legally be sold tobacco products, was not enacted prior to the election and it is unclear whether or how it will now be progressed. The Bill includes powers for Trading Standards to enforce the legislation as well as regulating the flavours and contents of vaping products and the packaging and product presentation of vaping products.

Local resilience arrangements

6.21 The UK Government Resilience Framework, launched in December 2022, set out the ambition to significantly strengthen the UK's strategic approach to resilience. This has already resulted in a number of national changes, such as the creation of a new UK Resilience Forum and a new Resilience Directorate in the Cabinet Office. Further guidance is awaited on the role of Local Resilience Forums, supporting vulnerable groups and the development of a social-economic resilience index to inform decision making. The Emergency Planning team will continue to monitor updates in this area to ensure our ongoing preparedness and amend plans in light of any new guidance or government requirements.

National planning reforms

6.22 A number of changes and reforms to the planning system were set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, although the majority require the introduction of secondary legislation, or changes to existing national planning policy. Some of these have already been made and consultations have taken place or are expected on various changes to the planning system including further extensions to permitted development rights and revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly those that relate to planning for housing.

6.23 The vast majority of the recent and emerging planning changes have some impact upon the County Council, both within our county planning authority role and through our statutory consultee and infrastructure provider role. There has been a particular emphasis from Government on seeing up to date Local Plans in place. This is of particular relevance to East Sussex, with the vast majority of the local planning authorities in the county not having such plans and therefore being susceptible to speculative and unplanned development proposals. Over the course of the coming two to three years the County Council will need to support these planning authorities in the production of their Local Plans, especially through our statutory roles (highways, flood risk and infrastructure planning and provision). It will also be important for the County Council, in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority and Brighton &

Hove City Council, to make timely progress on a full review of the Waste and Minerals Plan, which is due to commence in summer 2024.

6.24 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act also proposed reforms to the approach to development funded infrastructure and the introduction of the Infrastructure Levy. An initial consultation on the potential approach to the Infrastructure Levy was undertaken in spring 2023. Whilst the County Council welcomed the principle behind some aspects of the levy, we expressed a number of concerns, not least that it is unlikely to raise enough resources to properly fund both affordable housing and infrastructure provision. There are also concerns around the influence that county councils will have on spending decisions and the complexity of the system, which will require significant resources, skills and time to set up and implement. Further consultations are expected on the proposed Infrastructure Levy and it has been envisaged that implementation would be phased in over a 10 year period through a 'test and learn' approach. It will be important for the County Council to continue to assess and respond to such consultations, as well as working closely with the local planning authorities to ensure that there is the best possible chance of funding local infrastructure needs.

7. Highways and Transport

7.1. This section sets out a range of national and local developments impacting on transport planning and infrastructure in the county, encompassing highways maintenance, road safety, the update to the Local Transport Plan and associated strategies, and planned improvements to local public transport.

Highways Maintenance

7.2. Balfour Beatty Living Places' contract for highways and infrastructure services in East Sussex has been in place for one year and has delivered on a number of road and footway maintenance and improvement schemes. This has included works above and beyond our usual programmes using additional funding provided by Cabinet. ESCC continues to face significant challenges in efficiently maintaining the network and addressing the increased deterioration of road and footway surfaces across the county. Work to improve the network will continue in 2024/25 and is scheduled to include:

- The replacement of 427 signs, focused on missing or damaged signs, and to include further work to clean signs and clear vegetation or other obstructions where necessary.
- 53 larger drainage schemes, after focusing on the delivery of quick and simple drainage schemes using additional funding in 2023/24.
- Using the remaining budget for the refresh of road markings to renew the lining along the A22 Hailsham bypass and around 600 further sites across the county.

7.3. ESCC continues to invest more in highway maintenance than the grant we receive from Government. Funding from the Department for Transport accounts for only £60m out of a total £120m investment in highway capital maintenance over the last four years. Even with the authority continuing to invest in this asset, we will never be able to address the total backlog of issues on our network without more long-term funding.

Local Transport Plan

7.4. The [East Sussex Local Transport Plan](#) (LTP) sets out our strategy and policies for how we plan to invest in improving transport and maintaining the roads in the county to meet transport needs. With considerable recent changes in national, regional and local policy related to the environment, health and economy, including the declaration of a climate emergency, the LTP covering the period 2024 to 2050 (LTP4) will influence how we plan and deliver transport in East Sussex in the future. We have embraced a vision-led approach in the review of the plan to

factor in the uncertainties of the future and to prioritise the needs of business, people and the places that they wish to live and work in.

7.5. Public and stakeholder consultation on the [draft LTP4](#) was undertaken between November 2023 and February 2024. The outcomes of the consultation are being analysed, including recommending any changes to the draft strategy. Formal approval of the updated plan will be sought in autumn 2024. The Rail Strategy and Freight Strategy, both supporting LTP4, will also be developed during 2024.

7.6. The LTP4 and associated documents will act as a strategic platform for prioritising and determining future investment in transport infrastructure in the county within the resources available. Opportunities to successfully secure external funding (usually via competitive bidding rounds) may impact on our ability to deliver on the strategy in the future.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

7.7. ESCC received £41.4m in BSIP funding from the Department for Transport (DfT), of which £22m was capital and £19m was revenue. £20m of the capital funding was allocated to deliver bus priority measures which are to be delivered by October 2025. £13m of the revenue funding was allocated to bus service improvements, including Digital Demand Responsive Transport services, which are funded to April 2026. £5m of the revenue funding was allocated to reducing fares, which will provide reduced fares in East Sussex until April 2025.

7.8. Our updated BSIP, due to be submitted to the DfT in July 2024, covers progress to date and future bus service improvements that we would wish to deliver as part of the BSIP. There has been no confirmation of further BSIP funding beyond 2024/25. The DfT has indicated a BSIP may be required in 2025 and that funding may be allocated based on that submission. There has been no information provided on the scale or timescales of that funding.

7.9. Delivery of the East Sussex BSIP has supported local bus passenger growth with the county having the third highest growth in passenger numbers in England in 2022/23 compared to pre-pandemic levels. Additional bus service users have helped reverse the decline in bus use in the county and enabled bus operators to sustain more commercial services. However, ever increasing operational costs to run bus services mean that, without further external funding, there may be significant challenges beyond 2025/26 in sustaining the current level of bus service provision in the county.

Active travel

7.10. Our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), adopted in September 2020, sets out proposed local cycling and walking networks and measures for the key coastal towns and the market towns within the county. It provides a basis for seeking funding for walking, wheeling (wheelchairs and mobility scooters) and cycling infrastructure projects and is being used to inform the review of borough and district councils' Local Plans. The LCWIP will be refreshed in 2024 as a supporting document to LTP4.

7.11. At a national level, Active Travel England (ATE), sponsored by DfT, supports walking, wheeling and cycling. ESCC's local authority self-assessed active travel grade has been confirmed by ATE as Level 1, which has secured funding to deliver town centre based walking schemes and the development of pipeline schemes for future capital funding bids. These pipeline schemes include school streets schemes and an area based cycle scheme which have involved collaborative and co-design activities with communities and learning opportunities.

7.12. In the next year we are hoping to build on our current ATE level 1 assessment to unlock further external funding from ATE and support the delivery of the vision and objectives set out within our LTP. Without significant external funding investment towards these programmes we will not be able to deliver our ambitious plans for active travel infrastructure in the county.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

7.13. The [National Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy](#) was published in 2022, although last year the Government announced the push back of its proposal to end the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030 to 2035. The Council is committed to developing a strategy to support the growing needs of Electric Vehicles (EV) users within East Sussex. To reflect the national strategy at a local level, a draft EV Charging Strategy has been developed as a supporting document to our draft LTP4, subject to public and stakeholder consultation during 2024.

7.14. The ability to charge at or close to home is a major concern to many EV users and is a main priority within both the national and local EV charging strategies. In November 2023, we secured £4.4m under tranche 1 of the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund which will help the Council to scale up the delivery of local on-street chargepoints. This will enable more residents, especially those without off-street parking, to switch to EVs. The funding will also be used to provide chargepoints on the County Hall campus.

7.15. Separate grant funding has also been made available to local residents with no off-street parking to introduce EV chargepoints on their properties. This has implications for the Council in relation to licencing the installation of cable gully channels in the footway, as well as the liability and maintenance of these channels, alongside how this affects the commercial viability of potential on-street chargepoints delivered using the LEVI funding.

7.16. Procurement for a chargepoint operator will be undertaken during 2024 with an expectation that the initial roll out of on-street chargepoints will commence in late 2024/25. Following the initial investment and installation of chargepoints across the county, public take up will determine the future direction of this work. There is the potential that a proportion of the income generated can be used to support Council services.

Transport for the South East (TfSE)

7.17. TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) was submitted to Government in March 2023. DfT has said that due consideration will be given to the plan when advising ministers on future policy and investment decisions. A SIP Delivery Action Plan has been established which requires the input of a number of different partners working together. The Action Plan is updated annually with progress of schemes and supported by an online interactive map-based tool.

7.18. TfSE is currently refreshing its Transport Strategy to take account of the impact of recent events including the pandemic, the UK leaving the European Union and recent changes in government policy. Technical work to refresh the strategy is underway with the strategy due to be submitted to Government in October 2025, following public consultation in early 2025.

Road Safety

7.19. A Speed Management Programme will review all A and B roads across the county during 2024/25 to ensure that the existing speed limits are the most appropriate for the road conditions and ensure that they are effective. Sections of road identified through this programme will have reduced speed limits extended or introduced, and measures to ensure compliance with existing limits where necessary.

7.20. We are continuing to implement innovative behaviour change focused projects which aim to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured (KSI) on the county's road network. A new behaviour change trial, in partnership with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), was launched in February 2024 and will continue into 2024/25. The trial targets young drivers and uses existing DVSA communication channels to engage with them in the six months after they pass their test. Communications are designed to address a range of behaviours which influence driving, reinforce the legitimacy of speed limits and the costs of driving unsafely. The trial is intended to reduce the overall rate of speeding offences, which evidence indicates is a suitable proxy for reducing the future risk of being involved in a KSI collision. The impact of the trial will be assessed in 2025.

Strategic Road Network (A27/A21)

7.21. The Government's second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2), covering the period 2020-2025, identified that further work will be undertaken on developing proposals for the A27 between Lewes and Polegate as a potential pipeline scheme for construction between 2025 and 2030. A study outlining potential options for the A27 was submitted to DfT by National Highways (NH) for consideration alongside other RIS3 pipeline scheme studies.

7.22. NH's Strategic Road Network Initial Report and South Coast Central Initial Report, published in May 2023, indicated that the A27 between Lewes and Polegate will slip to become a RIS4 (2030 to 2035) pipeline project. This follows on from the announcement made in March 2023 by the Secretary of State for Transport that the development and potential delivery of the majority of RIS3 pipeline schemes across the country would slip due to a combination of factors having an impact on the Government's capital roads investment programme. We will continue to engage with NH and DfT to make the case for investment in a more comprehensive solution for the A27 between Lewes and Polegate, as well as improvements to the A21.

Local Highways Programme – Major Road Network

7.23. The Major Road Network (MRN) sits between the Strategic Road Network, which is the responsibility of NH, and the local road network, which is the responsibility of local authorities, and includes the busiest and most economically important local authority A roads. The MRN intends to provide more long-term certainty of funding, with a portion of the National Roads Fund being dedicated to the MRN. A number of roads in East Sussex are part of the MRN, and various outline business cases developed and submitted to the DfT for funding. Ongoing delays in decisions mean that we may have to review the schemes to fit the funding being sought in order to meet inflationary pressures on construction costs.

7.24. The development and delivery of these packages of MRN funded schemes are required to meet infrastructure needs that will come forward through district and borough Local Plans, as well as supporting the objectives of LTP4, the new Economic Prosperity Strategy, and BSIP.

Rail services

7.25. The Draft Rail Reform Bill was put before Parliament for pre-legislative scrutiny in February 2024. The Bill sets out a number of reforms from the Government's Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail including the creation of a new public body, Great British Railways. Together these changes would have a significant impact on rail passengers and businesses in the county. It is important that we continue to be involved in future processes associated with the delivery of the Plan for Rail and engage with Great British Railways to ensure these changes benefit our residents, those visiting East Sussex, and businesses operating in and out of the county.

7.26. Following the Kent and East Sussex Rail Connectivity study, in May 2021 a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) which set out the strategic case for four options (two in East Sussex) to potentially improve rail connectivity to the Kent and East Sussex coast was submitted to Government. A formal response has yet to be received, however the scheme has been included in the Kent, Medway and East Sussex package of interventions in the TfSE SIP and the LTP4 Implementation Plan. In the meantime, local MPs and the local authorities in East Sussex and Kent have been working collaboratively to explore opportunities to lever in private sector finance or investment to fund the delivery of the rail schemes identified.

8. Economy

8.1 The following sections outline recent developments in Government policy and investment programmes that will affect the support we provide, with partners, to drive sustainable local economic growth in future. There will be challenges and limitations in the scope and scale of the delivery of some of this support in future, arising from reduced availability of growth funding for the county, as detailed in the sections below.

Transfer of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Functions

8.2 In August 2023, Government confirmed its decision to discontinue LEP funding from April 2024. In light of this, South East LEP (SELEP), which covered East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock, took the decision to close operations, with LEP functions and responsibilities transitioning to upper tier local authorities in each of those areas from April 2024.

8.3 Since April 2024 ESCC has taken on relevant local SELEP responsibilities, including:

- Business representation – Team East Sussex (TES) will continue to operate in an advisory capacity, as the business-led strategic economic growth board for the county, providing the voice of business in steering the economic growth agenda.
- Strategic economic planning – The new East Sussex Economic Prosperity Strategy, jointly developed by the Council and TES, will be used to make the case for future access to Government programmes.
- The delivery of Government programmes – The Council is now the ‘accountable body’ responsible for current and future funding programmes and the Growth Hub.

8.4 A local Assurance Framework is being drafted to reflect these new responsibilities and the agreed LEP transition plan will be enacted through 2024/25.

East Sussex Economic Strategy

8.5 The transfer of LEP functions has placed even greater importance on the production of a new economic growth strategy for the county. The new strategy, titled East Sussex Prosperity, will be published imminently, as a strategy for the long term running to 2050, beyond current planning, economic and political cycles.

8.6 The strategy will seek to secure sustainable economic growth, setting out how, over the next generation, East Sussex can secure better opportunities and living standards for people who live in the county, and how businesses can flourish and grow sustainably. Although an attractive place to live, the county faces some significant economic challenges which have been persistent over time including low productivity, high costs relative to earnings, and sharp economic disparities within the county. The strategy seeks to address these challenges in the context of an economy which is likely to change radically in coming decades, as the county adapts to climate change and the transition to net zero, an ageing population, changing working patterns, and the consequences of ever more sophisticated digitalisation.

8.7 The transfer of strategic economic planning to the Council from SELEP is a welcome development. The strategic economic planning function is well placed to respond to any further evolution of government policy following the general election and to secure any new funding streams. Government has indicated that an annual review of the strategy may be required.

8.8 The Economic Development Team provides secretariat support to TES and will now include the transfer of the business representation function from SELEP. A new national assurance framework is awaited from Government, which could potentially require an open and regular recruitment process to further improve business membership of TES. There is also an expectation from TES that its sub-groups will play a greater role in delivering work to support it and the economic strategy. All five sub-groups are supported by ESCC.

Economic growth funding

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

8.9 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) focuses on three main investment themes: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills. It is managed by district and borough councils. A total allocation of £5.2m (across the five district and borough areas) has been made to East Sussex for the period April 2022 – March 2025. ESCC is working with district and borough partners to deliver pan-East Sussex business support programmes and skills interventions.

8.10 Future UKSPF monies or replacement programme (if any) will require decisions to be made before April 2025 when the current funding period comes to an end. This will likely require ESCC support in the preparation of new programme requirements such as investment and business plans, and the subsequent management and delivery of any projects.

Levelling Up Partnerships

8.11 In March 2023 Hastings and Rother were allocated £20m capital funding each from the Levelling Up Partnerships (LUPs) programme to deliver a tailored approach to place based regeneration, to be spent by March 2025. ESCC has worked with the two district and borough councils, Government and partners on various proposals, which has secured £7m of funding on five projects including Queensway Gateway Road, Hollington youth facility and Family Hub, other family and youth support services, and a combined skills capital fund for both areas.

8.12 The County Council has several teams involved in managing and delivering each of these projects which are timebound. The above assets will be owned by the Council (except for skills capital items) and will be managed within existing departmental resources.

Long Term Plan for Towns

8.13 The Long Term Plans for Towns was announced in October 2023, with both Hastings and Bexhill allocated £20m each, and Eastbourne also receiving a £20m allocation in March 2024. The grant funding is to be awarded as an endowment fund to be spent over a 10-year period, with 75% capital funding and 25% revenue funding. The priority investment themes to support the regeneration of the towns include community safety, high streets, heritage and regeneration, and transport and connectivity.

8.14 Each area is establishing a local board to agree the town's 10 year vision, and the priorities and spend which will form the long term town investment plan to be submitted by 1 August 2024. ESCC is directly involved in the strategic development of each town's investment plans and potentially identifying projects to address the investment themes for the initial first

three years allocation and throughout the 10 year lifetime of the programme. As a result, this programme will require ESCC officer support to be drawn in over a long period of time. Whilst this has the potential to bring in some external funding which would deliver on the Council's core priorities, this is not likely to replace existing budgeted activity.

Skills

8.15 National policy changes and reforms will continue to be considered and overseen by the Skills East Sussex (SES) Board, as well as local needs. The move towards Net Zero and the increase in automation and artificial intelligence (AI) remains a strong focus, as each has the potential to have significant implications. Skills East Sussex is identifying actions to address new skills needs and changes to employment that will be caused by these advances.

8.16 The Council's Employability and Skills Team run a number of programmes, some of which are time bound and subject to funding. The team will need to respond to substantial changes in policy and funding reforms in these areas, doing so in partnership across the Council and with external partners. Current programmes include:

- ongoing delivery via the acclaimed East Sussex Careers Hub and the ESTAR team (adult employability)
- Multiply numeracy programme (ends March 2025)
- 'Steps to Success' Effective Transitions pilot (ends March 2026)
- Moving on Up employability programme (ends March 2025),
- Support into Work for Ukrainians and refugee groups (ends October 2025)
- Homeless Prevention Employment project (ends March 2026)
- Levelling Up Partnership funding secured to deliver skills capital improvements in Hastings and Rother.

8.17 ESCC will continue to deliver Transform to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with advice on apprenticeships and skills training and help them to access government incentives and unspent levy funds to pay for apprenticeship training. Changes in government policy mean that in 2024/25, ESCC will be able to allocate up to 50% of its apprenticeship levy to local SMEs if not used by the Council for its internal apprenticeship programmes.

8.18 Changes in the post-16 education offer will continue to be implemented in 2024/25, with T-Levels (which require work experience placements) replacing taught vocational qualifications. The impact of these changes will be monitored to see whether they improve the quality and range of learning available to young people and adults, or if the work experience requirements reduce the volume of vocational provision in the county. Changes to Adult Education are being introduced this year, with greater emphasis placed on the programme as a vehicle for supporting adults towards employment and less opportunity for leisure-based learning.

8.19 Universal Support, a new Department for Work and Pensions programme, will resource employability programmes for unemployed people from specific cohorts, including care leavers, homeless adults, people with disabilities, those at risk of unemployment and refugees (including Ukrainians). The fund will be awarded to upper tier councils, subject to bidding processes, from November 2024 for three year programmes to support people into work and to retain employment.

Culture and tourism

8.20 ESCC, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) have secured Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) accreditation for Sussex as part of a

national restructure of destination management led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and delivered by Visit England. This new framework will support the sector to become more accessible, sustainable and financially resilient, and act as the conduit for national training, sector toolkits and shared marketing collateral between Visit England and all Sussex destination marketing and management organisations. This will require ESCC, WSCC and BHCC to support a LVEP Board and a coordinating LVEP officer post, which will be hosted by BHCC as the LVEP accountable body. Whilst no future grant opportunities from Visit England have been confirmed, eligibility for any future funding will be dependent on the existence of the LVEP, which will be required to be the lead applicant for any future funding.

8.21 ESCC and WSCC have come together to develop Experience Sussex, a destination management organisation which will seek to achieve a £2.5bn increase in the value of the visitor economy over the next 30 years. ESCC is committed to an initial two years of investment to support this collaboration. Going forward, the Experience Sussex model will look to offset some budget requirement through commercial investment, earned income and collaboration with other stakeholders.

9. Environment and Climate Change

9.1 The following paragraphs detail the range of recent national commitments, strategies and legislation that impact the Council's work to deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation, protection and enhancement of the local natural environment, waste management and flood risk management. It is important to note that net zero is increasingly integrated into wider policy and whilst the policy context below outlines the main recent developments, it is not an exhaustive list of every new policy that touches on climate change. Much national guidance or detail on plans for delivery is still awaited, including clear expectations on how central and local government will interact in the delivery of net zero.

Climate change – national policy context

9.2 In 2021 the Government published its [Net Zero Strategy 'Build Back Greener'](#). This did not include any statutory responsibility for local authorities to reduce carbon emissions but did indicate that local authorities are widely considered to have a key role in decarbonising services such as local transport, waste disposal, public buildings and other local services. More broadly, local authorities are seen to have a key role to play in creating change amongst residents and businesses via their investment and procurement decisions, planning and placemaking responsibilities, and by direct engagement with residents.

9.3 In 2022 the Government-commissioned [Independent Review of Net Zero, 'Mission Zero'](#), again identified the key role of local government and recommended several policy changes, including simplifying the fragmented funding landscape for local net zero projects. Government responded to the review in the 2023 [Net Zero Growth Plan](#). The plan made few hard commitments for local government but did promise to pilot a devolved approach to building retrofit as part of devolution deals and explore simplification of the net zero funding landscape.

9.4 In September 2023, the Prime Minister announced a 'new approach to net zero', which delayed or removed several net zero commitments. This included delaying the proposed bans on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans, and the installation of new oil and gas boilers and new coal heating for off-gas-grid homes to 2035.

9.5 Every five years, the Government produces an assessment of the risks and opportunities from climate change and how it plans to adapt. The current report, the [National](#)

[Adaptation Programme 3](#), explains the Government's plans to adapt to climate change during 2023 to 2028, including how it will:

- Adapt infrastructure (for example, our electricity networks and railways).
- Protect buildings and their surroundings (for example, from hotter temperatures).
- Mitigate international impacts on the UK (for example, on imported food supplies)

Local action on climate change

9.6 ESCC declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council set a target of achieving carbon neutrality from its own activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050. This is in line with the updated national target agreed in 2019. ESCC has committed to cutting its corporate carbon emissions by an average of 13% per year and set aside an additional £9.9m to help meet this reduction target for the period up to March 2025. Actions to implement the Council's own climate change commitments are set out in the [Climate Emergency Plan](#), covering the period 2023 – 2025. A plan for the period 2025 – 2030 is in development.

9.7 The cost for the Council to get to net zero for building and transport emissions (scope 1 and 2) could be approximately £200m between now and 2050, largely due to the investment needed for decarbonising heat in buildings, including schools. ESCC has secured over £1.9m of external funding to contribute to covering these costs, but there remains a very large gap between the resources available and the resources required to get to net zero.

9.8 Even if global warming can be limited to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, significant additional investment is likely to be needed in measures to adapt to the effects of climate change that are already locked in. ESCC's Climate Emergency Plan makes the following commitments to ensure that the council can continue to operate effectively as the climate changes, which we are currently in the process of implementing:

- Assessing the council's vulnerability to climate change
- Producing a climate risk register
- Developing a climate adaptation/resilience strategy and programme
- Embedding climate adaptation into business as usual decision making and risk management.

9.9 The Council continues to progress work with partners on climate mitigation and adaptation across the county through the [Climate Emergency Road Map](#) overseen by the East Sussex Environment Board. The road map summarises many areas of work that the Council leads, or collaborates with partners on, to mitigate and adapt to climate change. A range of existing thematic partnerships will also continue to address climate change in East Sussex, including partnerships covering housing, waste, skills and local planning.

Environment Act

9.10 The Environment Act 2021 placed a number of new duties and responsibilities on ESCC, the implications of which are covered below. These may also provide new opportunities to protect and enhance local ecology.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

9.11 Under the Act, ESCC is the Responsible Authority for producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. LNRSs are a means to identify and agree, at the local level, the priorities and actions needed to drive nature recovery and the wider environmental benefits that will arise from a healthy natural environment. They are intended to direct future effort and funding for nature recovery and must be developed in line

with secondary legislation and statutory guidance. Additional burden monies have been provided by Government for two years to help pay for the cost of developing the LNRS. It is currently unclear how implementation costs for the three to 10 year reviews of the LNRS that ESCC is expected to carry out will be covered.

9.12 ESCC is working closely with West Sussex County Council to share expertise and resources and to reduce the impact on shared stakeholders. Together, we are carrying out extensive stakeholder engagement, to be followed by a public consultation at the end of 2024, with publication of the final LNRS in summer 2025. Delivery of the LNRS will lie with a range of stakeholders, including ESCC.

Biodiversity

9.13 The Environment Act requires new developments to deliver a minimum of a 10% gain in biodiversity, known as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This became mandatory for major developments in January 2024 and for all others (with a few exemptions) in April 2024. Once published, the LNRS is expected to guide the delivery of BNG to the best strategic locations for nature recovery. All off-site BNG and any 'significant on-site' (to be locally defined) BNG must be maintained and monitored for at least 30 years following development, secured through planning conditions and/or legal agreements.

9.14 The Government has provided additional burden monies to help assess and monitor the implementation of BNG. Early indications suggest that this is unlikely to be sufficient to cover all costs. In preparation for BNG, ESCC has been actively upskilling relevant local planning authority officers and teams, primarily through the Sussex Nature Partnership, which is hosted by ESCC, and through service level agreements with the district and borough councils for the provision of ecological advice for planning.

9.15 The requirement for habitat sites to be created to cater for BNG offers the opportunity for planning authorities, including ESCC, to use their own land holdings to offset their own developments, and potentially to sell BNG 'credits' to other developers looking to purchase off-site BNG. Given the relatively small amount of land ESCC owns, opportunities are likely to be limited, and it should be recognised that habitat banks require an initial investment to establish.

9.16 The Environment Act also strengthens the existing Biodiversity Duty and requires all public authorities to consider what action they can take to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and to report on progress against that duty. ESCC published its [Biodiversity Duty first considerations report](#) in December 2023 in line with statutory guidance. The first report on progress and delivery, which will include reporting on the delivery of BNG, must be published no later than three years after that date, with subsequent reports published every five years. No additional burdens funding is expected to support this duty.

Waste provisions

9.17 The Environment Act introduces several changes to how waste services operate. Changes will include the introduction of extended producer responsibility for packaging in 2024, the provision of weekly food waste collections in 2026, and the introduction of a deposit return scheme in 2027. These changes will impact the Council's waste contracts, will require changes to facilities and will alter the amount of waste and recycling that we manage.

Air quality

9.18 The Environment Act significantly strengthened the duties on upper tier authorities with respect to air quality. It requires all tiers of government (and neighbouring authorities) to co-

operate in the development of action plans where Air Quality Management Areas have been declared. Statutory guidance states that if a borough or district council intends to prepare an Air Quality Action Plan, ESCC must propose specific measures it will take to help secure the achievement and maintenance of air quality standards and objectives in the relevant area, including target dates. Currently, there are two air quality management areas in East Sussex, one covering a part of Lewes town and one covering part of Newhaven. These were both declared prior to the Environment Act 2021 and the Air Quality Action Plans produced by Lewes District Council were developed with input from ESCC.

Flood risk management

9.19 Government has been seeking to implement legislation that would see local flood authorities (such as ESCC) take on responsibility for the approval, adoption and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) constructed as part of new developments. This would have significant implications for the Council's Flood Risk Management Team, as currently our role is restricted to commenting on proposed drainage schemes at the design stage. Consultation on secondary legislation, new burdens assessments, and matters such as transitional arrangements was expected in 2023, but did not take place. Until further details emerge resource and budget implications for the Council cannot be established.

UK Emissions Trading Scheme

9.20 In July 2023 the Government proposed expanding the UK Emissions Trading Scheme to include the energy from waste sector from 2028 onwards to help the UK achieve its net zero target. The energy from waste sector is responsible for about 1% of UK carbon emissions. Inclusion of Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility in the UK Emissions Trading Scheme will have significant financial and operational impacts from 2028 onwards. All facilities will need to decarbonise or pay for allowances. Consultation is expected on this proposal, to which the Council will respond, aiming to influence the national policy direction.

10. Supporting Services

10.1 The below section provides updates on key local and national developments for ESCC's supporting services. Local priorities are to deliver the implementation phase of the Modernising Back Office Systems programme; respond to workforce and pay challenges; continue delivery of the Council's Property Asset Management Plan including office space rationalisation; exploration of productivity enhancements potentially afforded by artificial intelligence; and adaptation to new procurement regulations. Preparations will also be made for the County Council election in May 2025.

Modernising Back Office Systems Programme

10.2 The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) programme was established to replace the Council's core finance and human resources (HR) systems. The current system, SAP, will no longer be supported by the supplier beyond 2027, so a replacement system is necessary. Replacing a system originally implemented over 15 years ago provides opportunities to take advantage of new technology which is better able to support an agile and flexible workforce and provide easily accessible data and insight to support management decision making.

10.3 Following an extensive and robust procurement process, Oracle Fusion was selected as the new software platform, and Infosys as the implementation partner. The replacement system offers the opportunity to deliver benefits including a better user experience, undertaking transactional activity (freeing staff up to focus on more complex and value-added advice), and better availability of data and management reporting.

10.4 The programme is in its implementation period which requires process changes to be made across the Council as ways of working are updated, including by introducing new functionality such as self-service for tasks such as submitting timesheets and requisitions.

10.5 Following the deferral of the programme go-live date from November 2023, an independent assessment of the programme has recently been undertaken and work is in progress to set out a revised delivery approach, timings and associated resource requirement. A phased approach to implementation is now being taken with some changes in organisational ways of working, supported by considerable staff and wider engagement.

Workforce challenges

10.6 The Council continues to face significant recruitment and retention challenges as a result of the current national labour market conditions and cost of living pressures. Locally, there are particular challenges in front line social care roles (qualified and unqualified) and some of our technical and professional roles such as legal services and engineering. The position is exacerbated in our more rural locations with recruitment in these areas being especially difficult. There is evidence to show that this tight labour market is putting pressure on pay levels.

10.7 In order to respond to these pressures and attract staff to work for the Council, plans include building on our 'We Choose East Sussex' recruitment brand to create additional engaging and informative content on the jobs pages of our website. Alongside this, we will attend local recruitment fairs to showcase the range of job opportunities at the Council and to connect with those who are looking for work. An important element of this will be to set out clearly the benefits of working for the Council and how we are an 'employer of choice'.

10.8 As well as seeking to attract experienced individuals, we are also utilising approaches such as apprenticeships, traineeships and intern arrangements as a way of bringing new talent into the Council. We are currently in the process of developing a 'work experience' package, the intention being to provide opportunities to support individuals to become work ready as well as encouraging individuals to consider the Council as the place to start their career.

10.9 Recent changes to the Apprenticeship Levy will enable us to transfer up to 50% of our levy to non-levy paying employers. We will build on the work undertaken to date through the Transform project to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in priority sectors to access our levy funding, supporting the skills development of our local population.

10.10 Retention of our workforce is also a key aim. We are committed to supporting our staff with continuous professional development and creating an environment where staff are encouraged to learn and grow. In line with this, our updated People Strategy covering the three year period 2024 to 2027 has recently launched and, alongside this, a second cohort of our innovative 'Ladder to Leadership' programme has commenced. We continue to develop our extensive wellbeing offer to support our staff to remain healthy and well, both in and out of work.

Pay challenges

10.11 The introduction of the National Living Wage (NLW) created pressures as a result of its close proximity to the bottom end of the local government pay scales. Given the national employers' principle that local government should not be a minimum wage employer, maintaining headroom between the lowest rate of pay and the NLW has been a key objective of the recent national pay awards. The current top-end forecast of the NLW will have a significant impact on the lower end of the local East Sussex Single Status pay scales, in particular the first two grades. These grades currently cover a range of posts, the majority of which are in schools.

10.12 To address the NLW pressures, recent national pay awards have removed pay points at the bottom end of the pay structure. Whilst this has addressed the immediate NLW pressures, a continuation of this approach in future pay awards will likely result in the need for the local Single Status pay scales to be remodelled.

Property asset management

10.13 The Council's Asset Management Plan 2020-2025 includes an action plan to ensure operational assets are used efficiently, and a programmed approach to asset disposal has been established. There is continued focus on ensuring our assets are optimally utilised and continue to reduce their carbon and physical footprint. In 2024/25 this will include the office space in Eastbourne reducing from two office hubs to one, and office space in Hastings being reduced further. The use of County Hall is also being reviewed, reflecting its decreased utilisation post-Covid, and options for future use are currently being considered. There are also increased opportunities for reducing the wider estate, reflecting revised service models and rationalising use where possible.

10.14 The Council has an ambitious disposal of assets programme to secure capital receipts that will support the capital programme. The Community Asset Policy will be updated during 2024/25 which will allow a small number of assets with low monetary value to be available for potential disposals by community groups, voluntary sector and parish councils.

Technology supporting productivity

10.15 Developments in process automation and artificial intelligence (AI) present opportunities for the Council to support organisational capacity and resilience. IT & Digital will work with departments to support the identification and readiness of processes for automation and the enhancement of service delivery using AI capabilities. A Data Protection and Information Security Policy, supported by practical guidance, is being developed to support the responsible use of Generative AI technologies, such as ChatGPT, as departments explore specific uses.

10.16 Investment of resources will be required to provide skilled support and establish the technology infrastructure and prerequisite data architecture. AI fundamentally draws from datasets to learn, harvest and present information. If the right data does not exist, or is not of sufficient quality, it may not be possible to use AI for the intended purpose or there could be harmful consequences of doing so. A corporate Data and Insight Plan is being developed to set out activity required to help address this.

Procurement

10.17 The Procurement Act 2023 will come into force in October 2024. The legislation will have a significant impact on procurement teams over the next two years and beyond, and work is underway to understand how existing processes, systems, people, and planned procurement activity will be impacted. All staff in the procurement service will require a minimum of 10 hours of Cabinet Office issued training and many will need to complete three days 'deep-dive' training. In addition, there will be internal training requirements relating to local systems and processes, with relevant commissioners across the Council also needing to understand the impact of the Act and attend briefings as necessary. The resource implications of the planning, training and implementation will have a significant impact on the available capacity of the procurement team. This is in addition to Provider Selection Regime changes that came into effect in January 2024.

10.18 A revised National Procurement Policy Statement is due to be released in autumn 2024. This will align with the new regulations and continue to support our approach to social value and sustainable procurement.

Local Elections

10.19 The next County Council election is scheduled to take place in May 2025. Work will take place over the coming year to provide information to prospective candidates about the Council's work and the role of a county councillor through our 'Be a councillor' campaign. A comprehensive induction programme will be prepared for newly elected councillors to support them in taking up their roles. We will work closely with district and borough councils, who administer the election on behalf of the County Council, on the statutory election process.

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Our priority and delivery outcomes

The Council has four overarching priority outcomes: driving sustainable economic growth; keeping vulnerable people safe; helping people help themselves; and making best use of resources now and for the future. Making best use of resources now and for the future is the gateway priority through which any activity and accompanying resources must pass. For each priority outcome there are specific delivery outcomes.

Proposed amendments to the delivery outcomes are shown in red bold text below.

Driving sustainable economic growth - delivery outcomes

- East Sussex businesses are supported to succeed and grow sustainably
- The county is an attractive place to live, work and do business
- Individuals, communities and businesses thrive in East Sussex with the environmental, and social infrastructure to meet their needs
- The workforce has and maintains the skills needed for good quality employment to meet the needs of the current and future East Sussex economy
- The value of our role as both a significant employer and a buyer of local goods and services is maximised
- All children progress well from early years through school and into post-16 education, training and employment

Keeping vulnerable people safe - delivery outcomes

- All vulnerable people in East Sussex are known to relevant local agencies and ~~services~~ **support is** delivered together to meet their needs
- People feel safe at home and well supported by their networks
- Children grow up supported by enduring, loving relationships
- People feel safe with ~~services~~ **support provided**
- We work with the wider health and care system to support people to achieve the best outcomes possible

Helping people help themselves - delivery outcomes

- Commissioners and providers from all sectors put people first when providing services and information to help them meet their needs
- The most vulnerable get the support they need to maintain their independence and this is provided at or as close to home as possible
- Through working well with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, individuals, families and communities are supported to thrive
- **We work to reduce health inequalities and maximise opportunities for our residents to live healthier lives**

Making best use of resources now and for the future - delivery outcomes

- To help tackle Climate Change East Sussex County Council activities are carbon neutral as soon as possible and in any event by 2050
- We work as One Council
- We work in strong and sustained partnership with the public, voluntary community, social enterprise and private sectors to ensure that our collective resources and influence are used to deliver maximum benefits
- Ensuring we achieve value for money in the services we commission and provide
- Maximising the funding available through bidding for funding and lobbying for the best deal for East Sussex

- We are an employer of choice and support our staff to achieve and develop, ensuring we have the workforce we need to deliver services both now and in the future

State of the County 2024 Capital Programme Update

1 Background

1.1 Through the Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources (RPPR) process the Capital Strategy and programme are reviewed annually to ensure that they support the Council's responsibilities and departmental service strategies. To manage investment to a sustainable level, the Capital Strategy focuses on the delivery of targeted basic need for the council to continue to deliver services as efficiently as possible, rather than rationing through prioritisation. Basic need for the purpose of strategic capital planning is provided below: -

- Place: ensuring we can deliver services by planning for future need.
- Asset Condition: maintaining our assets to an agreed level.
- ICT Strategy: ensure that our ICT is fit for purpose for delivering modern council services in a digital era and protecting data.
- Climate Change: supporting the Council's aim of reaching carbon neutrality from our activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050 in an appropriate and cost-efficient way.

1.2 At Full Council in February 2024 the target led basic need capital strategy of 20 years, supported by a 10-year planned capital programme was approved. The capital programme 2023/24 to 2033/34 reported as part of the Budget in February 2024 had a total programme expenditure of £768.1m and a borrowing requirement of £383.3m. Table 1 below provides details of the approved capital programme and funding.

Table 1 – Capital Programme (Budget 2024) (£m)	Previous Year 2023/24	MTFP Period			2027/28 to 2033/34	Total
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27		
Gross Expenditure	80.139	96.690	98.128	67.216	495.749	837.922
Specific Funding	(10.822)	(30.472)	(23.276)	(2.609)	(2.612)	(69.791)
Net Expenditure	69.317	66.218	74.852	64.607	493.137	768.131
Formula Grants	(32.502)	(23.916)	(26.223)	(26.023)	(191.066)	(299.730)
Capital Receipts	(0.817)	(7.061)	(9.753)	-	-	(17.631)
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	(18.979)	(3.098)	(6.709)	(8.507)	(11.598)	(48.891)
Developer Contributions Target	-	-	-	-	(18.588)	(18.588)
<i>Slippage Risk Factor</i>	-	(19.143)	(22.079)	-	41.222	0.000
Programme Borrowing	17.019	13.000	10.088	30.077	313.107	383.291

1.3 The financial outlook for local authorities is increasingly challenging, with uncertain funding allocations, inflationary pressure on contracts and wages, increasing service demands and the impact of national reforms leaving much uncertainty about the Council's future financial position. Capital investment decisions have a direct impact on the council's revenue budget, particularly relating to borrowing costs, and are therefore to be considered in the context of their impact on the MTFP. The Council will therefore continue to consider changes to the Capital Programme outside normal Capital Strategy updates that present a more realistic and affordable programme that reduces pressure on the MTFP position.

2 Capital Programme

- 2.1 Table 2 below summarises the gross movements since budget setting in February 2024, reflecting the 2023/24 outturn position, other updates made in accordance with approved governance and variation process, and proposed updates to be made in accordance with Capital Strategy principles. A detailed programme has been included at **Annex A**.

Table 2 - Capital Programme (gross) movements (£m)	Ref	Previous Year 2023/24	MTFP Period			2027/28 to 2033/34	Total
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/27		
Gross Expenditure Feb 2024		80.139	96.690	98.128	67.216	495.749	837.922
Approved Variations	A	5.741	11.595	10.775	1.333	4.958	34.402
Grove Park Project Update	B	-	(3.950)	3.000	(1.610)	1.001	(1.559)
Other Programme Updates	C	-	0.256	0.347	0.347	2.649	3.599
2023/24 Slippage / Reprofiles	D	(8.561)	3.714	4.400	0.674	(0.227)	0.000
2023/24 Over/Underspend		0.172	-	-	-	-	0.172
Revised Gross Expenditure		77.491	108.305	116.650	67.960	504.130	874.536
Slippage Risk Factor	E	-	(24.281)	(27.069)	(7.861)	59.211	0.000
Gross Expenditure (after slippage risk factor)		77.491	84.024	89.581	60.099	563.341	874.536

A Approved Variations

There is a gross increase to the programme of £34.4m relating to fully funded schemes having a net nil impact on the capital programme due to the identification of specific funding in accordance with the Capital Strategy, as summarised in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Approved Variations since February 2024	Gross Variation (£m)
Climate Emergency works (reserves funding switch to revenue)	(0.535)
Climate Emergency works (specific grant funding)	0.859
Flood Management and SuDs in Schools (specific grant funding)	0.440
Real Time Passenger Information (revenue set aside)	0.218
Area Wide Traffic Management Scheme – School Streets (revenue set aside)	0.119
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (specific grant funding)	4.541
Hastings Town Centre Public Realm and Green Connections (specific grant funding)	9.689
The Keep Solar PV (partner contributions)	0.070
Schools Delegated Capital (specific grant and schools contributions)	0.653
Growing Places Fund Loan Scheme (earmarked loan repayments)	4.958
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation – Oracle Implementation (reserves set aside)	13.390
Total Net Nil Approved Variations	34.402

B Grove Park Project Update

The Grove Park Project Board, with support from external consultancy partners, have undertaken an Options Appraisal of SEN school place provision at Grove Park, due to various construction and budgetary risks associated to the original proposal of additional nursery, secondary and sixth form places on the site. The Board have agreed to proceed with a project that delivers required secondary places and considers options for the provision of nursery places, which is considered to be the best option in managing risks and being affordable within the approved budget envelope. This update therefore presents a revised budget requirement based on the agreed option.

C Other Programme Updates

Other updates made in accordance with Capital Strategy principles relate to:

- Following government announcements of the 2024/25 grant allocation, the Schools Capital Building Improvements programme has been increased in line with anticipated grant value, being a cash limited programme that represent the value of formula grants received.
- The 10-year school basic need capital strategy has been reviewed and updated considering the need for temporary place provision over the MTFP period, resulting in a reduced requirement of £0.3m.

D 2023/24 Capital Programme Outturn

Total 2023/24 capital expenditure was £77.5m against an approved budget of £85.9m, resulting in a variation to budget of £8.4m. This variation is made up of £8.6m net slippage and £0.2m net overspend on the planned programme.

E Capital Slippage Risk Factor

The Capital Programme continues to experience significant levels of budget slippage compared to original budgets (£19m slippage in 2023/24 compared to original budget) which can undermine the planning process, particularly in terms of treasury management modelling and the impact of borrowing on the revenue budget over the medium term. A corporate capital risk factor has therefore been introduced from 2024/25 to reflect likely slippage based on a risk assessment of historic levels of actual expenditure and slippage at a project/programme level and has been updated following the 2023/24 outturn position.

3 Capital Programme Funding Update

- 3.1 Table 4 below provides movements in the council's borrowing requirement to reflect the 2023/24 outturn position, government funding announcements and other updates, reducing the council's borrowing requirement from £383.3m to £374.8m, of which £43.6m is expected over the period to 2026/27.
- 3.2 Current Treasury Management modelling for the direct costs of borrowing estimates that for every £10m of additional borrowing, there would be an associated revenue cost of approximately £750,000 per year over the full life of the asset (based on a 30 year asset life), although the profile of costs will vary dependent on a number of variables such as timing, internal cash balances and interest rates. As highlighted at budget setting in February 2024 the current planned programme borrowing requirement will need Treasury Management budget increases outside the current MTFP period.

Table 4 - Capital Programme Borrowing (£m)	Ref	Previous Year 2023/24	MTFP Period			2027/28 to 2033/34	Total
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/27		
Borrowing February 2024		17.019	13.000	10.088	30.077	313.107	383.291
Formula Grants Update	F	(6.033)	(1.436)	(0.500)	(0.500)	-	(8.469)
Capital Receipts Update	G	-	2.259	5.803	(8.870)	-	(0.808)
Revenue Contribution to Capital	H	1.827	-	-	-	-	1.827
Other Programme Changes	I	(0.261)	(3.740)	2.840	(1.670)	1.005	(1.826)
2023/24 Slippage / Reprofiles	J	(3.857)	2.038	2.843	(0.076)	(0.948)	0.000
2023/24 Over/Underspend		0.736	-	-	-	-	0.736
Slippage Risk Factor	E	-	(5.138)	(4.990)	(7.862)	17.990	0.000
Revised Borrowing		9.431	6.983	16.084	11.099	331.154	374.751

F Formula Grants Update

The capital programme is supported by £312.1m of non-specific formula grant, which represents 36% of the total gross programme funding. Formula grant assumptions reflect best estimates but noting that there continues to be risk in relation to these grants as values for future years are still yet to be announced. Formula Grant values have been updated to reflect the following announcements:

- **High Needs Provision:** Notification of additional High Needs Provision capital grants in 2023/24 and 2024/25 of £6.7m which will be allocated to the existing basic need programme. Assumptions for further years allocations over the MTFP period have been updated to minimum levels, as funding beyond 2025 is contingent on the outcomes of future Spending Reviews and additional capital funding beyond this period is not guaranteed.
- **Childcare Expansion Grant:** The DfE announced Childcare Expansion capital grant to support the expansion of current or new childcare places. Of the £0.823m council allocation, £0.659m has been allocated to fund existing programme expenditure, and it is intended to use the remaining £0.164m to support wraparound provision not currently included in the capital programme.
- **Traffic Signal Obsolescence and Green Light Fund:** New funding from the DfT announced in March 2024 totalling £0.613m to upgrade traffic signal systems and equipment.

G Capital Receipts Update

Review and refinement of Property Services schedule of capital receipts is undertaken on a regular basis with estimates based on Property Officers' professional judgement on a site by site basis. This is supported by the work undertaken recently and successfully getting a number of surplus properties to the point of sale. Following a recent review, it is suggested that anticipated capital receipts can be increased by £0.8m for capital planning purposes over the MTFP period.

H Revenue Contribution to Capital

Due to slippage within the capital programme, and to support the council's wider financial position in the year, it was agreed that two transfers for Capital Expenditure from Revenue Account (CERA) were not utilised to fund the capital programme during 2023/24, and were instead maintained within revenue to support the council's overspend position.

I Other Programme Changes

A number of other capital programme updates made in accordance with Capital Strategy principles have impacted the capital borrowing requirement, such as the review of the Grove Park Project Update, profile of capital reserves contributions and identification of developer contributions to fund basic need requirements.

J 2023/24 Capital Programme Outturn

Net variations within the 2023/24 capital programme have resulted in reprofile of borrowing requirements, and a minor increase to fund net overspends reported as part of the council's monitoring process.

- 3.3 The revised capital programme, taking into consideration the updates presented throughout this report, would reduce the level of borrowing to £43.6m in the period to 2026/27, which represents a reduction of £26.6m since the position reported in February 2024. It is estimated that this will have a favourable MTFP impact of £0.8m for cost of borrowing which will be incorporated into the MTFP revenue planning process.

4 Programme Update and Review / RPPR Next Steps

- 4.1 Work will now be progressed as part of the RPPR process to extend the programme by a further year to maintain a 10-year planning horizon and ensure continued links into, and support of, the Council's other strategies.

- 4.2 The draft capital programme after updates identified in this report would require capital programme borrowing of £43.6m up to 2026/27, the revenue cost of which would have a significant impact on the MTFP which is already in a large deficit position. It has therefore been agreed by CMT that a further review of the capital programme will be conducted as part of this year's RPPR cycle, to consider the implications of removing core council funded programmes / projects from the capital programme that increases the council's borrowing need.
- 4.3 The Capital Strategy will also be reviewed to ensure it continues to drive investment ambition in line with the Council's priorities and to continue to include equality impact assessments (EQIAs) as part of the capital RPPR process, whilst also providing for appropriate capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management within the context of sustainable, long-term delivery of services.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 This report provides an update on current approved capital programme as part of the annual RPPR cycle. Work will now be progressed as part of the RPPR process to extend the programme by a further year to maintain the 10-year planning horizon, link into and support the Council's other strategies, as well as a review of the programme to reduce the revenue impact of borrowing.

Annex A – Funding Summary and Detailed Capital Programme

Capital Programme Summary	Previous Year 2023/24	MTFP Period			2027/28 to 2033/34	Total
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27		
Gross Expenditure	77.491	108.305	116.650	67.960	504.130	874.536
Specific Funding	(9.028)	(33.835)	(35.338)	(4.692)	(2.612)	(85.505)
Net Expenditure	68.463	74.470	81.312	63.268	501.518	789.031
<i>Slippage Risk Factor</i>	-	(24.281)	(27.069)	(7.862)	59.212	0.000
Formula Grants	(38.736)	(25.558)	(27.130)	(26.930)	(193.715)	(312.069)
Capital Receipts	(0.817)	(4.802)	(3.950)	(8.870)	-	(18.439)
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	(19.479)	(12.846)	(7.079)	(8.507)	(17.277)	(65.188)
Developer Contributions Target	-	-	-	-	(18.584)	(18.584)
Programme Borrowing	9.431	6.983	16.084	11.099	331.154	374.751

Detailed Capital Programme (Gross Expenditure)	Previous Year 2023/24	MTFP Period			2027/28 to 2033/34	Total
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27		
Adult Social Care						
Adults House Adaptations	0.013	0.050	0.050	0.050	-	0.163
Learning Disability Support Living Scheme	1.012	3.700	1.256	0.081	-	6.049
Greenacres	-	0.070	0.070	-	-	0.140
Adult Social Care Total	1.025	3.820	1.376	0.131	0.000	6.352
Business Services						
SALIX Contract	0.056	0.350	-	-	-	0.406
Lansdowne Secure Unit	0.026	0.039	-	-	-	0.065
Youth Investment Fund	0.621	7.003	-	-	-	7.624
Disability Children’s Home	0.742	0.024	-	-	-	0.766
Westfield Land	0.036	0.017	-	-	-	0.053
Special Educational Needs Provision	1.029	0.525	0.685	0.300	1.000	3.539
Special Educational Needs Provision Grove Park	0.172	1.300	11.000	3.390	1.430	17.292
Schools Basic Need Provision	2.093	0.353	0.400	0.512	60.609	63.967
Capital Building Improvement (Schools)	4.419	5.781	4.589	4.389	30.723	49.901
Capital Building Improvement (Corporate)	3.748	4.401	4.000	4.000	28.000	44.149
IT&Digital Strategy Implementation	3.372	6.399	6.409	4.075	54.351	74.606
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation – Oracle Implementation	7.088	9.634	-	-	-	16.722
IT&D – Utilising Automation	-	0.024	-	-	-	0.024
Business Services Total	23.402	35.850	27.083	16.666	176.113	279.114

Children's Services						
Childrens House Adaptations	0.078	0.050	0.050	0.050	-	0.228
Schools Delegated Capital	1.803	1.150	1.150	1.150	-	5.253
Children's Services Essential System Developments	-	0.736	0.885	0.958	0.774	3.353
Children's Services Total	1.881	1.936	2.085	2.158	0.774	8.834
Communities, Economy and Transport						
Broadband	(0.269)	0.065	5.721	-	-	5.517
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road	0.566	-	-	-	-	0.566
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road Complementary Measures	0.048	0.141	-	-	-	0.189
Economic Intervention Fund – Grants	0.072	-	0.300	0.300	1.186	1.858
Economic Intervention Fund – Loans	0.053	-	0.300	0.300	1.097	1.750
Stalled Sites	0.013	-	0.050	0.050	0.157	0.270
Upgrading Empty Commercial Properties	-	-	-	0.007	-	0.007
Growing Places Fund Loan Scheme	-	-	-	-	4.958	4.958
Community Match Fund	0.029	0.379	0.066	-	-	0.474
Community Road Safety Interventions	0.175	0.547	-	-	-	0.722
Newhaven Port Access Road	(0.036)	0.135	0.030	0.665	-	0.794
Real Time Passenger Information	0.132	0.180	0.131	-	-	0.443
Passenger Services Software	0.021	0.005	-	-	-	0.026
Bus Service Improvement Plan - Bus Prioritisation	0.187	6.933	11.380	-	-	18.500
Bus Service Improvement Plan - Passenger Transport	2.174	1.251	-	-	-	3.425
Lewes Bus Station Replacement	0.004	-	-	-	-	0.004
Queensway Depot Development	(0.016)	0.120	2.900	1.500	-	4.504
The Keep	-	0.172	0.040	0.085	0.780	1.077
Other Integrated Transport Schemes	1.638	3.557	6.087	9.087	41.528	61.897
A22 Corridor Package	0.207	-	-	-	-	0.207
Exceat Bridge Replacement	0.632	5.340	0.880	-	-	6.852
Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2	(0.003)	-	-	-	-	(0.003)
Schools Streets	0.169	0.150	-	-	-	0.319
Eastbourne Liveable Town Centre	0.058	0.216	-	-	-	0.274
Hastings Town Centre Public Realm and Green Connections	0.359	0.706	8.624	-	-	9.689
Libraries Basic Need	0.442	0.773	0.550	0.467	1.347	3.579
Highways Structural Maintenance	33.877	23.704	22.246	22.819	237.539	340.185
Bridge Assessment and Strengthening	1.955	7.945	2.901	2.901	14.025	29.727
Street Lighting Replacement Programme	2.150	3.835	3.988	3.429	8.395	21.797

Street Lighting SALIX Scheme	0.220	-	-	-	-	0.220
Rights of Way Programme	0.534	0.588	0.643	0.662	5.486	7.913
Gypsy and Traveller Site Refurbishment	-	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.490	0.700
Visibly Better Roads	0.789	0.504	-	-	-	1.293
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure	-	0.400	2.298	1.843	-	4.541
Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme	1.135	0.758	0.989	0.683	-	3.565
Flood Management and SuDS in Schools	0.202	0.218	-	-	-	0.420
Climate Emergency Works	2.843	4.336	4.206	4.137	10.255	25.777
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2a	0.521	1.779	1.746	-	-	4.046
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2b	0.078	0.022	5.050	-	-	5.150
Eastbourne / South Wealden Walking & Cycling Package	0.089	0.990	1.328	-	-	2.407
Hailsham / Polegate / Eastbourne Movement & Access Corridor	0.260	0.134	-	-	-	0.394
Hastings / Bexhill Movement and Access Package	(0.125)	0.746	3.582	-	-	4.203
Communities, Economy and Transport Total	51.183	66.699	86.106	49.005	327.243	580.236
Capital Programme Total	77.491	108.305	116.650	67.960	504.130	874.536

Context

An overview of the East Sussex context can be found in our [Focus on East Sussex report](#). Key features include a significantly older than average population, a relatively weak local economy, below average earnings and areas of significant deprivation, with three of the five district and borough areas designated nationally as in need of levelling up.

East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) priorities for the county are set out in our [Council Plan](#), together with the key activities and targets. Each of our priority outcomes, and their supporting delivery outcomes, has been informed by a robust evidence base, including comparative information with other local authorities and areas.

The Council Plan, [revenue budget](#) (c£1bn gross and £550m net) and [capital programme](#) (c£838m across 10 years) are fully integrated through our [integrated business planning](#) process, Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR), which helps us ensure we are as productive as possible.

Recent external assessments of the Council have provided independent assurance that the organisation is effective, well managed and offers value for money. These include:

- Local Government Association [Corporate Peer Challenge 2023](#)
- Local Government Association Adult Social Care Peer Challenge 2024
- Ofsted [Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services 2023](#)
- Grant Thornton's External Auditor [Value for Money Assessment 2022/23](#)

More information about how the Council operates is in the [position statement for our 2023 Corporate Peer Challenge](#).

1. Developing our services to make best use of resources

Our previous work

ESCC has a strong focus on continuous improvement, using benchmarking groups to assess our comparative performance in relation to other councils, and to share learning on successful delivery models or interventions which can be adopted locally.

Using this approach, and a focus on commissioning strategically to achieve specific outcomes, we have implemented a range of significant service development and improvement programmes in recent years, for example:

- Health and social care integration
- Children's services Early Help Strategy
- Strategic commissioning approach to library services
- Highways – asset management approach

Despite significant work to make best use of reduced resources, the scale of the gap between the cost of providing services and the funding available meant that ESCC has had to identify £140m of savings since 2010. We have taken innovative approaches to delivering savings which align to our priority outcomes, including a focus on efficiency in the back office to prioritise funding for frontline services. We have managed staff reductions to avoid compulsory redundancies as far as possible.

In 2018 we developed our Core Offer which defined the basic but decent level of services residents should expect and helped explain what we would need to step back from in order to live within our means and what we would continue to provide.

Future plans

We face a projected financial deficit of c£84m by 2027/28, £55m in 2025/26 alone – see [State of the County 2024](#) for more detail. This means that the Council is having to take a range of actions to bridge the financial gap including additional measures to contain and reduce day to day spend wherever possible, maximising income and identifying further savings. This includes reviewing the

remaining non-statutory, preventative services we continue to provide as part of our Core Offer. Any further reductions we are forced to make are very likely to generate higher need later on – a less productive use of resources.

The Council continues to focus on evidence-based continuous improvement across all services. Planned improvements are included in our [Council Plan](#). We review progress against the measures in our Council Plan as part of our [quarterly Council Monitoring process](#). Examples of planned work include:

- Implementation of family safeguarding and Valuing Care approaches in Children's Services
- Implementation of our [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Strategy](#).
- Taking forward our [Adult Social Care Strategy](#)
- Delivering our Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy
- Maximising value from our new highways contract
- Replacement of our back office IT system
- Continuing to reduce our office footprint

2. Taking advantage of technology and making better use of data

How we use technology and data

Our Strategic Digital Framework sets out how we will use technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our business processes. We have:

- implemented an automation platform which is helping to automate a range of administrative processes across multiple teams;
- piloted a chatbot for [Blue Badges](#);
- continually reviewed our IT systems and upgraded these where possible to take advantage of advances in technology. However, there is a significant cost involved in replacing older systems, requiring cost/benefit judgements;
- routinely used data quality audits and put in place data quality improvement plans to address any issues;
- published a range of data and reports, research and [key information about the county](#) online to support our and partner organisations' planning;
- shared data with partner organisations and used anonymised data to help plan services;
- taken part in benchmarking exercises to understand how well we are performing;
- adopted the data standards approved by the Data Standards Authority for new systems;
- maintained a set of clear and robust information governance processes to make sure data is kept safe and shared and used appropriately.

Our next steps

Over the next year we will develop pilots to test how we can use artificial intelligence (AI) safely and securely to deliver improvements and efficiencies. Alongside this we will continue to roll out our robotic process automation programme across the Council.

We will adopt and implement a new Data and Insight Plan which sets out actions for how we will collect, maintain and use our data to generate better insights into our services and the needs of our communities.

3. How we avoid wasteful spend

Our processes

We have established processes in place to ensure spend is directed to essential service delivery, including:

- a culture of strong financial management and awareness resulting from embedding the RPPR process throughout our delivery of services;

- a robust framework of financial management and controls to support effective budget monitoring;
- a business case process in relation to any significant investments in service development requiring capital funding or ongoing increases to revenue budgets; and
- the [Constitution](#), along with our [Annual Governance Statement](#), which provide assurance regarding the Council's governance framework and how it provides accountability regarding spend.

In addition to reductions in support services made as part of the Council's wider savings programmes, operating efficiencies have been achieved in the following areas:

- The [Orbis partnership](#) (with Surrey County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council) which involves shared teams supporting areas such as IT and procurement.
- Our Workstyles programme which allows some staff to work more flexibly where this will not affect the service that residents receive, helping reduce the spend on offices.

Our [People Strategy](#) informs our approach to attracting, retaining and developing staff. Managers are working in a very challenging context and we support them to deliver their responsibilities including the management of resources and demand. We have in place a strong approach to supporting our staff to maximise their performance through regular supervision, appraisal, coaching and development. We use consultants in line with our staffing policies where we need expert support for short periods of time where this would be cheaper than to directly employ staff. Our agency spend on qualified social worker roles in Children's Services is low compared to other authorities. Spend in these areas is overseen by the Corporate Management Team.

We have legal duties to ensure that we consider the equalities implications of the decisions we take and this also helps ensure resources are deployed fairly and effectively. We have the necessary staff to provide specialist advice on service planning and commissioning decisions so that we can meet these legal duties and business needs, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and Best Value requirements.

Further steps

Ongoing measures to ensure we consistently make best use of resources are well embedded in the council's processes and culture as described above, following many years of operating with constrained funding and capacity. In the face of the acute financial pressures currently facing the Council and the substantial budget gap, we have:

- undertaken a further review of day to day spend;
- instituted vacancy controls; and
- engaged staff in identifying any further ways to save money, however small.

Despite all these measures the Council will still need to make further service reductions which will impact on our ability to maintain our Core Offer to residents. The processes involved in implementing further savings will divert staff resource from service provision and development.

4. The barriers Government can help reduce or remove

There are a range of barriers which prevent the Council being more productive or sustainable which Government could help reduce or remove as set out below. The way in which central Government departments work with local government and local places can be an overarching barrier. The [Partnerships for People and Places \(PfPP\) programme](#) (in which ESCC participated) recently set out five barriers to place-based working and ways these could be addressed. Barriers included the overly complex and varying organisational structures in Government departments which make them difficult and time consuming for local authorities to navigate – the East Sussex team was required to engage with 26 individuals across ten teams in two Government departments to progress the PfPP project.

Financial barriers

A number of national issues are contributing to the Council's very significant financial challenges and ability to use the resources we have to best effect:

- Funding is not appropriately aligned to need – the funding formula on which local authority allocations are based requires fundamental reform to ensure it properly reflects the cost of providing services in different areas. There is currently over-reliance on raising income through Council Tax which is unrelated to need and is particularly difficult in areas like East Sussex where need for services, especially social care, is high but residents' ability to contribute more is very limited given below average wage levels and one of the highest band D rates in the country.
- Single year financial settlements limit our ability to plan and use resources most effectively – we need longer term settlements, including certainty on Council Tax referendum limits.
- Multiple ringfenced grants, with restrictive criteria and reporting requirements – we need greater freedom to allow local decision making on the best use of funding.
- Bidding processes, multiple funding pots and time-limited funding/pilots – these create additional work, a lack of flexibility to meet local needs and wasted time and resource in standing up/winding down provision or developing unsuccessful bids.
- National reforms which create new duties and responsibilities for the Council but are not fully funded – a key risk relates to Adult Social Care charging reforms which will, if implemented, have a major impact on councils in the south east, including East Sussex, with older populations, high levels of people self-funding their care and additional challenges in the independent sector market.
- A lack of early information on the funding available to meet new duties, and the specific obligations involved, to enable councils to plan effectively – for example in relation to Extended Producer Responsibility (Packaging) reforms.

National policy and legislative barriers

There are a significant number of requirements placed on the Council by national policy and legislation which reduce or remove our ability to target services most effectively and/or use our resources most effectively. Key areas in need of national reform or review include:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) – wholesale reform of the SEND system is required and funding must either be increased to meet eligibility criteria or eligibility criteria reduced to match available funding.
- Home to school transport – reforms to entitlement to make it more proportionate and affordable, including the ability to means-test so that families in a position to contribute to the cost are required to do so.
- Concessionary fares – reform to enable targeting of free travel to those most in need, such as through means-testing.
- The residential placements market and the agency staffing market in children's social care - both require greater controls on the costs charged and the profits made by independent sector providers, and how these services are made available.
- Looked After Children (LAC) reviews – a review and reduction in the number of professionals required to attend LAC reviews so we can make local decisions about the best use of limited staff time.
- NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC) – there is a need to review the CHC framework and create a fairer regime for funding care for people with long-term complex health needs.
- Utility company street works – greater powers for local authorities to manage the activities of utility companies on the highway which will enable better co-ordination of works and a reduction in inadequate repairs.
- Migration – a joined up, place-based approach from Government is required to address inconsistencies and a lack of co-ordination across multiple national schemes which play out locally in ways that create additional issues and work.
- Virtual (formal) meetings – legislative change to provide for local choice over which meetings may be held virtually in order to make best use of time, maximise accessibility and minimise travel costs and associated carbon emissions.
- Coroner's services – to review the role of local authorities in providing support services to HM Coroners.

Barriers to taking a more preventative approach

Providing early, upstream support can lead to better outcomes for people and reduce the higher intensity demand placed on a range of public sector organisations. We also want to invest in more cost-effective, proactive approaches to areas like maintaining our roads. With our current funding levels and the rising cost of delivering statutory services we are having to make difficult decisions to further reduce the amount of preventative work we do. We know these are not the best decisions for the medium or longer term but we have no choice. **We need Government to recognise the evidence-based case for prevention**, including:

- Providing significant additional investment in early help and family help as recommended by the MacAlister review of children's social care.
- Providing additional investment so we can provide better support for pupils with SEND, and those at risk of exclusion, in mainstream schools.
- Investing in health improvement and services that can maintain people's independence through Adult Social Care, Public Health and the NHS.
- Funding changes to allow more proactive planned roads maintenance, which would help us spend less on reactive repairs including pothole filling and the associated costs and work generated from roads being less well maintained.
- Greater investment in local economic growth and skills development, with increased local flexibility to meet local needs, which would increase independence and reduce need for support through access to good jobs.
- Housing – a strategic approach to addressing rising homelessness and the systemic and structural problems in the housing market, particularly in high cost areas such as the south east, which have a knock-on effect on demand for public services.

Capacity barriers

Although we work hard to deliver as much as we can with the resources we have available we still have challenges relating to capacity. We need Government recognition and support in the following areas:

- Workforce – we continue to face challenges in recruiting and retaining the essential staff we need. This is particularly the case in skilled areas such as social work, legal services or property services, and in areas where pay levels compare less favourably to other sectors. In social care, the impact of recent visa changes on overseas workers is also contributing to high vacancy rates.
- Ability to invest in technology – the significant financial pressures we face limit our capacity to invest in new technology and developing or recruiting staff with the specialist skills required.
- Capacity to further develop/improve services – the steps taken over many years to manage with reduced resources means that our managers and staff are stretched fulfilling their core roles. This means there is very limited capacity to implement significant change programmes. This is particularly the case in support services which have been reduced more significantly in order to prioritise funding for frontline services.
- Data sharing – improved data sharing by Government departments such as DWP to enable more automated processing in areas such as blue badges.

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Report to East Sussex County Council, South Downs National Park Authority and Brighton & Hove City Council

**by Stephen Normington B.Sc. Dip TP MRICS MRTPI FIQ FIHE and
Luke Fleming B.Sc. (Hons) Dip URP MRTPI IHBC**

Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State

Date: 3 April 2024

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

Section 20

Report on the Examination of the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan Revised Policies Proposed Submission Consultation Document September 2021

The Plan was submitted for examination on 13 May 2022

The examination hearings were held on 8 and 9 November 2022

File Ref: PINS/G1440/429/7

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Abbreviations Used in this Report

ADTP	Aggregates Data Technical Paper
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
LAA	Local Aggregates Assessment
HWAONB	High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework September 2023
NPPW	National Planning Policy for Waste
MCAs	Mineral Consultation Areas
MPA	Minerals Planning Authority
mtpa	Million tonnes per annum
MSAs	Mineral Safeguarding Areas
MSPG	Mineral Safeguarding Practice Guidance
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SDNP	South Downs National Park
SEEAWP	South-East England Aggregates Working Party
SEWPAG	South-East England Waste Planning Advisory Group
SOCG	Statement of Common Ground
SPA	Special Protection Area
SRN	Strategic Road Network
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WMP	Waste and Minerals Plan 2013
WMSP	Waste and Mineral Sites Plan 2017
WMLP	Waste and Minerals Local Plan
WPA	Waste Planning Authority

Non-Technical Summary

This report concludes that the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan Revised Policies Proposed Submission Consultation Document September 2021 (the Plan) provides an appropriate basis for the planning of waste and minerals in the County of East Sussex, part of the South Downs National Park and Brighton & Hove provided that a number of main modifications (MMs) are made to it. East Sussex County Council, the South Downs National Park Authority and Brighton & Hove City Council (the Authorities), as joint Mineral Planning Authorities (MPAs) and joint Waste Planning Authorities (WPAs), have specifically requested that we recommend any MMs necessary to enable the Plan to be adopted.

Following the hearings, the Authorities prepared schedules of the proposed modifications and, carried out sustainability appraisal (SA) and habitats regulations assessment (HRA) on them. The MMs were subject to public consultation over an eight-week period. In some cases, we have amended their detailed wording and/or added consequential modifications where necessary. We have recommended their inclusion in the Plan after considering the sustainability appraisal and habitats regulations assessment and all the representations made in response to consultation on them.

The MMs can be summarised as follows:

- A number of modifications to ensure the Plan period of the policies in the Plan is aligned with that of the vision, objectives and strategic policies.
- Modifications to Minerals Safeguarding Area and Mineral Consultation Area Policies to ensure they are justified and effective.
- Modifications to ensure the development management Policy is clearly written without ambiguity so that decision makers and developers can understand how to react to it.
- A range of modifications to the monitoring framework to clearly specify triggers and associated action necessary if the Plan is not delivering outcomes as expected.
- A number of other modifications to ensure that the Plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Introduction

1. This report contains our assessment of the Plan in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It considers first whether the Plan's preparation has complied with the duty to co-operate. It then considers whether the Plan is compliant with the legal requirements and whether it is sound.
2. On the 19 December 2023 the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published its revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) alongside other revisions to national policy. Paragraph 230 of that document indicates that the Plan should be examined against the version of the NPPF published on 5 September 2023. Therefore, when we refer to the NPPF in our report, we are referring to that published on the 5 September 2023. However, the Plan cross references specific paragraphs of the NPPF in places. Some of the MMs¹ consulted upon have therefore been adjusted to ensure they reference the correct paragraph numbers and the version of the NPPF published on 19 December 2023. We have had regard to all relevant national policies and statements in preparing this report.
3. The NPPF (paragraph 35) explains that in order to be sound, a Local Plan should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the Authorities have submitted what they consider to be a sound Plan. The Plan, submitted in May 2022 (R-RP02) is the basis for our examination. It is the same document as was published for consultation in September 2021.

Main Modifications

4. In accordance with section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act the Authorities have requested that we should recommend any MMs necessary to rectify matters that make the Plan unsound and /or not legally compliant and thus incapable of being adopted. Our report explains why the recommended MMs are necessary. The MMs are referenced in bold in the report in the form **MM1**, **MM2** etc, and are set out in full in the Appendix.
5. Following the examination hearings, the Authorities prepared a schedule of proposed MMs and carried out SA and HRA of them. The MM schedule was subject to public consultation for eight weeks. We have taken account of the consultation responses in coming to our conclusions in this report. None of the amendments to the detailed wording of the MMs as described in paragraph 2 of this report significantly alters the content of the modifications as published for

¹ **MM02, MM05, MM07, MM08, MM09, MM10, MM12**

consultation or undermines the participatory processes and SA or HRA that has been undertaken.

6. This report does not explain the detailed content and precise wording of every MM. This can be found in the Appendix to this report. However, it does refer to the most salient matters in explaining why a MM is necessary in order for the Plan to meet the test of soundness or be legally compliant.

Policies Map

7. The Authorities must maintain an adopted policies map which illustrates geographically the application of the policies in the adopted Development Plan. When submitting a Local Plan for examination, the Authorities are required to provide a submission policies map showing the changes to the adopted policies map that would result from the proposals in the submitted Local Plan.
8. In this case, the submission policies map comprises the set of plans identified in the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan Revised Policies Local Policies Map October 2021 (R-LPM02) and the plan identified as Revised Policies Local Policies Map (Amendments) (Addendum) (May 2022) – Replacement Map for map RSA/D Shoreham (R-LPM02A-RSA-D-2). For the avoidance of doubt, when we refer to the submission policies map in our report, we are referring to both of these documents unless explicitly indicated otherwise.
9. The policies map is not defined in statute as a development plan document and so we do not have the power to recommend MMs to it. However, a number of the published MMs to the Plan's policies require further corresponding changes to be made to the policies map. In addition, there are some instances where the geographic illustration of policies on the submission policies map is not justified and changes to the policies map are needed to ensure that the relevant policies are effective. These further changes to the policies map were published for consultation alongside the MMs in a Schedule of Policy Map Modifications (MM-PM01).
10. When the Plan is adopted, in order to comply with the legislation and give effect to the Plan's policies, the Authorities will need to update their adopted policies map to include all the changes proposed in MM-PM01.

Context and Scope of the Plan

11. The adopted East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan (WMLP) comprises the Waste and Minerals Plan (2013) (WMP) and the Waste and Mineral Sites Plan (2017) (WMSP). The Plan seeks

to amend (replace, add to or modify) specific policies and text contained within these adopted development plan documents. The Plan is therefore a partial review of the existing Development Plan and once adopted will form part of the adopted Development Plan for the Authorities replacing, adding to or modifying specific parts of the WMP or WMSP.

12. The Plan is focussed on the review of minerals provision and safeguarding of mineral resources and facilities, particularly for aggregate minerals. In addition, it reviews one minerals and waste development management policy and a single policy concerned with managing waste development proposals. It is only these matters which are within the scope of the examination. Any other matters detailed in the WMP or the WMSP, such as the capacity for waste management, are not dealt with in the Plan as they are not being reviewed by the Authorities at this time. Such matters are therefore not before us and have not been considered during the examination or in our report.
13. The Plan area covers the administrative areas of East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council, along with the part of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) that falls within East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. In 2017, the Plan area had a population of approximately 840,000 people.
14. Two thirds of the Plan area is covered by the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (HWAONB). In November 2023 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was renamed as National Landscapes. However, these areas remain AONB insofar as all policy, legislation and guidance applies to the designated landscape. We continue to refer to AONB in this report reflecting the Plan as modified.
15. To the east of the Plan area is the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated for their ecological and geological interest.
16. Environmental constraints have historically influenced low levels of 'land-won' aggregate production in the Plan area. Imports of aggregates extracted from the seabed (marine dredged aggregates) and crushed rock have therefore been necessary to meet local construction needs.

Public Sector Equality Duty

17. Through the examination, we have had due regard to the aims expressed in S149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Impact Assessment and Outcome Assessment (R-EQ02) demonstrates that the Plan does not lead to any adverse impacts or cause discrimination to any particular groups with protected characteristics within the Plan area.

18. No issues have been detected that would be likely to impinge upon the three aims of the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations or affect persons of relevant protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Overall, we have no reason to question the conclusions of R-EQ02.

Assessment of Duty to Co-operate

19. Section 20(5)(c) of the 2004 Act requires that we consider whether the Authorities have complied with any duty imposed on them by section 33A in respect of the Plan's preparation. Details of how the Authorities have met this duty are set out in the Duty to Co-operate Statement, Statements of Common Ground (SOCG) (R-DTCS01 & R-DTCS01.2) and the Authorities written responses to pre-hearing questions. These documents set out where, when, with whom and on what basis co-operation has taken place over all relevant strategic matters.
20. The evidence demonstrates that throughout the plan-making process the Authorities have worked closely with all prescribed bodies, including neighbouring MPAs, as well as some further afield where a strategic relationship was identified. It also shows the Authorities have worked closely with the South-East England Aggregates Working Party (SEAWP) and the South-East England Waste Planning Advisory Group (SEWPAG).
21. R-DTCS01 identifies, minerals provision, the cross-boundary supply of aggregates (excluding soft sand), the cross-boundary supply of soft sand, the safeguarding of minerals resources infrastructure and biodiversity net gain as strategic matters. These reasonably cover the scope of the Plan and the Authorities evidence includes records of numerous meetings, joint evidence and signed SOCGs that demonstrate the Authorities engagement with the prescribed bodies has been constructive, active and ongoing throughout the plan-making process. We are therefore satisfied that the duty to co-operate has been met.

Assessment of Other Aspects of Legal Compliance

Local Development Scheme

22. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with each of the Authorities' Local Development Schemes (ES-LDS22, SD-LDS22 and BH-LDS22). These were updated during the examination to take account of delays caused by COVID-19, a longer examination than expected and to include consistent details with

regard to the timetable and scope of the review of the Plan and the WMLP (ES-LDS23.07, SD-LDS22.10 and BH-LDS23.03).

Public Consultation and Engagement

23. The Consultation Statement May 2022 (R-CS01) summarises the consultation and engagement undertaken and explains how the response has informed the Plan. Consultation on the Plan and the MMs was carried out in compliance with the Council's Statements of Community Involvement (ES-SCI22, SD-SCI22 and BH-SCI22) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (the 2012 Regulations).

Sustainability Appraisal

24. The Authorities have carried out a SA of the Plan (R-SA02 and R-SA02A). They have prepared a report and technical annex of the findings of the appraisal and published it along with the Plan and other submission documents under regulation 19. The SA report and technical annex were updated to assess the MMs (R-SA07). Overall, we are satisfied that the SA was proportionate, objective, underpinned by relevant and up to date evidence, and is compliant with legal requirements and national guidance.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

25. The Plan was subject to a HRA during its preparation (R-HR02) as required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The HRA identifies that the Plan is compliant with the Habitats Regulations. It concludes the Plan will not result in likely significant effects on any European Sites, specifically the Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA, the Dungeness SAC, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA, Dungeness Romney Marsh Rye Bay Ramsar, the Hastings Cliffs SA, Pevensey Levels SAC and Ramsar site, the Castel Hill SAC, and the Lewes Downs SAC. The MMs have also been subject to HRA (R-HR03) reaching the same conclusions.

Climate Change

26. Section 19(1A) of the 2004 Act requires that development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the Plan area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. The Plan includes objectives and policies designed to secure that mineral development and use of land for such purposes within the Plan area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change (Policies RM0, RM1, and RM2). Furthermore, Policy WMP24a of the WMP, explicitly requires proposals for minerals or waste management development to take account of climate change mitigation and adaptation. We are therefore

satisfied the Plan as part of the Development Plan, meets the requirements of Section 19(1A) of the 2004 Act.

Superseded Policies

27. Regulation 8(5) of the 2012 Regulations sets out that where plans contain certain policies that are intended to supersede other policies in the adopted Development Plan, this fact should be stated, and the superseded policies must be identified. Section 9 of the Plan includes a table which summarises all the amendments to the WMP and WMSP and explicitly states which policies are to be superseded or replaced by new policies in the Plan upon adoption. This requirement has therefore been met.

Other Legal Requirements

28. The Plan complies with all other relevant legal requirements, including in the 2004 Act (as amended) and the 2012 Regulations.

Conclusion

29. We therefore conclude that all relevant legal requirements have been complied with during the preparation of the Plan.

Assessment of Soundness

Main Issues

30. Taking account of all the representations, the written evidence and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings, we have identified seven main issues upon which the soundness of the Plan depends. This report deals with these main issues. It does not respond to every point or issue raised by representors. Nor does it refer to every policy criterion or designation in the Plan.

Issue 1 – Whether the overarching strategy as amended by the Plan is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Scope of the Plan and its relationship with the WMLP

31. The Inspector examining the WMSP concluded among other things that the rate of land-won aggregates detailed in the WMP could not be maintained by the sites allocated, finding that a review of the approach to minerals provision and minerals sites was needed before the end of the WMLP Plan period, particularly with regard to aggregates. The Plan is a partial review of the WMLP which

seeks to respond to those findings. It does this considering updated evidence, particularly that related to aggregate demand and supply and environmental constraints which are explained in detail below under the relevant main issues.

32. The Plan also reflects ongoing joint working relationships between the Authorities and the Minerals and Waste Planning Authorities adjoining the Plan area or affected by the WMLP or its review. In light of this and the agreed SOCGs between the relevant Authorities, the Plan proposes that the section titled "Local Strategy Statement", on pages 25-32 of the WMP, be deleted upon adoption of the Plan. The Authorities consider that this topic is now addressed through the latest SOCGs and is therefore no longer necessary. The Authorities approach in respect of this matter is justified.
33. However, the Plan will be a separate document that can only be read alongside the WMLP. As currently written, the explanation of this relationship in the Plan is ambiguous and somewhat confusing. This would be avoided, if the relationship between the Plan and the WMLP was more clearly explained in justification text in the Plan in the interests of effectiveness. For the same reasons and for the avoidance of any doubt associated with the effect of adopting the Plan, the table in the 'Summary of Policy Review' section of the Plan should explain the impact of adoption on each existing Policy of the WMLP. Furthermore, to ensure consistency with paragraphs 20 to 23 of the NPPF it is also necessary to make clear that all of the Policies in the Plan are Strategic Policies.
34. The WMLP Plan period is 2013 to 2030. It sets out a 'A vision for the Plan Area up to 2030' which the Policies of the WMLP are intended to deliver. However, paragraph 1.3 of the Plan says the Plan period is 2019-2034. This would mean the new Policies or those replaced or altered by the Plan on adoption would have a different and longer plan period than the components of or Policies of the WMLP which would be unaltered by the adoption of the Plan. Particularly, the Policies detailed in the Plan would not be aligned to the WMLP lifespan or its overarching vision and objectives.
35. As explained in further detail below, the Policies of the Plan are not designed to anticipate or respond to long term requirements or opportunities. Instead, they are in response to the significant environmental constraints facing the Plan area and the Authorities current understanding of aggregate supply and demand. Reflecting this and recognising the narrow scope and the intended purpose of the Plan as explained above, the Authorities have committed to an immediate full review of the WMLP. They anticipate such would be adopted as soon as 2027 (ES-LDS23.07, SD-LDS22.10 and BH-LDS23.03).
36. Therefore, even though the Policies of the Plan are intended to look ahead a minimum of fifteen years from adoption seeking consistency with paragraph 22

of the NPPF, they can only be read in conjunction with the WMLP and its overarching vision, objectives and strategic direction. Although, we accept these are now of some age, these are not being comprehensively reviewed at this time and are not within the scope of this Plan.

37. Having regard to all these factors, the Plan period is not justified or effective. MMs are therefore needed to align it with the WMLP Plan period, its vision, objectives, strategic direction and evidence base.
38. **MM01** addresses all these issues, through changes to the 'Introduction' and 'Summary of Policy Review' sections of the Plan and is needed in the interests of justification and effectiveness. Thus, subject to **MM01**, pragmatically, the approach, purpose, scope and relationship between the Plan and the WMLP is clear and soundly based.

Mineral and Waste Development and the SDNP (Policy RV1)

39. Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and AONB which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The SDNP and HWAONB covering two thirds of the Plan area therefore have a significant influence on the minerals and waste strategy.
40. Policy RV1 and the associated justification text replaces Policy WMP2 of the WMP which is an overarching strategic policy concerned with minerals and waste development affecting the SDNP. However, Policy RV1 justifiably and accurately references to the HWAONB whereas Policy WMP2 of the WMP does not.
41. Unlike Policy WMP2 of the WMLP, Policy RV1 of the Plan does not include any criteria relating to the extension of existing soft sand quarries or new quarries in the SDNP whereas Policy WMP2 does. As such, Policy RV1 provides a more restrictive approach to major minerals and waste development in the SDNP and HWAONB, and states that no provision will be made for such development in these areas in the Plan period other than in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. This matter is explained in more detail under issue two below.
42. However, Policy RV1 and the justification text refer to a "designated area" and it is unclear whether such reference relates to the SDNP, the HWAONB or both. Policy RV1 should also be modified to explicitly refer to its geographical extent on the policies map. Moreover, Policy RV1 also makes the distinction between small scale and major development without giving clear definitions for either.

43. **MM02** would address these issues all in the interests of effectiveness. A modification to the Council's submission policies map is also necessary to ensure the identification of the SDNP and HWAONB and its geographical extent is accurate (PM1 and PM2 of MM-PM01).

Conclusion on Issue 1

44. Subject to the MMs identified above Policy RV1 and the associated changes to the justification text of the WMP are justified, effective and consistent with national policy. Consequently, the overarching strategy insofar as it is amended by the Plan is also justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 2 – Whether the Plan would maintain a steady and adequate supply of aggregates?

Sustainable Use of Aggregates (Policy RM0)

45. Secondary aggregates as by-products of industrial processes and recycled aggregates from materials previously used in construction are both steady sources of supply in the Plan area. The WMLP vision promotes the use of secondary and recycled aggregates in preference to primary mineral resources. However, the Policies contained therein do not specifically prioritise the use of recycled and secondary aggregates over primary extracted aggregates.
46. Policy RM0 is therefore a new Policy which consistent with the vision and paragraph 216 (b) of the NPPF aims to encourage the use of recycled and secondary aggregates over the extraction of primary materials. Policy RM0 therefore provides a more pro-active approach to the use of recycled and secondary aggregates in the Plan area.
47. However, Policy RM0 refers to being applicable to “innovative proposals” without defining what these are. This reference is unnecessary and instead, all development proposals should rightly seek to prioritise the use of recycled and secondary aggregates and adhere to Policy RM0 where possible. Furthermore, Policy RM0 does not specify how development proposals should demonstrate that consideration has been given to the sustainable use of aggregates making it unclear how a decision maker should assess compliance with it or not.
48. **MM04** would address these issues making clear all proposals should maximise use of secondary and recycled aggregates and this should be demonstrated in design and access statements. This MM is necessary in the interests of ensuring consistency with national policy and effectiveness.

Provision of Aggregates (Policy RM1)

49. The permitted sites that contribute to this provision in the Plan area are at Lydd Quarry² and Novington Sandpit. Lydd Quarry produces sharp sand and gravel, but, is due to cease production in 2027. However, Novington Sandpit which produces soft sand and has permitted reserves remaining has not been active for a number of years. Novington Sandpit has not therefore been considered as a contributor to future supply. There are no sites producing crushed rock within the Plan area with demand met historically from imports from outside it. Consequently, overall, there is a lack of available land-won aggregate resource within the Plan area.
50. The NPPF looks to MPAs to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by preparing a Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) based on a rolling average of ten years' sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options (including marine-dredged, secondary and recycled sources). The approach to the calculation of the future demand and supply for aggregate minerals over the Plan period is set out in the Aggregates Data Technical Paper (ADTP) (R-AG02).
51. The ADTP recognises that the use of sales data to predict future demand makes it difficult to draw robust trend-based conclusions from production and sales data sources. The Authorities have been unable to use aggregate land-won sales figures because of a very small number of sites and significant variations in production levels. In addition, sales data for mineral infrastructure sites in the Plan area has been very limited until relatively recently.
52. The Authorities have therefore based future likely sales demand on "other relevant local information", particularly, the demand for aggregates generated from local planned housing construction. The Authorities estimate the demand for aggregates based on a figure of 400 tonnes of aggregate per dwelling.
53. Following the hearings, the Authorities prepared an Addendum to the ADTP (R-AG07) which considered alternative sources of "other local information" and non-residential construction. It includes a review of the assumptions made in the ADTP (R-AG02), uses the revised Plan period (2019 – 2030) and takes account of new and updated data since the Plan was submitted.
54. The Addendum identifies that the use of future housing growth as a proxy for construction remains robust and ensures adequate aggregate provision for both residential and non-residential construction. There are currently no significant local infrastructure projects within the revised Plan period to 2030. The Authorities estimate that the total provision for the new Plan period is between

² Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review Note regarding Lydd Quarry, August 2023 (R-NOTE01)

17.2 million tonnes and 18.4 million tonnes of aggregates (crushed rock and sand and gravel combined), which averages at between 1.57 and 1.67 mtpa.

55. Overall, we are satisfied, the conclusions of R-AG07 demonstrate that the Authorities methodology remains the most robust and appropriate considering the bespoke local circumstances and the availability of robust data.
56. In terms of future land-won aggregate supply, an extension to Lydd Quarry is the only site that has been promoted through the examination in the Plan area. However, Lydd Quarry is within the Dungeness, Romney Marsh & Rye Bay SSSI which is of national importance for its coastal and wetland habitats and coastal geomorphology. Particularly, among other things, there are known to be subsurface/buried ridges and marsh interface deposits which allow mapping of foreland evolution. The palaeo-environmental information allows for detailed interpretation of environmental conditions at the time of deposition³.
57. Therefore, inevitably, any further mineral extraction in this location would be highly likely to have adverse impacts on geomorphology and biodiversity. In such cases paragraph 186 of the NPPF makes clear that where a SSSI is likely to be adversely affected by development, that development should not normally be permitted. Furthermore, it states the only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest.
58. Given the evidenced lack of potential viable land-won aggregate resources, the extraction of further sharp sand and gravel, at Lydd Quarry, would undoubtedly be a significant benefit. However, the extent of any likely adverse effect on the features of Dungeness, Romney Marsh & Rye Bay SSSI which make it of special scientific interest are unknown. Indeed, Natural England have raised concerns in this regard through the examination and identified that the loss of land to mining operations would result in irreversible impacts to the SSSI interest features which cannot be mitigated, compensated, or reversed.
59. Despite further evidence provided in the examination by the quarry operator, Natural England's concerns remain. In particular, due to a lack of detailed information at this stage, it is not possible to determine the effect of mining operations on the SSSI. Therefore, we concur with the Authorities' view that mineral resources at Lydd Quarry over and above those already permitted cannot be regarded as being environmentally acceptable at this time. Consequently, it would not be appropriate for the Plan to identify any extension to the Lydd Quarry.

³ Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review Site Assessment Document, August 2021 (R-SAD01)

60. The Plan acknowledges that, given the lack of viable land-won sites and the scarcity of resources within the Plan area, it is not possible to meet any of the demand for aggregates through land-won extraction and, therefore, approximately 90% of the aggregates to be consumed needs to be imported. Furthermore, it is not possible to make any provision for a landbank of aggregate minerals in the Plan.
61. Apart from current production at Lydd Quarry and road imports, the Plan identifies that aggregate supply will be maintained through a combination of marine dredged sand and gravel imports received through the Ports of Shoreham, Newhaven and Rye and at a rail head at North Quay in Newhaven in addition to sites producing recycled aggregates. The ADTP sets out in detail the available capacity for primary/import/recycled aggregate within the Plan area and concludes that provision can be made with existing permitted import and processing facilities to meet the identified demand for aggregates over the Plan period.
62. In respect of soft sand, the SOCG with Kent County Council, West Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council and Maidstone Borough Council (R-DTCS01.2(B2)) identifies the safeguarding of resources and that soft sand resource within their areas will contribute to the needs of other areas. A steady and adequate supply can be maintained to supply the requirements of the Plan area from the administrative areas of the parties to the SOCG.
63. Despite the lack of availability of land-won aggregates in the Plan area, overall, we are satisfied that the Plan makes adequate provision to meet the identified demand for aggregate minerals over the Plan period.
64. Policy RM1 replaces Policy WMP11 of the WMP. It sets out the requirements for and supply of the aggregates over the Plan period based on the findings of the ADTP. However, in the interests of justification and effectiveness MMs are needed to adjust Policy RM1 to reflect the findings of R-AG07, to reflect the Plan period as modified by **MM01** and set out in justification text the methodology for the calculation of aggregate demand and the approach for maintaining supply. MM is also needed to remove reference to the supply being for consumption in the Plan area as such is not controllable and to ensure consistency with paragraph 213 of the NPPF. All of these matters are addressed by **MM05**.

Conclusion on Issue 2

65. Subject to the MMs identified above the Plan would maintain a steady and adequate supply of aggregates and the Authorities approach in this regard is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 3 – Whether the identification of an additional clay extraction area at Aldershaw Farm through a criteria-based policy is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

An additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm (Policy RM2)

66. Paragraph 214 (c) of the NPPF requires MPSs to plan for a steady and adequate supply of industrial minerals. Policy RM2 is read alongside and supplements Policy WMP13 of the WMP and specifically seeks to ensure that an additional clay extraction area is provided for at an existing clay extraction site known as Aldershaw Tiles at Aldershaw Farm. This is intended to meet the demand for the production of specialist clay tiles. These are used in historic building restoration and the evidence shows reserves for this particular industrial mineral are running low.
67. However, the Aldershaw Tiles site is within the HWAONB, close to ancient woodland and a variety of sites with ecological interest making it a highly sensitive location for clay extraction. It is also accessed from the A21, part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN).
68. Currently there are no clear definitive proposals which specify the exact location for any proposed new extraction area. The evidence⁴ shows clay extraction is already taking place sensitively and safely in this location. It also shows that expansion could be undertaken sensitively outside of the relevant buffer zones for ancient woodland subject to detailed assessments and mitigation measures. However, in the absence of detailed working proposals at this stage, it is not possible to determine the effect of mineral extraction on the HWAONB or the ancient woodland with any degree of certainty. Consequently, the Authorities approach in principle to set out a criteria-based policy which supports development at this location rather than an allocation is justified. In this regard, the mineral operator's objective of securing longer term clay supply is not prejudiced by this approach.
69. However, against this background, MMs are necessary to make it explicitly clear that a detailed ecological impact assessment will be required to ensure Natural England are consulted, and that the ecological impacts of any development are mitigated. Policy RM2 should also explicitly specify the need for a Transport Impact Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures. **MM06** would address all of these issues in the interests of effectiveness.

⁴ Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review Site Assessment Document, August 2021 (R-SAD01)

Conclusion on Issue 3

70. Subject to the MM identified above the Plan would provide an appropriate approach to the provision of additional clay extraction at Aldershaw Farm that adequately considers ecological and transport impacts and in this regard is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 4 – Whether the Plan's approach to minerals safeguarding is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

71. In accordance with Paragraph 210 (c) of the NPPF, Policy RM3 defines Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) and Policy RM7 identifies Minerals Consultation Areas (MCAs). Policies RM3 and RM7 are read together alongside Policies RM4, RM5 and RM6 and collectively safeguard mineral resources and minerals infrastructure (such as facilities, wharves, railheads and batching plant) in the Plan area to avoid minerals sterilisation and/or prejudicing minerals extraction or processing.

Safeguarding Mineral Resources (Policy RM3)

72. Policy RM3 replaces Policies SP8 and WMP14 of the WMP. Like the policies it replaces it designates MSAs on the policies map where evidence shows potential for land-won mineral resources and seeks to avoid development which could prejudice their extraction. Policy RM3, in contrast to Policies SP8 and WMP14 of the WMP make clear it is concerned only with potentially viable mineral resources, to reflect that the viability of mineral extraction changes over time.
73. The PPG⁵ states that safeguarding mineral resources should be defined in designated areas and urban areas where necessary to do so. The supporting text to Policy RM3 identifies that clay sites, permitted gypsum reserves and soft sand resources are safeguarded. There is no MSA identified for sharp sand and gravel because, the evidence shows that there are no potentially viable resources in the Plan area as explained above.
74. The justification text to Policy RM3 sets out categories of excluded development (excluded development) for which the requirements of Policies RM3, RM4, RM5 and RM7 do not apply. This reflects the fact that not all development would prejudice or should be constrained by the presence of potentially viable extractable minerals.
75. However, the relationship between Policies RM3 – RM7, MSAs, MCAs and excluded development is not explicitly clear in the Plan. Furthermore, the list of

⁵ PPG, Minerals, Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 27-003-20140306, Rev: 06 03 2014

excluded development includes applications for small-scale urban infill development within existing built-up areas i.e., the development of a small gap between existing buildings / enclosed by other types of development. However, without detailed complex definitions this category of excluded development would be open to wide ranging interpretation and in any event the Agent of Change principle should be applied instead.

76. **MM07** would add a table with explanatory information to the justification text of Policy RM3 to clarify these relationships so that decision makers would know how to react to these Policies collectively or in isolation. It would also introduce supporting text to explain the application of the 'Agent of Change' principle, as set out in paragraph 193 of the NPPF and explain the role of District and Borough Authorities in Minerals safeguarding.
77. Overall, subject to **MM07**, which is necessary in the interests of justification, effectiveness and in order to ensure consistency with national policy the Authorities approach with regard to safeguarding mineral resources is sound.

Prior Extraction of Mineral Resources (Policy RM4)

78. Policy RM4, is a new policy that aims to ensure that all of the existing already safeguarded soft sand, clay and gypsum resources are extracted prior to any development, as those safeguarded resources are likely to be necessary to maintain supply. In principle this approach is consistent with the NPPF and is necessary particularly as no additional sharp sand and gravel resource is proposed to be safeguarded over the Plan period as modified. However, as written Policy RM4 only applies to development proposals in MSA's and can only be applied in conjunction with Policy RM3. Furthermore, it is also unclear what "to the satisfaction of the MPA" means in demonstrating compliance.
79. Therefore, to avoid ambiguity and in the interests of effectiveness, MMs are necessary to delete Policy RM4 and instead incorporate the wording of Policy RM4 into Policy RM3. Furthermore, MM is needed to make it clear what evidence is needed to demonstrate compliance, so that a decision maker knows how to react. **MM08** does all this and is therefore necessary for effectiveness and to ensure consistency with national policy.

Safeguarding Minerals Infrastructure (Policies RM5 and RM6)

80. The Plan area has historically not been self-sufficient in land-won aggregates. The efficient operation of Wharves such as Newhaven, Shoreham and Rye and railheads Newhaven and the British Gypsum rail facility at Robertsbridge are therefore essential to preserve the ability to process and transport minerals in and out of the Plan area to meet development needs.

81. Policy RM5 would replace Policies SP9 and WMP15 of the WMP and seeks to safeguard minerals infrastructure. Policy RM5 correctly makes reference to the Agent of Change principle and identifies existing mineral infrastructure to be safeguarded on the policies map rather than listing safeguarded infrastructure in policy wording. This approach, in principle, is justified.
82. The site boundaries of minerals infrastructure are identified as MSAs on the submission policies map. However, Policy RM5 says the Authorities will periodically review and update MSAs as required. MSAs will need to be reviewed through the formal Local Plan preparation/review process to ensure they can be appropriately consulted on and examined and therefore the Authorities approach in this regard is not justified or consistent with national policy and a MM is therefore needed to delete this clause **[MM09]**.
83. A SOCG (R-DTCS01.4) between East Sussex County Council and the Port Authority, agrees the safeguarding of East Quay at Newhaven does not compromise any current non minerals related uses from continuation, but recognises its potential to contribute to the imports of marine won aggregates. The SOCG accurately also shows the full extent of the individual mineral infrastructure sites boundaries at East Quay. This differs from that on the submission policies map. The submission Policies Map also does not accurately show the full extent of all the mineral infrastructure site boundaries associated with Shoreham Harbour. Consequently, the geographical extent of Policy RM5 is not justified. However, the Authorities intend to address these issues on adoption as detailed in PM4, PM5 & PM6 of MM-PM01. Subject to these changes and **MM09**, Policy RM5 would be soundly based.
84. Policy RM6 supersedes Policy SP10 of the WMP and seeks to safeguard facilities for concrete batching, coated materials manufacture and other concrete products within the Plan area. In contrast with Policy SP10 of the WMP it also relies on the policies map for the identification of relevant facilities. Furthermore, it also references the Agent of Change principle and includes more detailed wording setting out the limited circumstances upon which planning permission may be granted for other uses in the safeguarded locations as identified on the policies map. In principle, this approach is sound.
85. However, other minerals infrastructure or plant such as that associated with plasterboard and brick production is not safeguarded by either Policy RM5 or RM6. A MM is therefore needed to Policy RM6 to ensure all types of minerals plant and infrastructure not covered by Policy RM5 are safeguarded in the interests of effectiveness. Furthermore, it is common for minerals plant infrastructure to be located in larger infrastructure sites safeguarded by Policy RM5. Therefore, Policy RM6 should also be modified to make clear that the sites it safeguards are safeguarded for the lifetime of the larger host site, also in the interests of effectiveness **[MM10]**.

Minerals Consultation Areas (Policy RM7)

86. Policy RM7 designates MCAs as identified on the submission policies map and requires consultation with the MPA to be undertaken for non-mineral development within MCAs. Policy RM7 applies only to East Sussex outside of the SDNP, because Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority are both MPAs. Policy RM7 also does not apply to excluded development as identified in the justification text to Policy RM3 as modified by **MM07**.
87. However, Policy RM7 states MCAs will be reviewed as necessary. Such a review would significantly alter how Policy RM7 is applied and should be subject to consultation and examination through the formal Local Plan preparation/review process. Furthermore, Policy RM7, is not explicitly clear that there will be instances where consultation with the MPA will be necessary for developments outside of the MCAs. In such cases, clearly the local planning authorities will need to exercise judgement, but in the interest of effectiveness additional wording should be added to the justification text of Policy RM7 to explain it is not only where development falls within a MCA that consultation with the MPA will be required.
88. The geographical application of Policy RM7 is shown through MCA boundaries on the submission policies map. Standard 100m buffer zones have been drawn around all MSAs except for Rye Harbour and East Quay Newhaven. The 100m buffer zone is carried forward from the approach in the WMLP, it is justified and fit for purpose in the absence of bespoke site-specific information which might suggest alternative boundaries.
89. However, as explained above, because the geographical application of the MSA requires modification in relation to Newhaven and Rye harbour, so will the associated MCA boundary on the submission policies map (PM4, PM5 & PM6 of MM-PM01). In addition, Policy RM7 does not adequately explain that planning applications for development within a MCA that is not included on the list of excluded development will require consultation with the MPA. Furthermore, the Policy does not identify that Neighbourhood Planning Groups will also need to consult the relevant MPA where allocating land affecting MSA's in their Neighbourhood Plan. **MM11** addresses all of the above matters and is necessary for the Plan to be justified and effective.

Conclusion on Issue 4

90. Subject to the MMs identified above the Plan's approach to minerals safeguarding is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 5 – Whether the Plan makes adequate provision for the management of waste?

Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (Policy RW1)

91. The overall strategy for waste as set out in the WMLP is not altered by the Plan. Policy RW1 replaces Policies WMP7a and WMP7b of the WMP and seeks only to add clarification to the existing approach set out in the policies to be replaced. Policy RW1 does not specifically refer to small scale facilities as these are dealt with in Policy RV1.
92. Policy RW1 identifies areas of focus within which sustainable opportunities for locating waste and recovery facilities will be supported in the same way as Policies WMP7a and WMP7b of the WMP. However, Policy RW1 introduces criteria to allow exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated where it is not possible to locate waste development proposals on industrial land, previously developed land or existing waste management land.
93. Overall, the Authorities broad approach is consistent with the aims of paragraph 4 of the National Planning Policy for Waste (2014) (NPPW).
94. However, additional justification text is required to explain how the areas of focus have been identified. It should also make reference to considering impact on AONB / National Landscapes, the proximity principle, encouraging net self-sufficiency and ensuring any proposals have regard to cross boundary movements. Furthermore, the justification text does not adequately explain that opportunities should be sought for the co-location of waste management facilities. **MM03** would address these matters by adding further justification text in the interests of effectiveness and ensuring consistency with national policy.

Conclusion on Issue 5

95. Subject to the MMs identified above the Plan makes adequate provision for the management of waste and is justified, effective and consistent with national policy in this regard.

Issue 6 – Whether the development management policy is justified effective and consistent with national policy?

Environment and Environmental Enhancement (Policy RD1)

96. The WMP sets out a suite of policies for use in determining minerals and waste development planning applications. The Authorities monitoring reports indicate

these policies are performing well and do not require altering at this time except for Policy WMP27.

97. Policy RD1 would therefore replace Policy WMP27 and has the same aim to ensure development conserves and enhances the environment. However, Policy RD1 includes the NPPF requirement for new development to secure biodiversity net gain. Furthermore, through additional and amended justification text it clearly sets out the approach to undertaking a site specific HRA which is consistent with the Wealden High Court Judgement⁶. Policy RD1 also differs from Policy WMP27 in that it makes reference to the Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
98. However, MM is needed to specifically explain in the justification text that a minimum of a 10% biodiversity net gain is required and not just net gain in line with the Environment Act 2021 which came into effect during the examination. We have adjusted **MM12** from that consulted upon to reflect this. Furthermore, MM is also needed to distinguish between effects on sites of national importance and effect on sites of international importance, making clear that an appropriate assessment is required and only imperative reasons of overriding public interests can outweigh any harm to sites of international importance.
99. **MM12** as amended, would address all of these issues in the interests of ensuring effectiveness, legal compliance and consistency with national policy.

Conclusion on Issue 6

100. Subject to the MM identified above the Plan's replacement development management policy is justified effective and consistent with national policy.

Issue 7 – Whether the Monitoring section of the Plan is effective?

101. As required by the NPPF, the Implementation and Monitoring section of the Plan sets out clear performance indicators against which the effectiveness of the policies will be monitored. It would replace the monitoring table in section 7 of the WMP. Subject to **MM13** which would add trigger points and actions for each indicator where appropriate, clarify data sources and identify delivery partners and delivery mechanisms where necessary, the Plan's monitoring framework is effective.

⁶ Wealden District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Down National Park Authority [2017] EWHC 351(Admin)

Conclusion on Issue 7

102. Subject to the MM identified above the Plan's monitoring section is effective.

Overall Conclusion and Recommendation

103. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in respect of soundness for the reasons set out above, which mean that we recommend non-adoption of it as submitted, in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the 2004 Act. These deficiencies have been explained in the issues set out above.

104. The Authorities have requested that we recommend MMs to make the Plan sound and / or legally compliant and capable of adoption. We conclude that the duty to cooperate has been met and that with the recommended MMs set out in the Appendix the Plan satisfies the requirements referred to in Section 20(5)(a) of the 2004 Act and is sound.

S Normington and L Fleming

Inspectors

This report is accompanied by an Appendix containing the Main Modifications.

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East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove
Waste and Minerals Plan

Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review

Revised Policies

Adoption Version

July 2024

This is the July 2024 Adoption Version.

In this document, unless otherwise specified, references to the National Planning Policy Framework referred to the December 2023 version which was the current version at the time of writing.

Errata

The following minor corrections have been made to this version further to the main modifications:

Table below 2.1 - Entry SP7: Waste Consultation Areas ~~Providing for Minerals of~~ (typographical error).

Footnote 9 - ...Paragraph ~~477~~ 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that... (Paragraph reference corrected)

Para 1.7 - ...over a minimum period of 15 years period from adoption" ... (Corrected to reflect NPPF 2023)

Whole Document - ~~WMLP~~ Waste and Minerals Local Plan (Expansion of acronym for readability).

Page 0 - In this document, unless otherwise specified, references to the National Planning Policy Framework referred to the December 2023 version which was the current version at the time of writing. (Added for clarity).

Para 3.4 such as the Environment ~~Bill (once enacted)~~ Act and... (Factual Correction)

Whole Document - ~~SDNP~~ South Downs National Park (Expansion of acronym for readability)

Whole Document - ~~SDNPA~~ South Downs National Park Authority (Expansion of acronym for readability)

Para 5.3 - ... paragraph ~~476~~ 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework ... (Correction to reflect NPPF 2023)

Provision for an additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm (RM2) - Explanation - ...paragraphs 182, 183 and 186 and... (Correction)

Provision for an additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm (RM2) - Explanation - ... paragraph ~~477~~ 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework (~~2024~~ December 2023). (Correction to reflect NPPF 2023)

Footnote 19 - ...integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities, and that existing business and existing facilities should... (Correction to reflect NPPF 2023)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority (the Authorities) have responsibility for planning the future management of waste and production of minerals. To guide those decisions the Authorities are required to prepare Minerals and Waste Local Plans which contain policies that guide where minerals and waste developments should go. These policies are then used to make decisions on planning applications for waste management and minerals activities.
- 1.2 The Waste and Minerals Local Plan is currently comprised of the:
 - Waste and Minerals Plan 2013, and
 - Waste and Minerals Sites Plan 2017.
- 1.3 The purpose of the review principally focuses on minerals provision, as well as updating and clarifying certain other policies, it is not a complete review of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan. This document therefore sets out proposed revisions to specific policies within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan. The Plan Area for this and the other Waste and Minerals Local Plan documents is the administrative areas of East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, including part of the South Downs National Park. The revised policies include two key changes:
 - East Sussex and Brighton & Hove to become more reliant on aggregates from the marine sources and other sources outside of the Plan Area.
 - Providing increased protection for minerals and minerals related infrastructure against inappropriate development being located nearby.
- 1.4 This partial review of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is being undertaken due to the findings of the Inspector at the Examination into the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan adopted in 2017. The Inspector at this Examination considered this Plan to be sound but concluded that the current rate of land-won aggregates in the Waste and Minerals Plan could not be maintained with the current allocated sites, and therefore indicated that a review of the minerals policies within this Plan would be required prior to the end of the Plan period. For this reason, the Revised Policies Document has primarily focussed on minerals, and more specifically, aggregates provision in the Plan Area. The proposed strategy is one based on importation and the sustainable use of aggregates. Where a clear and obvious need for updates and clarity have been required to other policy areas, these have also been undertaken. However, what is not in scope as part of this review is the waste management provision policies.
- 1.5 A number of updates to clarify and consolidate existing policies are also proposed, along with an additional policy for the provision of an additional area of clay extraction at Aldershaw Farm. No other alterations to the existing strategy are being proposed at this time.
- 1.6 This document joins the other Waste and Minerals Local Plan documents in forming part of the Development Plan for the administrative areas set out in Paragraph 1.3. This means that relevant policies within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan documents apply to all development within this

area, not just proposals for waste and minerals development, and that other local authorities within this area will need to consider relevant Waste and Minerals Local Plan policies when determining planning applications. Similarly, other relevant Development Plan documents besides the Waste and Minerals Local Plan will need to be considered when determining applications for waste and minerals development.

- 1.7 Once this review has been completed, a composite version of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan comprising of the Waste and Minerals Plan and the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan, incorporating the changes proposed in this document will be published. This will result in a single document containing all the Waste and Minerals Local Plan Policies in one place rather than three individual documents. The policies within this review will be in accordance with the 'Vision for the Plan Area to 2030' timeframe of the original Waste and Mineral Local Plan policies. The plan period for the Waste and Minerals Local Plan will then allow for all of the adopted plan policies (original and revised) to align until 2030. The synchronising of the timeframes for all the Waste and Mineral Local Plan policies will result in a joined up coherent Plan that should provide clarity for all users. Although Paragraph 22 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that "strategic policies should look ahead over minimum 15 year period from adoption" it is considered that as this review is only a partial plan review it would be simpler for users if the new policies shared the same time frame as the original Waste and Minerals Plan policies. This will also avoid inconsistency between policies and ensure they are justified by the evidence base. Consequently, new policies within this document share the same plan period of the original Waste and Minerals Plan.
- 1.8 Upon completion of this partial review it is proposed to swiftly undertake a full review of all of the policies within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan in order that a fully updated Waste and Minerals Local Plan can be produced. This review will enable expected forthcoming national policy changes, as well as matters such as secondary legislation and guidance published in relation to the Environment Act, to be taken into consideration. This will then inform the creation of long-term strategic policies beyond the current 2030 Plan period. This review will commence immediately on adoption of this Plan and is anticipated to be completed by 2027.
- 1.9 For the avoidance of doubt the Plan period for the Revised Policies Document (this document) is 2019 - 2030 (11 Years).

How to read this document

- 1.10 As the Authorities are proposing to make amendments to specific parts of the Waste and Minerals Plan and Waste and Minerals Sites Plan this document is written in the style of an amendment document. On the following pages there is a table which lists all the policies in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan and their status.
- 1.11 Over the remainder of the document, to help show and explain the amendments, the following special notations are used:

Explanation

Commentary text explaining the proposed changes can be found in these grey bordered boxes. For reference, these boxes will be retained in the adopted Revised Policies Document but will not appear in the consolidated Waste and Minerals Local Plan document.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended.

Text in bold explains what alterations are being proposed, for example if sections are proposed to be deleted or added.

2. Summary of Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policy

- 2.1 Below is a complete list of adopted and draft policies from the Waste and Minerals Plan, Waste and Minerals Sites Plan and this document, the Revised Policies Document (RPD). Policies proposed for deletion are ~~struck out~~ with a red background, whilst proposed policies are shown underlined with a green background. All relevant policies should be applied in the determination of planning applications.

Policy Number	Policy Title	Document	Page	Status	Impact on other policies
	Overarching Strategy				
WMP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	WMP	33	Adopted	None.
WMP2	Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs National Park	WMP	36	Adopted	Replaced by RV1.
<u>RV1</u>	<u>Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Direct replacement for WMP2. Refers to new policy RD1 and existing WMP8b.
WMP3a	Promoting Waste Prevention, Re-use and Waste Awareness	WMP	40	Adopted	None.
WMP3b	Turning Waste into a Resource	WMP	42	Adopted	None.
WMP3c	Production of Energy from Waste (EfW)	WMP	45	Adopted	None.
WMP3d	Minimising and Managing Waste During Construction, Demolition and Excavation	WMP	46	Adopted	None.
WMP3e	Waste Management In New Development in the Plan Area	WMP	48	Adopted	None.
WMP4	Sustainable Provision and Use of Minerals Providing for Waste	WMP	50	Adopted	No change to policy but amendments to monitoring and implementation.
	Providing for Waste				
WMP5	Provision of Built Waste Facilities	WMP	53	Adopted	None.

Policy Number	Policy Title	Document	Page	Status	Impact on other policies
WMP7a	Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (Excluding Land Disposal)	WMP	61	Adopted	Replaced by RW1, no other policies affected.
WMP7b	More Detailed Criteria for Waste Development	WMP	62	Adopted	Replaced by RW1, no other policies affected.
<u>RW1</u>	<u>Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (Excluding Land Disposal)</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Direct replacement for WMP7a & b. Explanatory text refers to policy WMP8 & WMP22.
SP1	Waste Site Allocations	WMSP	14	Adopted	None.
SP2	Areas of Opportunity on Previously Developed Land	WMSP	15	Adopted	Makes reference to WMP25.
SP3	Areas of Search	WMSP	16	Adopted	Makes reference to WMP25.
SP4	Physical Extension of Existing Waste Site	WMSP	17	Adopted	None.
SP5	Existing Industrial Estates	WMSP	19	Adopted	Makes reference to deleted WMP7a and deleted WMP27, which are replaced by RW1 and RD1. Refers to retained policies WMP25, WMP26, WMP 28a, WMP24a.
WMP8a	Land Disposal of Non-Inert Waste	WMP	67	Adopted	None.
WMP8b	Deposit of Inert Waste on Land for Beneficial Uses	WMP	69	Adopted	None.
WMP8c	Management of Landfill Gas	WMP	70	Adopted	None.
WMP9a	Hazardous Waste	WMP	72	Adopted	None.
WMP9b	Low Level Radioactive Waste	WMP	75	Adopted	None.
WMP10	Management of Waste Water and Sewage Sludge	WMP	77	Adopted	None.
WMP6	Safeguarding Waste Sites	WMP	58	Adopted	None.
SP6	Safeguarding Waste Sites	WMSP	22	Adopted	None.

Policy Number	Policy Title	Document	Page	Status	Impact on other policies
SP7	Waste Consultation Areas Providing for Minerals of	WMSP	23	Adopted	Refers to retained policies WMP6, SP4.
	Providing for Minerals				
WMP11	Provision of Aggregates	WMP	81	Adopted	Replaced by RM1.
<u>RM0</u>	<u>Sustainable Use of Aggregates</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Stand alone new policy.
<u>RM1</u>	<u>Provision of Aggregates</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Direct replacement for WMP11, no other policies affected.
WMP12	Provision of Gypsum	WMP	83	Adopted	None.
WMP13	Provision of Clay	WMP	85	Adopted	References retained policy WMP4.
<u>RM2</u>	<u>Provision for an additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Stand alone new policy.
WMP14	Safeguarding Mineral Resources	WMP	88	Adopted	Replaced by RM3 also references replaced WMP2.
SP8	Mineral Safeguarding Areas for land won minerals resources within the Plan Area	WMSP	25	Adopted	Replaced by RM3.
<u>RM3</u>	<u>Safeguarding Mineral Resources</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Combined replacement policy for WMP14 & SP8.
WMP15	Safeguarding Wharves and Railheads	WMP	90	Adopted	Direct replacement by RM5.
SP9	Safeguarding wharves and railheads within the Plan Area	WMSP	27	Adopted	Direct replacement by RM5.
<u>RM5</u>	<u>Safeguarding Minerals Infrastructure</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Combined replacement for WMP15 & SP9. Also references retained policy WMP18.
SP10	Safeguarding facilities for concrete batching, coated materials...	WMSP	28	Adopted	Replaced by RM6.
<u>RM6</u>	<u>Safeguarding facilities for concrete batching (etc)</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Direct replacement for SP10.

Policy Number	Policy Title	Document	Page	Status	Impact on other policies
SP11	Minerals Consultation Areas	WMP	29	Adopted	Replaced by RM7. References SP8, 9 & 10.
<u>RM7</u>	<u>Minerals Consultation Areas</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Direct standalone replacement for SP11.
WMP16	Exploration for Oil and Gas	WMP	92	Adopted	None.
	Overarching Policies				
WMP17	Restoration	WMP	94	Adopted	Supporting text references deleted policy WMP27 which is being replaced by RD1. Supporting text references retained policies WMP 28 a & b, WMP 24 & WMP 25.
WMP18	Transport - Road, Rail and Water	WMP	97	Adopted	Supporting text references deleted policy WMP15. Supporting text references retained policy WMP26.
WMP19	Co-location of Complementary Facilities	WMP	98	Adopted	None.
WMP20	Community Involvement and Benefits	WMP	100	Adopted	None.
WMP21	Opportunities for Sustainable Waste Management and Minerals Production in Other Development	WMP	102	Adopted	None.
WMP22	Expansion and Alterations Within Existing Waste Facilities	WMP	103	Adopted	None.
	Development Management Policies				
WMP23a	Design Principles for Built Waste Facilities	WMP	106	Adopted	Supporting text references retained policies WMP20, WMP 24 & 24b.
WMP23b	Operation of Sites	WMP	107	Adopted	Supporting text references retained policies WMP20, WMP 24 & 24b.
WMP24a	Climate Change	WMP	109	Adopted	None.
WMP24b	Resource and Energy Use	WMP	109	Adopted	None.

Policy Number	Policy Title	Document	Page	Status	Impact on other policies
WMP25	General Amenity	WMP	110	Adopted	None.
WMP26	Traffic Impacts	WMP	112	Adopted	Supporting text references retained policy WMP18
WMP27	Environment and Environmental Enhancement	WMP	113	Adopted	Replaced by RD1. References policy WMP 2.
<u>RD1</u>	<u>Environment and Environmental Enhancement</u>	<u>RPD</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>Draft</u>	Replaces WMP27. No other policies referenced in text.
WMP28a	Flood risk	WMP	117	Adopted	Supporting text mentions policy WMP7 which is to be deleted and replaced by policy RW1.
WMP28b	Water Resources and Water Quality	WMP	118	Adopted	Supporting text mentions policy WMP7 which is to be deleted and replaced by policy RW1.
	Diagrams				
	Waste Key Diagram	WMP	156		None.
	Minerals Key Diagram	WMP	157		None.

Notes

1. All policies within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan are considered to be strategic policies. See paragraphs 20-23 of the National Planning Policy Framework for further information.
2. Some policies appear out of document order above so that they appear correctly grouped in the table.
3. In this table WMP means the Waste and Minerals Local Plan, WMSP means Waste and Minerals Sites Plan and RPD is the Revised Policies document (this document).

3. Context

Explanation

This section does not contain any Policy changes, and instead serves as an update to the factual information provided in the WMP, and gives an overview of the minerals produced and imported into the Plan Area which are subject to the review.

Background to the Review

- 3.1 The Authorities monitor the success of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan and its policies through their Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) and Local Aggregate Assessments (LAAs). Through this process, three areas of the Plan have been identified which the Authorities consider should be reviewed. These are:
- The provision of sand and gravel (aggregates);
 - the safeguarding of minerals resources and infrastructure; and
 - improving the effectiveness of specific policies.
- 3.2 The Authorities have also checked current Waste and Minerals Local Plan policies against the latest iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), proposing changes where necessary, and have factored in updated evidence, changes in relevant policy and emerging policy. The Authorities have also monitored the effectiveness of the policies in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan in the determination of planning applications, and this has in turn formed part of the consideration when identifying the topics of the review.
- 3.3 The Authorities remain committed to the concept of net self-sufficiency for the management of non-hazardous waste, meaning that they plan for the management of an amount of waste which is equivalent to the amount arising in the Plan Area. The overall approach to waste policies in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is not considered to require review at this time.
- 3.4 The Authorities are committed to ensuring that the Waste and Minerals Local Plan minimises and mitigates against contributory causes of climate change, as well as adapting to the changes to our climate that are likely to occur. This is especially pertinent given the Climate Emergency declared by each of the three Authorities, and emerging legislation and documents including the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. The existing Waste and Minerals Local Plan has policies concerning climate change, particularly WMP24a and WMP24b, which are considered to be still relevant and in accordance with higher level planning policy (i.e. the NPPF). The scope of the current review is largely limited to minerals provision, however the Authorities acknowledge that a review of the whole Plan in terms of climate change implications will be necessary in the future. For this reason the Authorities will commit to a future full plan review in order to reassess the entire plan in the context of climate change and key legislative changes, such as the Environment Act and secondary legislation, policy changes and further guidance.

Policy Context

- 3.5 Local Plans, including minerals and waste plans, must be prepared in the context of national policy and other relevant documents. Since the adoption of the Waste and Minerals Plan in February 2013 and the WMSP in 2017, the policy context for planning generally as well as Minerals and Waste planning has evolved, with the publication of new key documents informing the content of this review. Policies and documents which have influenced the approach taken in this Plan revision are detailed below¹. This is not an exhaustive list of documents, and does not include documents published before the publication of the WMP; a more complete list of documents will be available in the Sustainability Appraisal that will be published as part of this review.

National Policies and Strategies

- 3.6 National planning policy is set out in the '[National Planning Policy Framework](#)' (last updated December 2023). This document provides the framework for sustainable development in England, and contains a chapter on facilitating the sustainable use of minerals. Waste policies are set out in the [National Planning Policy for Waste](#) (October 2014). [Planning Practice Guidance](#) provides further information on how national policy should be implemented, including notes on Minerals, Waste and Plan-Making, and is updated periodically.
- 3.7 The following documents have also been taken into account when preparing the Review:
- The [25 Year Environment Plan](#) sets out the government's overall approach to protecting and improving the natural environment. The [Environment](#) Act makes provision about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment.
 - The [Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution](#) sets out the government's approach to economic growth, supporting green jobs and accelerating the path to net zero.
 - The [Energy White Paper](#) sets out how the UK will decarbonise its energy system and reach net zero emissions by 2050.
 - The [Resources and Waste Strategy for England](#) sets out policy for the preservation of material resources in England by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy where products and materials are recovered and regenerated where possible. This document is of particular relevance to the production of secondary and recycled aggregates.
 - The [Waste Management Plan for England](#) provides an analysis of the current waste management situation in England and aims to bring current waste management policies together under one national plan. The most recent iteration of the Plan, published in January 2021, includes changes relating to the promotion of a circular economy.
 - [Practice Guidance on the Production and Use of Local Aggregate Assessments](#) is produced by the Planning Officers Society and the Minerals Products Association. The South East England Aggregates Working Party (SEEAWP), to which the Authorities are party, has

¹ A list of references for this section is available in the Appendix.

also produced guidance on the production of LAAs. The Authorities have considered the guidance when working on this Plan Review and in preparing the LAA.

- The Planning Officers Society and the Minerals Products Association have produced [Minerals Safeguarding Practice Guidance](#) which has instructed the safeguarding of minerals resource and infrastructure in this Plan Review.

Local Plans and Strategies

3.8 The District and Borough Councils in East Sussex, as well as the South Downs National Park Authority and Brighton & Hove City Council have published, or are preparing, Local Plans which set out planning policies governing development in their areas. There are also a number of Neighbourhood Plans in place or in preparation in the Plan Area, which contain planning policies for smaller-scale areas, although these cannot plan for strategic matters such as waste and minerals.

3.9 The following local documents have been taken into account when preparing the Plan Review:

- The Authorities are required to prepare a [Local Aggregate Assessment \(LAA\)](#) annually which reports on all aggregate supply options and forecasts demand in the Plan Area.
- The South Downs National Park Authority have produced a [Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document](#) which expands upon the guidance provided in The South Downs Local Plan and sets out what the expectations are for different forms of development when applying the Local Plan policies relating to construction.
- Lewes District Council have produced a [Circular Economy Technical Advice Note](#) which encourages a circular economy approach involving the recovery and reuse of construction materials, for the development sectors within Lewes District.
- The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is responsible for managing the seas around England through marine planning, which includes providing licenses for marine dredging that are necessary for the marine extraction of minerals. The MMO [South Marine Plan](#), adopted July 2018, covers the areas of sea which border the Plan Area.
- West Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park Authority adopted their [Joint Minerals Local Plan](#) in 2018. [A Soft Sand Review](#) of the Plan was subsequently undertaken, which identified changes to the Plan, and was formally adopted in March 2021. The supply of soft sand is an important cross-boundary issue between Minerals Planning Authorities in the south of England.
- The [Joint Area Action Plan](#), which sets out the future vision and development policies for the Shoreham Harbour area, has been adopted by Brighton & Hove City Council, Adur District Council and West Sussex County Council. Minerals wharves at Shoreham Harbour within West Sussex are known to import significant amounts of marine dredged aggregate and crushed rock into the Waste and Minerals Local Plan Area.
- The Shoreham Port Authority adopted their most recent [Port Masterplan](#) in 2021, setting out the Port's plans for future growth.

- The [Environment Strategy](#) for East Sussex was published in 2020, and sets out a long term goal for East Sussex to remain within its science-based carbon budget. The document focuses on five key themes: climate change, natural capital, air quality, water, and resource efficiency. East Sussex County Council have also agreed a [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) which covers the Council's corporate carbon emissions, sets out the scale of the carbon footprint, describes the carbon budget that the Council will aim to keep within, and proposes an initial 2 year delivery plan for 2020-22. Brighton & Hove City Council adopted the [Carbon Neutral 2030 Programme](#) in 2021, setting out the direction for action on climate change for the Council, its partners and residents, in response to the climate and biodiversity emergency. The South Downs National Park Authority also adopted a [Climate Change Adaptation Plan](#) in 2015 which sets out how the authority intends to meet the challenges and opportunities of climate change.
- The South Downs National Park Authority's [Partnership Management Plan](#) sets out a vision for what the National Park should look like by 2050. The South Downs National Park Authority's [People and Nature Network](#) sets out aims to create a connected network of green infrastructure.
- The [High Weald AONB Management Plan](#) sets out long term objectives for conserving the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) cover the Plan Area. These are cross-boundary economic partnerships between Local Authorities and businesses. The [Coast to Capital LEP](#) includes Brighton & Hove, whilst East Sussex is part of the [South East LEP](#).
- The [Newhaven Enterprise Zone](#) is a designation which covers a number of sites in Newhaven which are identified and/or safeguarded in the WMP, including North Quay which contains a number of safeguarded mineral wharves.
- [Transport for the South East](#) is a cross-boundary partnership which aims to improve the transport network and benefit the economy throughout the South East of England.
- The [Local Transport Plan for East Sussex](#), which includes the areas of the National Park, covers the period 2011-2026 and sets out the future direction for transport infrastructure and services in the County. The [Local Transport Plan for Brighton & Hove](#), which also includes areas of National Park, contains a long-term strategy for delivering transport improvements until 2030.

Industry Best-practice Guidance

3.10 The following documents provide guidance on construction practices, and have been useful in developing policies for the Plan review:

- The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) have developed a [2030 Climate Challenge](#) which aims to ensure architects meet net zero carbon standards for new and retrofitted buildings by 2030.
- The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) have produced the [Whole Life Carbon Assessment for the Built Environment](#) which is a professional statement that aims to

standardise carbon assessments in development, and which all RICS members must act in accordance with. The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) have produced a [framework definition on net zero carbon buildings](#) in order to provide the industry with clarity on how to achieve net zero carbon in construction. The UKGBC have also set out [Circular Economy Guidance for Construction Clients](#), which provides practical guidance for the construction industry.

- The Green Construction Board have set out the [Buildings Mission 2030](#) report, which demonstrates how achieving the 2030 target to halve all new building energy use over 2018 standards is achievable.

Cross-boundary and Partnership Working and the Duty to Cooperate

- 3.11 The Duty to Cooperate (DtC) is a statutory requirement set out in Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 that requires councils and other prescribed bodies to work together on strategic matters when preparing Plan documents. The Authorities have worked in partnership with others in preparing the Waste and Minerals Local Plan review. Details of the steps taken by the Authorities in relation to the DtC can be found in the Plan [Monitoring Reports](#).
- 3.12 The National Planning Policy Framework also requires authorities to produce and maintain Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) during the plan-making process, which are written records of key cross-boundary matters and the progress made towards cooperation between authorities. A number of draft SoCGs have been prepared alongside the Review, and the Authorities have also signed up to, and actively engage with, a number of other existing and emerging SoCGs relevant to the Plan Area.

Characteristics of the Plan Area

- 3.13 Large parts of the Plan Area are subject to protection. Two thirds is covered by the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Several other tracts of land are designated as being of international and national environmental importance. The area to the east of the Plan Area, in the vicinity of Lydd Quarry, is designated for its ecological and geological interest at a national and international level, including the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Pevensey Levels Ramsar site is designated for its wetland habitat. The Plan Area contains a number of other SPAs, SACs, SSSIs and ancient woodlands. There are also a number of locally designated sites of importance for their wildlife and/or geology (Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites). These areas are protected in order to maintain the rich and varied landscape character and biodiversity within the Plan Area.
- 3.14 The demography of the Plan Area affects the need for minerals as well as the generation of waste. The Plan area had an estimated total population of approximately 840,459 in 2017, of which about two thirds live in East Sussex and the remainder in Brighton & Hove. Approximately 4% live within the South Downs National Park. There is significant residential development expected within the Plan Area, which has been planned for up to 2034. The population in East Sussex is predicted to

increase by approximately 10.86% between 2016 and 2031. The average household size is also expected to decrease from 2.22 in 2014 to 2.06 in 2039. These factors could lead to a greater demand for minerals in terms of impact on development and infrastructure and an increase in waste arisings, though a reduction in the average size of household may cause the waste generated per household to decrease.

Minerals and Waste Context

Minerals in the Plan Area

- 3.15 Minerals are natural substances which include metals, rocks, and hydrocarbons (oil and gas) that are extracted from the earth (including the seabed) by mining, quarrying, pumping and dredging. They are used in a wide range of applications related to construction, manufacturing, agriculture and energy supply.
- 3.16 The geology of the Plan Area dictates where minerals occur. The South Downs National Park, in the south west of the Plan Area, is formed of chalk hills and vales dissected by major valleys cut by the rivers Ouse and Cuckmere. The High Weald, which covers much of the northern, central and eastern parts of the Plan area, is a faulted structure comprising clays and sandstones. The Low Weald is a gently undulating clay vale which separates the High Weald from the chalk Downs to the south. The Coastal Marshes are located between Eastbourne and Bexhill, and in the Rye Bay/Camber area either side of the Rother estuary. These areas comprise large sheets of alluvium, extending inland over the Pevensey Levels and Romney Marsh.
- 3.17 Aggregates are minerals such as sand, gravel, and crushed rock, which are used in the development and improvement of infrastructure and buildings. Two types of sand and gravel are found in the Plan Area: sharp sand and gravel and soft sand, which have different uses. Historically there have been low levels of extraction of 'land-won' sand and gravel in East Sussex, and imports of aggregates extracted from the seabed (known as marine dredged aggregates) and crushed rock have been important in meeting local construction needs.
- 3.18 Secondary aggregates are materials that are produced as a by-product of other industrial processes, and recycled aggregates are materials that have previously been used in construction. A steady supply of both, particularly recycled, is produced across the Plan area.
- 3.19 Clay is extracted in East Sussex for brick and tile manufacture. There are currently four active sites, including Aldershaw Farm in Sedlescombe near Battle.
- 3.20 Gypsum is an important raw material for the construction industry, and is used in plaster and plasterboard, cement and other industrial processes. The resource near Robertsbridge in East Sussex is the largest deposit in the UK. Gypsum can be substituted with desulphogypsum (DSG), a secondary material which is a by-product from coal fired power stations.
- 3.21 There is currently only one existing licence for exploration for oil and gas within East Sussex covering 20 square kilometres around North Chailey. There are no current planning applications or planning permissions for any oil and gas exploration and development in East Sussex.

Waste in the Plan Area

- 3.22 Waste is generally defined as materials and goods we discard because we no longer want or need them. Many different types of solid and liquid waste are produced in the Plan Area and the Plan applies to them all. Around 1.75 million tonnes of solid waste are handled in the Plan Area each year. The main types are:
- **Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW)** which comprises about 21% of all wastes in the Plan Area;
 - **Commercial and Industrial Waste (C&I)** which makes up about 27%, and;
 - **Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste (CDEW)** which accounts for about 51%.
- 3.23 Other waste sources include hazardous waste, which makes up approximately 1% of the total waste stream and often requires specialist treatment facilities with tight environmental controls, low level radioactive waste, liquid waste, wastes arising from the agricultural sector, and waste water, which comprises the water and solids that flow to a waste water treatment works. There are 74 waste water treatment facilities within the Plan Area treating 90 million cubic metres of waste water each year.
- 3.24 Some waste is exported to other areas for management including non-inert waste to landfill. Approximately 47,000 tons of Local Authority Collected Waste and Commercial & Industrial waste was exported for land disposal at facilities outside of the Plan Area in 2018. This is an improvement on 2010/11 when approximately 147,000 tonnes of Local Authority Collected Waste was sent for land disposal outside the Plan Area.

Transport of Minerals and Waste

- 3.25 Road infrastructure in the Plan Area is currently constrained. There are no motorways, and the trunk road network is predominantly single carriageway. Although waste and minerals traffic movements account for only a small percentage of the total, the current limitations of the road network is a consideration in planning for new development. To accommodate additional transport demands on the strategic and major road networks, there are a number of improvements currently being implemented to the A27 east of Lewes, whilst there are aspirations for further improvements to be delivered on the A27 and A21 corridors. In addition, there are proposed improvements to the A22 in the Hailsham and Stone Cross area.
- 3.26 Rail Freight movement of minerals and waste consists of gypsum and DSG imported into the mine at Robertsbridge; crushed rock, sand and gravel and recycled aggregates imported into Newhaven; and Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) produced by the Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility exported from Newhaven to Brentford to be processed into recycled aggregate. A new railhead facility in Newhaven exports aggregates into the wider South East market.
- 3.27 Marine-borne aggregates are imported through the ports of Newhaven, Rye and Shoreham. Aggregate importation figures are available in the Authorities' [Local Aggregate Assessment \(LAA\)](#).

4. Overarching Strategy

Explanation

The overarching strategy of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is set out in the Waste and Minerals Plan. It sets out the vision and strategic objectives² for the Plan Area, and four main overarching policies, WMP1, WMP2, WMP3a-e and WMP4. Together these policies aim to promote the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy so that waste is prevented, then reused, recycled, recovered and as a last resort disposed of safely, by enabling the provision of the required waste management facilities. The policies also seek to make provision for a steady supply of minerals by promoting the use of secondary and recycled aggregates, the use of sustainable transport methods, whilst using viable primary mineral resources as a least preferred option. Both of these aims are in the context of objectives seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change whilst protecting and enhancing the environment, communities and human health.

In this section the Authorities propose:

- to remove the section titled Local Strategy Statement, which is now addressed through Statements of Common Ground with the relevant duty to co-operate parties.
- replace Policy WMP2 Minerals and Waste Development Affecting the South Downs National Park with Policy RV1 Minerals and Waste Development Affecting the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The overarching strategy of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan itself remains unchanged.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

The part of this section titled Local Strategy Statement - Approach to Key 'Larger than Local' Matters in the WMP (pages 25-32) is removed from the WMP because this topic is now addressed through the Statement(s) of Common Ground that accompanies this Plan.

Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (RV1)

Explanation

As part of the review of Policy WMP27, which is addressed later in this document, it has been identified that further clarity could be provided in relation to minerals and waste development affecting the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), particularly in respect of its purposes. Policy WMP2 currently contains similar requirements in relation to the South Downs National Park, but does not refer to the High Weald AONB. The Authorities propose to revise WMP2 to align more closely with the NPPF (2023).

The Authorities also propose the removal of criteria c) which addresses extensions to existing soft sand quarries or new quarry proposals in the National Park. This is now addressed within the

² See WMP pages 22-24.

following section Provision of Aggregates (RM1) and Duty to Cooperate work, see page 25 for further information.

Neither of these changes are intended to alter the overall strategy of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan.

This section replaces Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs National Park (WMP2) on pages 34-36 of the WMP.

Purpose of Policy RV1

To ensure development is sustainable and appropriate to the purposes and duty of the South Downs National Park Authority and the purposes and objectives of the High Weald Area of the Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

The South Downs National Park

- 4.1 The South Downs National Park was established in 2010 and the South Downs National Park Authority took up its statutory responsibilities in April 2011. The South Downs National Park covers an area of 1600km² and stretches from Eastbourne in the East to Winchester in the West. Although over 85% of the area is farmed, it has a population of over 117, 000 people and includes the towns of Lewes, Midhurst and Petersfield. The South Downs Local Plan 2019 sets out the planning policy context for the whole South Downs National Park, replacing previous joint plans with each of the district and boroughs. The South Downs National Park Authority plans jointly for minerals and waste with East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, West Sussex County Council and the Hampshire Authorities.
- 4.2 National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty and this will be given great weight in decisions.
- 4.3 The South Downs National Park has the following statutory purposes:
- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area; and
 - To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.
- 4.4 The National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by Section 245 of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023, requires all relevant bodies including statutory undertakers and statutory bodies to seek to further the purposes. If there is a conflict between the two purposes, the first takes precedence. In pursuing these purposes the South Downs National Park Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 4.5 The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1983 and covers land within 4 counties and 11 district or borough councils. It is one of 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, Wales and Northern Island. It covers an area of 1,461km² and 127,000 people live within

its boundary. A third edition of the management plan for the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was published in 2019, covering the period to 2024.

- 4.6 On the 22 November 2023 the Government announced that all Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were to be renamed as National Landscapes. However, the National Landscapes (including the High Weald) remain an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty insofar as all policy, legislation and guidance applies to the designated landscape. The statutory purpose of the designated landscape remains unchanged and the 'High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024' remains valid.
- 4.7 The primary purpose of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty, but the architects of the 1949 Act recognised other underlying principles which were important aspects of the designation's success. These included the need to maintain a 'thriving community life' with particular emphasis on farming and forestry, and the need to promote understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities. These subsidiary purposes - in effect, qualifications of the primary purpose - are those defined in the Countryside Commission statement 1991, restated in 2006 (the basis for the wording of the subsidiary purposes can be found in the Countryside Act 1968, section 37):
- In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries, and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development
 - The formal legal responsibility for both development control and for management of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including the duty to prepare an AONB Management Plan) lies with the local authorities in whose area(s) the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty exists. In addition, local authorities and all public bodies have a statutory duty under CROW Act 2000, Section 85, to '...have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty...'. To 'conserve and enhance' is a single duty, therefore exercising the duty requires that both elements be addressed.

Minerals and Waste Development in the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 4.8 National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have the highest status of protection in terms of landscape and scenic beauty. Great weight, therefore, must be given towards the protection of the natural beauty of the landscape, together with conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage, when making planning decisions.
- 4.9 National planning policy for minerals and waste development in the countryside and rural areas relates to "major development" within nationally designated areas including National Parks and AONB. Within the context of national policy, the winning and working of minerals and waste development generally constitutes major development whereby due to the nature, character and scale of some proposals, there is the potential to adversely impact upon recreational opportunities and the natural beauty of protected landscapes.

- 4.10 Major minerals and waste development (including quarry restoration) can have significant adverse impacts upon such areas of natural beauty together with the recreational opportunities that they provide. In line with national policy, major minerals and waste development must not be permitted within National Parks or AONB except in exceptional circumstances. Applications must also be demonstrated to be in the public interest. Development will only be in the public interest if consideration of the proposal details gives sufficient reason/s to override the potential damage to the natural beauty, cultural heritage, wildlife or quiet enjoyment of the National Park and or AONB. Minerals and waste development can also have positive effects on the environment through restoration and aftercare (Policy WMP17 addresses restoration requirements in detail).
- 4.11 Other minerals and waste development which is ancillary to a main minerals and waste operation (e.g. weighbridge, offices, haul road and minor amendments) would not normally be considered as major development. It would be expected however that such proposals have regard for and consideration of National Park and AONB purposes, and ensure that great weight is given to the conservation of the landscape and natural beauty, conservation of wildlife, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities.
- 4.12 Quarries and quarrying operations have the potential to impact heavily upon the landscape and surrounding environment, therefore the setting of any proposed development within the context of the National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is also an important consideration. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.
- 4.13 As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development which falls within the South Downs National Park or High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty should clearly demonstrate how it will contribute to the outcomes, objectives and priorities of the relevant Management Plan. Applications should clearly reference the specific outcome, objective or priority and provide further information as to how the planning proposal will contribute to the objectives of the Management Plan.
- 4.14 Minerals and waste development not considered to be major should be carefully assessed. Weight should be given towards conservation of the landscape's natural beauty, the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage and the need to avoid adverse impact upon recreational opportunities within these areas.

Policy RV1: Minerals and waste development affecting the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

a) Minerals and waste development in the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will have regard to the relevant Management Plan.

b) Major minerals and waste development³ in the South Downs National Park or High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be refused other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. In this respect, consideration will be given to relevant information, including:

- i. the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations; and
- ii. the impact of permitting or refusing the development upon the local economy; and
- iii. the cost of and scope for developing outside the South Downs National Park or High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or meeting the need in another way; and
- iv. any detrimental effect on the environment, landscape and/or recreational opportunities and the extent to which it could be moderated.

c) Small-scale waste management facilities⁴ for local needs are not precluded from the National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where they meet the requirements of Policies RD1 and RW1.

d) Proposals for the backfilling of redundant quarries within the National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty need to conform with (b) above and additionally demonstrate net long term benefits to the National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and that they meet Policy WMP 8b criteria (a) to (e).

The South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are identified on the Policies Map.

5. Providing for Waste

- 5.1 The Providing for Waste section in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan sets out policies regarding the amount of waste management capacity that is planned for locations suitable for waste management development, and safeguarding arrangements for waste management facilities.

Explanation

Monitoring by the Authorities indicates that the waste strategy does not require altering at this time. There was ambiguity in Policy WMP7a "Sustainable Locations for Waste Management

³ When assessing what constitutes "major development" within a protected landscape the guidance set out in Footnote 64 to the National Planning Policy Framework will be applied, this states that whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

⁴ Smaller, localised facilities can be essential in helping to provide local solutions for collecting, sorting, bulking, and transferring and treating wastes in complementing the waste treatment provided at larger-scale facilities. Smaller scale facilities are defined as those seeking to meet a localised need generally of a particular settlement area, in contrast to larger scale facilities that provide benefits to the whole Plan Area.

Development" and Policy WMP7b "More Detailed Criteria" that required clarification. Policy RW1 below combines and clarifies these policies.

All other policies within this section apart from WMP7a and WMP7b remain unchanged.

Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (RW1)

Explanation

Policy RW1 proposes to remove ambiguity and consolidate WMP7a and WMP 7b clarifying the policies intent. It retains the existing direction of policies WMP 7a and WMP 7b and all alterations to the policy are intended to only be technical in nature. Policy RW1 proposes the following alterations:

1. The preference expressed in Policy WMP7b for development on general industrial land including general industrial estates, employment land (B2/B8 uses), previously-developed land, and land already in waste management uses, has been replaced by a requirement to demonstrate that the development is located within one of these areas or, that it has been adequately demonstrated and explained why this is not possible. The exception in relation to minerals sites has been retained.
2. Text in Policy WMP 7a concerning small scale facilities in the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has been removed; this was already addressed through the criteria relating to small scale facilities which are not restricted by the Area of Focus and addressed by Policy RV1 which places additional requirements on development within the South Downs National Park.
3. The 'Purpose of Policy' box and supporting text have also been updated to reflect the updated text.

The Authorities have focused on making the above alterations to the policy and, at this time, consider that the broad strategy does not require alteration. Consequently, no alterations to other over-arching approaches for this policy area have been considered.

No further amendments have been made to the proposed policy following the Regulation 18 consultation.

No changes are proposed to the sites already identified in the adopted WMSP nor are any additional waste sites identified.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces Suitable Locations for Waste Development (WMP7a, WMP7b) on pages 59-62 of the WMP. It is also proposed that Policies WMP7a Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (excluding land disposal) and WMP7b More Detailed Criteria for Development are superseded by RW1 Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (excluding land disposal).

Purpose of Policy RW1

To identify broad areas (Areas of Focus) within the Plan Area within which more sustainable opportunities for locating waste recycling and recovery facilities are more likely to be found.

Introduction

- 5.2 This policy relates to waste treatment facilities, i.e. facilities involved in processes in the waste hierarchy excluding land disposal. Transfer facilities are included because they play a fundamental part in moving waste to and from the facilities referred to in this policy, and increasingly waste transfer is being integrated with waste processing (such as that which takes place at Materials Recovery Facilities) at the same site and so there is less distinction between them. Land disposal is covered separately in Policy WMP8.
- 5.3 National policy requires local planning policy to give a clear indication to industry about the areas where development might be acceptable and to provide flexibility to allow for responses to changes in circumstances. Paragraph 4 of the National Planning Policy for Waste sets out that when considering suitable locations for waste management development Local Plans should consider a broad range of locations including industrial sites, looking for opportunities to co-locate waste management facilities together and with complementary activities, giving priority to the re-use of previously-developed land, sites identified for employment uses, and redundant agricultural and forestry buildings and their curtilages. Paragraph 5 continues to explain that existing and potential transport infrastructure to support the sustainable movement of waste, and products arising from resource recovery, seeking when practicable and beneficial to use modes other than road transport should also be a consideration when identifying suitable locations. Additionally, paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
- 5.4 The Authorities are all signatories to the South-East England Waste Planning Advisory Group (SEWPAG) Statement of Common Ground, which is an agreement between all Waste Planning Authorities within the South-East England Region. In this Statement, the signatories agree that their plans will provide for the development of facilities that will manage waste produced within, and beyond, their areas based on net self-sufficiency and in accordance with the waste hierarchy. In seeking to meet this agreement, this policy steers waste management development towards those areas with better transport links, and more urban areas, which should assist in minimising the distance which waste travels to be managed.
- 5.5 All policies within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan must support the Strategic Objectives set out in the Waste and Minerals Plan (pages 23 and 24). This Policy supports Strategic Objectives SO1, SO4 and SO8, and should be read in the context of other policies within the overarching and development management sections of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan documents.
- 5.6 Policy WMP5 sets out the estimated additional waste management capacity that is required during the Plan period to achieve net self-sufficiency. This policy (RW1) identifies areas hereon called

'Areas of Focus' where the best opportunities for the development of waste recycling and recovery facilities are most likely to be found. Areas of Focus indicate broadly the areas where the greatest sustainability benefits are likely to be achievable based on the application of national policy. However, this policy recognises that there may be sites which are acceptable in principle but are beyond the Areas of Focus. For example, there may be sites just outside of the Areas of Focus where there may be overriding sustainability reasons for permitting development, such as supporting movement up the waste hierarchy or being well-related to the strategic road network. The policy therefore does not precisely define boundaries, and the overall sustainability benefits of proposals will be considered on their merits. Consideration of locations within the Areas of Focus also needs to be balanced with ensuring the Plan is deliverable, and as such the Plan considers economic viability which is often influenced by economies of scale.

5.7 The Areas of Focus are those where the greatest sustainability benefits are likely to be achieved regarding new waste development or extensions to existing sites as they are more likely to be close to:

- waste arisings,
- better transport network,
- complementary industries and waste development for potential co-location benefits,⁵
- existing facilities where there is scope for physical site extension (for detail about alterations within the site boundary of existing facilities See Policy WMP 22).

5.8 The Areas of Focus reflect the fact that the majority of the population and businesses in the Plan Area are located along the coastal strip so this is where the main proportion of the largest waste streams is either currently generated or likely to be in the future according to predicted growth areas in Local Plans. The Areas also reflect the road, rail and water transport connections within the Plan Area, the limited opportunity to transport waste via railheads, and the lack of abandoned agricultural and forestry buildings. This is in accordance with the proximity principle and seeks to minimise the distance over which waste must be transported before it can be managed. Areas outside the Areas of Focus are generally more rural and less densely populated and therefore it is likely that less waste is generated and there are fewer opportunities for maximising sustainability. Much of these areas are also covered by landscape designations of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the South Downs National Park. The topic of sustainable transport via road, rail and water is further addressed under Policy WMP18 Transport - Road, Rail and Water, and the topic of co-location is addressed through Policy WMP19 Co-location of Complementary Facilities.

5.9 The policy also recognises that with modern design and operational techniques, waste management facilities can increasingly be accommodated in general industrial areas as a B2 use class, and even more so with the revised waste hierarchy which includes 'preparation for reuse'. Detailed criteria to manage the potential impacts of development is covered in the development management

⁵ See Policy WMP 19.

policies later in the Plan Document. Proposals will also be subject to the relevant statutory pollution control regulatory frameworks.

- 5.10 Applicants are expected to make reasonable efforts when seeking to demonstrate that there are no suitable sites within the preferred locations under criteria A2 and B2. The level of detail should be appropriate to the scale and type of facility being proposed.
- 5.11 Sites identified within the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan and Schedule of Suitable Industrial Estates are all considered to be within the Area of Focus and located on one or more of the types of land specified under criteria B1; as such these sites are considered in accordance with this Policy.

Policy RW1: Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (excluding land disposal)

The principle of the development will be supported where:

A1 The site is located within a broad Area of Focus indicated on the Key Diagram and described in paragraph 5.5, or

A2 It has been demonstrated there are no suitable sites available within the Areas of Focus to meet identified needs, or the proposed development is a small-scale facility / extension to existing facility predominantly to meet smaller, more localised needs only⁶.

In addition to criteria A1 or A2 the proposed development must also demonstrate:

B1 The proposed development is located on: general industrial land including general industrial estates, employment land (B2/B8 uses), previously-developed land, or land already in waste management uses; or

B2 There are no suitable sites available within the locations listed under criteria B1; or

B3 The proposal is located at a minerals working or landfill site and the development's lifespan will be limited to the lifespan of the minerals operation or landfill site⁷, unless there are overriding reasons why the lifespan should be extended.

6. Providing for Minerals

Sustainable Use of Aggregates (RM0)

Explanation

Following the 2020 consultation on the Draft Revised Policies a further review of the likely aggregate demand (See RM1) was undertaken. As part of that review it was identified that, whilst the adopted Waste and Minerals Local Plan promotes waste minimisation, it does not specifically address the topic of resource use and that support for resource minimisation could be more

⁶ Smaller, localised facilities can be essential in helping to provide local solutions for collecting, sorting, bulking, and transferring and treating wastes in complementing the waste treatment provided at larger-scale facilities. Smaller scale facilities are defined as those seeking to meet a localised need generally of a particular settlement area, in contrast to larger scale facilities that provide benefits to the whole plan area. See Policy RV1 for additional requirements in relation to waste management development within the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

⁷ The lifespan of a site may, but does not necessarily, include restoration phases.

explicitly expressed. Representations received during the 2020 consultation also queried whether the use of recycled and secondary aggregates should be prioritised over virgin material. The Authorities recognise that aggregates are essential for construction, but they are also a finite resource which should be used prudently. The NPPF also recognises this in its definition of Sustainable Development (paragraph 8). Policy RM0 seeks to address these omissions.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section is inserted the prior to Provision of aggregates WMP11 (pages 78-81) in the WMP.

Purpose of Policy RM0

To ensure the sustainable use of aggregates.

Introduction

- 6.1 Aggregates such as sand and gravel are used in construction, and are usually mined from the land, dredged from the seabed or recycled from existing construction industry waste. Secondary aggregates such as certain mineral waste can also be used in construction. As a mined or dredged material, aggregate is a primary resource of which there is a finite supply; likewise, recycled aggregate is limited by the material available to recycle. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8) explains that Sustainable Development includes using natural resources prudently, whilst also supporting growth, innovation, and improved productivity. This is also supported by the forthcoming Circular Economy package. Policy RM0 seeks to promote that when aggregates are used in construction they are used in the most sustainable way.
- 6.2 There are now a growing number of examples of low aggregate construction developments. Originally these may have been a consequence of another design choice, for example in the form of temporary buildings, or as exemplars such as the Glyndebourne Pavilion. However, more recent prefabricated building techniques and innovations in construction technology such as the K-Brick may prove to be more prevalent in the future as the development industry takes on the challenge to deliver buildings which meet net zero carbon objectives. In many cases these techniques and technology also reduces aggregate consumption.
- 6.3 Reducing the amount of aggregates used in construction will require changes in both construction methods and technology. And, as aggregates are just one of the materials used in construction, it is important that this is considered as just one element of the design process for any development. This will be achieved directly within the South Downs National Park and Brighton & Hove, and by working with the Districts and Boroughs within East Sussex, who are the planning authorities for most types of development by helping them to include circular economy and resource minimisation policies within their local plans.
- 6.4 After minimising the amount of aggregates, developers should seek to use recycled and secondary aggregates in place of primary materials wherever possible. However, secondary materials may not always be suitable owing to limitations relating to material specifications and availability. Where this occurs, the design choice should be explained within the proposal.

Policy RM0: Sustainable use of aggregates

1. To maximise the sustainable use of aggregates, proposals that:

- a) minimise the quantities of aggregates used in construction, and
- b) prioritise the use of recycled and secondary aggregate over virgin aggregate,

are encouraged and will be supported.

2. Applicants should demonstrate the sustainable use of aggregates as part of their wider consideration of resources used when designing their developments. These design choices should be documented and presented through Design and Access, Sustainability or Circular Economy statements. Applicants should engage with any design panels to explain their approach, where possible.

3. East Sussex County Council will work with stakeholders and delivery partners and support will be given to Local Plan policies that promote sustainable aggregate use as part of design or Circular Economy policies within Local Plans being prepared by the District and Borough Councils within East Sussex.

Provision of Aggregates for the Plan Area (RM1)

Explanation

The current adopted Waste and Minerals Local Plan makes provision for 0.1 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of land-won aggregate during the Plan period, and commits the Authorities to providing a land bank of 7 years permitted aggregate reserves. The permitted sites identified to contribute to this provision in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan are Lydd Quarry (area in East Sussex), and Novington sandpit located within the South Downs National Park. This provision rate is therefore a combined rate including both sharp sand and gravel and soft sand.

In coming to the 0.1 mtpa provision rate the Authorities maintained that the Plan Area was a "special case" recognising the particular circumstances of:

- low production;
- remote reserves;
- high dependence on marine landings; and
- large area affected by environmental constraints/designations

Following the Public Examination into the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan in 2016, the Inspector concluded in his report that "[...] the Plan cannot maintain provision for the production of land-won aggregates at a rate of 0.10 mtpa throughout the Plan period. There will be no permitted reserves at that date because either mineral working under the planning permissions will cease in accordance with a condition of the permission or the workable reserves will be depleted at current rates of production. For that reason alone it will not be possible to maintain a land-bank of at least

7 years”. The Authorities accepted the Inspector’s conclusions and recognise that the Waste and Minerals Local Plan aggregate provision levels need to be reassessed.

Future Provision

The National Planning Policy Framework states that mineral planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by preparing an annual [Local Aggregate Assessment](#) to forecast demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years sales data and other relevant local information. The LAA should include an assessment of all supply options including land won, marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources. The Authorities have carried out a review of aggregate provision, and further details and calculations are set out in the latest [Local Aggregates Assessment](#).

During the Call for Evidence and Sites the operator of Lydd quarry submitted proposed extension areas for the site. These were considered for inclusion in the draft Plan but were not considered acceptable as allocations due to the significant harm mineral working would cause to the interests of designated sites located within the vicinity of the proposals. In addition, the Authorities consider that there are adequate and suitable alternative supplies of material to the proposals which would result in lesser environmental effects. No other aggregate sites were submitted at the Call for Evidence and Sites stage.

Following consultation on the draft Revised Policies in 2020 some representations were received relating to aggregates and the provision of material to the Plan Area. These include comments and queries concerning marine dredged aggregate, recycled aggregates and the calculation and methodology of provision levels. The operator of Lydd quarry also submitted a revised proposal for a quarry extension with more clarified extraction proposals. The Authorities have reassessed the proposed allocations but consider that the issues of harm to designated sites remain and alternatives exist. The proposed allocations are therefore not included in the draft Plan.

New aggregate data has been collected and published since 2020, mainly as a result of the annual aggregate monitoring surveys. Revised housing projections figures are also now available which indicate that forecasts of demand for aggregates over the Plan period may now be higher since the publication of the consultation document in 2020. Data is set out in the latest [Local Aggregates Assessment](#) and the supporting documents including the [Aggregate Data Technical Paper](#).

Following the consultation on the draft Revised policies in 2020, Policy RM1 and supporting text have been revised to reflect the matters above. In summary, the following chapter now includes further explanation of how provision will be secured for the Plan Area together with updated information and data. Policy wording has been clarified to confirm that new rail and wharf infrastructure would be supported and where relevant minor corrections have also been made. Some issues are covered further in the Aggregates Data Technical Paper, which also includes detailed workings of the methodology of assessing supply and demand in the Plan Area.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces Provision of aggregates WMP11 (pages 78-81) in the Waste and Minerals Plan, and Section 4 Providing for Minerals paragraphs 4.1 to 4.6 (page 24) in the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan.

Purpose of Policy RM1

To ensure sustainable provision for an appropriate level of aggregates for the Plan area over the duration of the Plan period.

Introduction

- 6.5 Historically there have been low levels of extraction of 'land-won' aggregates in East Sussex, and imports of marine dredged aggregate, crushed rock and other aggregates have been important in meeting local construction needs. These have been imported via a mixture of rail, road and wharf. Within the Plan Area two types of aggregate resource are to be found: sharp sand and gravel, and soft sand, which have different uses. Sharp sand and gravel uses include concreting applications and soft sand, also known as building sand, uses include the production of mortar.
- 6.6 There is currently one working sharp sand and gravel extraction site in the east of the Plan area at Lydd. Lydd quarry straddles the East Sussex/Kent border and extraction is currently taking place within East Sussex. Approximately 50% of the production is exported to Kent and extraction at this site is due to cease in January 2027. If this site were to contribute to future aggregate provision in the Plan Area, further reserves at the quarry would need to be identified. The area around Lydd Quarry is constrained by both national and international environmental designations including Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Area and Ramsar site. The designations cover or are adjacent to all the sand and gravel resource in this part of the County.
- 6.7 The majority of land-won sharp sand and gravel deposits in East Sussex are found in the coastal areas and river valleys. Having assessed these resources, the Authorities have concluded that identification of feasible extensions or new land - won sites in the Plan area is not possible due to the environmental constraints which are considered overriding.
- 6.8 Apart from production at Lydd quarry and road imports from outside the Plan Area, aggregate supply is currently received through the Ports of Shoreham, Newhaven and Rye, and at a railhead at North Quay in Newhaven. Marine imported material is also exported by rail from a different rail head at East Quay, Newhaven. There are also permitted construction, demolition and excavation waste sites producing recycled aggregates which can in some cases substitute for sharp sand and gravel end-uses, and secondary aggregates, such as brick waste, are also produced and imported into East Sussex.
- 6.9 A new aggregate processing plant, aggregate bagging plant, concrete batching, and rail siding extension has recently been constructed at Fishers Wharf, Newhaven Port. The operation involves the import of marine dredged aggregate. The development provides up to 0.586 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of new import capacity. The majority of the material is sold and used within the Plan

area including for concrete batching. A proportion of the imported marine dredged aggregate is exported from the site by rail currently to the London area.

- 6.10 The main source of soft sand in the South East (the Lower Greensand Formation) runs through Kent, Surrey, Hampshire, West Sussex and peters out just over the border of East Sussex. There has been limited working of this material in the Plan Area in recent times. Novington Sandpit is the only permitted soft sand site and lies within the South Downs National Park in the East Sussex Plan Area. It is understood that there is a reserve of around 250,000 tonnes still to be worked as part of the extant planning permission. However, the site has been inactive since 2013 and any reported sales figures prior to that date are considered to be confidential.
- 6.11 The Plan Area appears to have been reliant on soft sand imports for a number of years. The Authorities have undertaken surveys to confirm this assumption, and to understand where the material is imported from and how the need for soft sand is currently being met. As a partner Authority for waste and minerals plans in Hampshire, West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, the South Downs National Park Authority is working on a unified position across the South Downs National Park relating to the provision of soft sand that is consistent with national policy within a designated landscape.
- 6.12 The Authorities have worked with the other South East Mineral Planning Authorities to agree a [Position Statement on Soft Sand](#). This sets out the context for soft sand provision at a regional level. Following on from that work, the Authorities have entered into a [Statement of Common Ground](#) with Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Surrey County Council and West Sussex County Council, which is specifically related to making provision for soft sand within Local Plans, in line with national planning policy requirements to ensure that a steady and adequate supply can be maintained in the administrative areas of the Parties. The Statement of Common Ground commits all the Parties to various actions including safeguarding of resources and an agreement that the soft sand resource within their areas may contribute to the needs of other areas. In particular it is recognised that any apparent soft sand surplus in Kent is acknowledged as having potential to meet a wider need in the South East. As the East Sussex Plan Area relies on imports from both West Sussex and Kent (and other areas), additional reserves in the market could help meet a steady and adequate supply for the three Authorities in the future.

Future Provision

- 6.13 It is a particular characteristic of this Plan Area that about 90% of aggregates consumed are imported (based on 2019 figures). Indeed, the Plan Area has a long-standing unique and particular land-won aggregate situation which has been recognised as a "special case".⁸ Consequently, the Plan Area has not been self-sufficient in land-won sand and gravel in the past and has had to rely on imports of aggregates for supply for many years. Mineral planning authorities which export

⁸ During the review process for the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the Review of Policy M3 of the South East Plan the Councils successfully requested to be treated as a special case. This recognised the particular circumstances of low production; remote reserves; and high dependence on marine landings; in an area largely affected by environmental constraints/designations.

aggregates to the Plan Area also need to prepare their own Plans and Local Aggregates Assessment to comply with national policy. The Authorities are therefore continuing to work with proximate authorities as part of the Duty to Cooperate to ensure that infrastructure facilities are safeguarded.

- 6.14 Government policy requires mineral planning authorities to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by preparing Minerals Local Plans and Local Aggregate Assessments and to forecast aggregates demand based on sales data in their Local Aggregates Assessments. However, authorities must also consider other relevant local information in addition to the 10-year rolling supply, which seeks to look ahead at possible future demand, rather than rely solely on past sales. Such information may include, for example, levels of planned construction and housebuilding in their area and throughout the country. In undertaking the Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review the Authorities have therefore assessed how provision can be continued in the Plan Area.
- 6.15 The Authorities have been unable to apply Government guidance in using aggregate land won sales figures, owing to the small number of sites and limited data. Consequently, the estimate for future likely sales demand has focused on “other relevant local information”, and in particular the demand for aggregates generated from local planned housing construction.
- 6.16 The Authorities have reviewed their methodology and have taken into account new and updated data. Details of the reassessment are set out in the updated Aggregates Data Technical Paper. The Authorities have established that their methodology of using housing as a proxy for construction also ensures adequate aggregates will be provided for both residential and non-residential construction. The Authorities have concluded that their methodology remains the most robust and appropriate available.
- 6.17 The Authorities have also reapplied their methodology with more recent housing forecasts to calculate revised provision figures as follows. There has been a slight increase to the provision figures compared to those in the Submission Revised Policies Document due to the revised housing data. Taking into account the shortened Plan period ending in 2030, for the 11-year plan period there will be a total sales demand of between 17.2 million tonnes and 18.4 million tonnes of aggregates which averages at between 1.57 and 1.67 million tonnes per annum. Note, these averages are based on the total for the Plan period, and the annual demand will vary from year to year depending on the exact demand at that time.
- 6.18 The Authorities consider that this provision can be met with existing permitted capacity. Further details on capacity are detailed below.
- 6.19 In terms of quantity, the supply of marine dredged aggregate, effectively provides an amount of aggregate to substitute for land-won sharp sand and gravel from Lydd where resources are near exhaustion. It is also necessary to ensure that the end uses of these materials and their markets are comparable, and that sufficient reserves of marine dredged aggregate are available. In terms of continuing supply to the existing market area, the Fishers Wharf development at Newhaven could provide for the western side of the Plan Area, and the Authorities consider that any market variations to the east could be compensated for by, for example, further imports using existing

capacity at Rye Harbour as well as from Kent. The Crown Estate advises that marine aggregate is wholly interchangeable with land based sand and gravel, and can perform the same technical tasks. Reserves off the south coast of Sussex and Hampshire are circa 80 million tonnes with a life of 24 years at 10 year average levels of extraction. New capacity is also expected to come on stream in the very near future. The environmental impact of dredging is considered at the application stage of the Marine Licencing system which is determined by the Marine Management Organisation.

- 6.20 The British Geological Survey Local Aggregates Survey (2019) indicates that a significant amount of aggregates imported into Shoreham Port are consumed within the Plan Area and it is understood that additional capacity remains at the Port. Shoreham Port straddles the boundary between Brighton & Hove and West Sussex minerals planning authority areas. The majority of the minerals wharves are located in West Sussex; West Sussex County Council, as minerals planning authority, report the Port sales figures in their Local Aggregates Assessment, and this underpins the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan which safeguards the wharves to ensure a continued steady and adequate supply of aggregates. The Authorities recognise that the supply from Shoreham Port is accounted for in the West Sussex Local Aggregates Assessment and that it would not be appropriate for the Authorities to attribute capacity from Shoreham for potential supply to the Plan Area. It is however important to understand the contribution that Shoreham wharves do make to the Plan Area, therefore a proxy figure derived from Crown Estate marine dredged aggregate landing statistics has been used to represent a minimum annual supply to the Plan Area. Further details are set out in the Aggregates Data Technical Paper. The Authorities continue to work with West Sussex County Council as part of the Duty to Cooperate to ensure steady and adequate supplies continue.
- 6.21 Unused permitted capacity remains at all infrastructure and processing facilities, including for the production of recycled and secondary material, which could be utilised in the future with the minimum of planning constraints. In particular further capacity could be available via the Permitted Development rights which exist for some wharves and may not have been included in the permitted capacity figures, and also if non-operational wharves were to be re-established. There may also be opportunities to increase capacity by improving the operation and efficiency of existing sites.
- 6.22 An assessment of the existing capacity at permitted import and processing facilities in the Plan Area indicates that adequate capacity exists to accommodate the proposed level of aggregate provision set out in policy RM1. In addition, the Authorities have identified that more capacity is and will be imminently available. Further details are set out in the [Local Aggregates Assessment](#) and the updated *Aggregate Data Technical paper*.
- 6.23 It is acknowledged that if demand were to exceed these levels, there could potentially be shortfalls in supply during the Plan period. However, the Authorities consider that the market is likely to respond in such circumstances to enable additional provision by, for example, diverting exports. In the past regardless of the aggregate demand at that time, supply has occurred and construction has taken place in the Plan Area. In addition, if demand is high enough it could be that market conditions are favourable for new import and recycling infrastructure and/or sites which, where appropriate, would be supported by RM1 and other policies in this Plan. Furthermore, the amount

of aggregates needed in new buildings may reduce over time as construction methods change in response to net zero carbon requirements. The sustainable use of aggregate is supported in Policy RM0.

- 6.24 With regards to soft sand it is considered that the most appropriate approach is to safeguard the soft sand resource and not allocate any further sites in the Plan Area. It is not appropriate to designate Areas of Search in a protected landscape and no aggregate sites have been put forward during the consultation process in either the National Park or the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.⁹
- 6.25 The Authorities consider that based on current evidence there are no acceptable or feasible further land-won resources available, and that in the context of the Plan Area's long established "special case", future provision in the Plan Area has to be supplied from a combination of recycled and secondary material, and rail, wharf and other aggregate imports. This provision strategy does not therefore include land-won material from within the Plan Area and does not require the allocation of sites or setting of a specific "landbank" for aggregates.
- 6.26 The Plan strategy for meeting the sand and gravel needs of the Plan Area is therefore through supporting and encouraging imports through existing permitted facilities, as well as utilising permitted recycled and secondary aggregate capacity, and encouraging sustainable usage of aggregates. Proposals for new rail and wharf import infrastructure will also be supported, where appropriate. To ensure that supply is secured and maintained through import facilities it is important that minerals infrastructure, including wharf and rail heads, are adequately safeguarded. This is covered in policy RM5. In addition, any extensions or improvements to existing safeguarded sites which improve the operation and/or efficiency of the landing, processing, handling and storage of minerals will normally be supported. The reuse of existing infrastructure will be supported where appropriate.
- 6.27 The strategy aims to protect and support every mechanism for enabling supply. This will allow provision for the 11-year plan period which equates to a total sales demand of between 17.2 million tonnes and 18.4 million tonnes of aggregates, averaging at between 1.57 and 1.67 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) peaking at just over 2mtpa in 2027/28. Of the 17.2 to 18.4 mtpa, between 11.5 and 14.3 mtpa will be sourced from imports, using existing permitted facilities in the Plan Area and beyond.

⁹ Mineral extraction is considered to be 'major development' as defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning permission should be refused for major development in National Parks other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Footnote 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the question of whether a development proposal is 'major' in a National Park is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

Paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework relates primarily to the determination of planning applications in protected landscapes. However, to ensure that all local plan allocations are deliverable, it is also necessary to consider the issue of major development at the plan making stage.

- 6.28 Aggregate supply and demand in the Plan Area, including the annual provision figure, will be continually monitored via the Authorities' Monitoring Report and the Local Aggregate Assessment, and will be reviewed when required.
- 6.29 The Authorities will commit to reviewing the methodology used to predict demand and establish aggregates provision for the forthcoming full Review of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan. In doing this the Authorities will collaborate with industry, proximate Mineral Planning Authorities, and district and borough Councils in the Plan Area to ensure all relevant information is considered. The Authorities will continue to work closely with proximate Mineral Planning Authorities that supply the Plan Area, to ensure that they continue to protect, maintain and enhance existing infrastructure and capacity.
- 6.30 Where proposals for land-won aggregate are received they will be supported, in principle, subject to consideration against the Development Plan as a whole. Of particular relevance are the overarching principles set out in Policy WMP4, Policy RD1 (Environment and Environmental Enhancement) and other development management policies.
- 6.31 Proposals for new sites and additional capacity for aggregate importation infrastructure and recycled and secondary aggregate production will be supported and encouraged through the pre-application advice process subject to the environmental protection requirements set out in other plan policies.
- 6.32 Proposals which may involve marine operations should also consider Policies S-AGG-3 and S-AGG-4 from the MMO South Marine Plan. These policies refer to proposals in areas where high potential aggregate resource occurs, and local sourcing of aggregates respectively.

Policy RM1: Provision of aggregates for the Plan Area

1. The Authorities will support the provision of at least 17.2 million tonnes and 18.4 million tonnes (averaging between 1.57 and 1.67 million tonnes per annum) of aggregate material over the 11-year Plan period by seeking to protect, maintain and enhance existing:
- a) aggregate importation infrastructure and capacity; and
 - b) recycled and secondary aggregate production.
2. Proposals for new rail and wharf import infrastructure, and additional capacity for a) and b) (including increased operational capacity within the site boundary of existing infrastructure) will be supported. In particular, support will be given to proposals which further enable sustainable provision of aggregates by sea and/or rail.
3. Proposals for land-won aggregate extraction, including extensions of time and physical extensions to existing sites, will be supported where consideration against other policies in the Development Plan indicates there would be no unacceptable adverse impacts.

Provision for an additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm (RM2)

Explanation

An extension to the Aldershaw Tiles extraction site was promoted by the operator in response to the Call for Evidence and Sites 2017 and was included in the 2020 consultation draft (Regulation 18) version of the Revised Policies Document (RPD). The tile works is a small-scale operation which primarily produces handmade tiles, many of which are used in the restoration of historic buildings. Clay supplies are now running low at the extraction site and an extension could extend the lifetime of the facility by providing a potential minerals reserve of between 25 and 30 years.

Since publishing the Regulation 18 Revised Policies Document, the site assessment has been updated several times to reflect the current text, the latest of which is the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023). This places higher protection on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, ancient woodland and irreplaceable habitats. Paragraph 186 and Footnote 67 states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland should be refused unless where wholly exceptional circumstance exist and where by a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Mineral extraction is a type of operation regarded as major development in the National Planning Policy Framework and in legislation[1]. Though, under Footnote 82 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), for the purposes of Paragraphs 182 and 183, the decision maker must determine whether the development constitutes major development.

Under paragraphs 182, 183 and Footnote 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), where a decision maker judges a proposal to represent major development, permission should not be granted other than in exceptional circumstances and where the development is demonstrably in the public interest.

As the previously promoted extension would extend into an area of ancient woodland, the extension site proposed in response to the Call for Evidence and Sites is therefore no longer being allocated. Sites outside of areas of ancient woodland may be available and further information on site selection and feasibility of extraction is anticipated from the landowner/operator.

The Authorities believe that development for clay extraction could take place outside the area of ancient woodland. Any proposal for extraction within or within the vicinity of ancient woodland would be subject to further consideration in light of paragraphs 182, 183 and 186 and Footnotes 64 and 67 of the NPPF, as set out above.

The ultimate decision on exceptional circumstances and the public interest can only be taken when a planning application is submitted as exemplified by the following case:

R (Advearse) v. Dorset Council paragraph 46[2]¹⁰ sets out the successive stages for the consideration and implementation of the NPPF, particularly in relation to paragraph 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023).

Since 2020, the Policy has therefore been revised in response to key responses, as follows:

- No longer allocating a specific site.
- Inclusion of a criteria based policy in line with national policy.

[1] Town and County Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

[2] R (Advearse) v Dorset CC et al [2020] EWHC 807 (Admin) Paragraph 46

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section is appended to Provision of Clay (WMP13) on pages 84-85 of the WMP.

Purpose of Policy RM2

To ensure a continued supply of specialist clay.

- 6.33 It has been identified that an additional extraction area for the Aldershaw Tiles site is required to ensure continued provision of clay for use in the production of specialist tiles. The products made at the Aldershaw Tile works include specialist clay tiles used in the restoration of historic buildings. The tiles may need to match original features, and so the colour and quality of these products is an important consideration.
- 6.34 The Policy aims to make provision for the specialist clay product, to meet the need from outside of areas of ancient woodland where possible, and to only allow development within designated ancient woodland in wholly exceptional circumstances, where a suitable compensation strategy exists and where it is in the public interest, in accordance with national policy. A final decision on whether exceptional circumstances exist can only be made when proposals come forward.

Policy RM2: Provision for an additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm

For an area of additional clay extraction, in connection with the specialist tile manufacturing facility at Aldershaw Farm as identified on Map 10.2 Minerals Sites and Infrastructure Map to be acceptable in principle, proposals for an additional extraction area must demonstrate that the following criteria are met:

- i. An Ecological Impact Assessment must be carried out to demonstrate how impacts on biodiversity features, including Ancient Woodland (Screen Wood and Lane Wood) and Beauport Park Local Wildlife Site, have been avoided in line with the mitigation hierarchy. Where necessary and in

¹⁰ “46. Consideration and application of a policy such as the one stated at (what is now) paragraph 172 of NPPF 2019 will not always be a one-off event. The expectation is that policies in the NPPF will be considered at successive stages: for example, not only at the time a Local Plan is formulated, but also when subsequent decisions are taken on applications for planning permission. As the decisions in issue become more specific, the information relevant to the application of any particular policy is likely to change.”

accordance with Natural England and the Forestry Commission's standing advice, appropriate buffers should be incorporated, and mitigation provided, to the satisfaction of both bodies.

ii. The impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty must be assessed and appropriate mitigation should be included, if required, in consultation with the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit and Natural England.

iii. Beauport Park Local Wildlife Site should be safeguarded, and where necessary, appropriate mitigation provided, in consultation with and to the satisfaction of Natural England or a suitably qualified ecological advisor of the Council's choosing.

iv. Access to the site is through the existing brickworks.

An appropriate mitigation and environmental enhancement scheme for the operations and restoration of the entire extraction site would be required as part of any permission.

Proposals must demonstrate how they have considered relevant Policies in the Waste and Minerals Plan, Waste and Minerals Sites Plan and the Development Plan (relevant Local Plan). Any application will be assessed in accordance with relevant development plan policies taking into account any material considerations.

Further Guidance

- 6.35 Protected and notable species may be present within or in the vicinity of any future additional area of extraction. Appropriate assessments and surveys should be carried out in accordance with standing advice and development management policies within this Plan.
- 6.36 Any restoration plan should be supported by a landscape and ecological management plan.
- 6.37 A Transport Assessment and Site Management Plan for the management of impacts arising from vehicle movements including dust reduction measures and wheel washing facilities should be prepared and submitted with any planning application. It is advised that the applicant engages in pre-application discussions with National Highways prior to the submission of any application.

Introduction to Minerals Safeguarding

- 6.38 The following section sets out the Policies on Mineral Resources and Infrastructure safeguarding including a policy on minerals consultation areas. These policies (RM3 - RM7) are designed to be read concurrently.

Purpose of Safeguarding

- Safeguarding aims to avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources, where non-mineral development effectively prevents and/or unduly affects the ability to extract the underlying mineral.
- Safeguarding also aims to prevent the loss of key minerals infrastructure and avoid unreasonable constraints on their operation (including workings at active and proposed extraction sites) that may result from the introduction of proximate sensitive development.

For example, there may be conflicts of use and disturbance where a residential development is developed in close proximity to a minerals wharf facility from the impact of noise or light pollution, dust, traffic movements or impact on visual amenity.

The Agent of Change Principle

- 6.39 The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) requires that where the operation of an existing business could have a significant adverse effect on new development in the locality, the applicant of the new development (or ‘agent of change’) should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed, this is known as the ‘agent of change principle’. The ‘Agent of Change’ (Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2023) principle and the term ‘incompatible development’ are closely linked; incompatible development refers to development which places unreasonable constraints on the workings of existing businesses/facilities. Both concepts are applied within the safeguarding policies.
- 6.40 For some types of non-mineral development the impact upon safeguarded sites may be negligible. Accordingly, the Authorities consider that the following categories of development/application type would be unlikely to pose a threat to safeguarded areas and are therefore exempt from the Policy requirements of RM3, RM5, RM6 and RM7. The exemptions are referred to as excluded development. They would apply to sites located in Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas; to the requirements for prior extraction; and for consultations relating to both mineral resources sites and minerals infrastructure sites. Those listed would also be exempt from the requirements of Mineral Resource and Infrastructure Assessments.

Excluded Development

- Householder planning consent: Applications for alterations to existing single buildings including works within the boundary/garden of a house i.e. domestic extensions, conservatories, loft conversions, dormer windows, garages and similar structures (car ports, outbuildings) within the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse;
- Applications for Advertisement Consent;
- Applications for Listed Building Consent;
- Lawful Development Certificate for existing use, proposed use, or operation or activity in breach of a planning condition;
- Applications for Tree Works (including consent under Tree Preservation Orders and notification of proposed works to trees in conservation areas);
- Application for non-material amendments;
- Developments within a conservation area within existing urban areas.

Overview of safeguarding policies

Policy	Overview of Policies
RM3	This policy safeguards locally important feasible land-won mineral resources and permitted extraction sites from sterilisation and

	incompatible development. In cases where sterilisation may occur, prior extraction is required unless it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible. The Mineral Safeguarding Areas are identified on the Policies Map.
RM5	This policy safeguards minerals infrastructure (wharves and railheads) and associated capacity. Wharves and railheads are the key bulk transport routes in the Plan Area. Using the 'Agent of Change' principle the policy protects the safeguarded facilities from negative impacts resulting from non-minerals development which may not be compatible with the operation of minerals infrastructure sites.
RM6	This policy safeguards other types of minerals plant and infrastructure, for example for concrete batching, coated materials manufacture, and other concrete products, facilities for plasterboard and clay manufacture, from encroachment from incompatible development.
RM7	This policy identifies Minerals Consultation Areas. In cases where the Local Planning Authority considers that a non-minerals development affects or could potentially affect an existing minerals site or facility, consultation with the Minerals Planning Authority is required. Proposals within Minerals Consultation Areas, unless identified on the excluded development list, require consultation with the Mineral Planning Authority. Outside Mineral Consultation Areas, Local Planning Authorities may come to a judgement of the potential impact on an existing minerals site or facility and should therefore consult with the Minerals Planning Authority.

- 6.41 Paragraph 216e of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2023 states that planning policies should safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for: bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material. Sites falling within these categories are safeguarded by various policies¹¹ within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan.

The Role of District and Borough Councils in Minerals Safeguarding

- 6.42 In two-tier authority areas, such as much of the Plan Area, the District and Borough Councils play a key role in the implementation of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan. The role of District and Borough Councils in Minerals Safeguarding is to:

¹¹ RM5 safeguards bulk transport sites (wharves and railheads) and the handling and processing of minerals at these sites. RM6 safeguards sites for manufacture (including concrete and concrete products) and associated handling and processing. Recycled and secondary aggregates are safeguarded by Policies WMP6 and SP6 of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan.

- Have regard to the Waste and Minerals Local Plan when identifying areas for development in Local Plans and determining planning applications; and,
- Consult with the relevant Mineral Planning Authority on development proposals in accordance with the Plan policies and take into account their views; and
- Identify Minerals Safeguarding Areas on their Policies Maps.

6.43 The responsibilities set out above have been agreed in direct cooperation with the District and Borough Councils and continual work on the delivery of these will be achieved through the Duty to Cooperate.

Safeguarding Mineral Resources (RM3)

Explanation

The provision of aggregates (minerals used for the construction and improvement of buildings or infrastructure) is important in ensuring that planned development in the Plan Area can be delivered. Directly linked to the provision of aggregates is the safeguarding of minerals resources and the safeguarding of minerals infrastructure. Safeguarding helps to ensure that minerals resources, which are finite in their supply, are not sterilised by other development.

Separate policies relating to safeguarding of mineral resources are contained within the Local Plan and Sites Plan. To avoid duplication of policy content, it is proposed that policies WMP14 and SP8 are combined into a single policy within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan.

It is also proposed that a list of exempt development relating to Minerals Safeguarding Areas , Minerals Consultation Areas and prior extraction is included for clarity. This establishes the concept that not all development should be constrained by mineral designations.

The list of safeguarded resource sites will be moved to the policies map. The list of safeguarded sites has been included below for information. The strike-through indicates sites which are no longer being safeguarded.

Gypsum:

- Brightling Mine/Robertsbridge Works, Mountfield

Sand and Gravel (including soft sand):

- Novington Sandpit
- Ditchling/Plumpton Reserve¹²
- Scotney Court Farm, Jury's Gap Road, Camber, near Lydd

¹² This is a new safeguarded resource.

- ~~Scotney Court Extension and Wall Farm, Jury's Gap Road, Camber, near Lydd¹³~~
- ~~Broomhill, near Lydd¹⁴~~

Clay:

- Ashdown Brickworks, Bexhill
- Little Standard Hill Farm, Ninfield
- Chailey Brickworks, Chailey
- Hastings Brickworks, Guestling
- Aldershaw Farm, near Hastings
- Horam Brickworks, Horam

Since the consultation in 2020, the wording of the policy has been updated to ensure that 'potentially' feasible resources are safeguarded to address the issue of feasibility changing overtime.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces Safeguarding Mineral Resources (WMP14) on pages 86-88 of Waste and Minerals Plan and paragraphs 4.1 - 4.11 and Policy SP8 on pages 24-25 of the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan. Policies WMP14 and SP8 are superseded by Policy RM3.

Purpose of Policy RM3

To ensure known mineral resources of local and national importance are safeguarded and that safeguarded mineral resources are not sterilised by development by encouraging their extraction prior to development.

Introduction

- 6.44 The National Planning Policy Framework requires Mineral Planning Authorities to prevent mineral resources from being unnecessarily sterilised. Sterilisation of known or potential resources would reduce the ability and flexibility to supply future demand. However, it is also important to find a balance between protecting mineral resources for the future and allowing for necessary development of some of those areas.
- 6.45 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and other guidance¹⁵ requires mineral planning authorities to define Mineral Safeguarding Areas which should contain resources that are of local and national importance to warrant protection for future generations. Mineral safeguarding allows for potential resources to be examined; however, there is no

¹³ Permitted extraction sites (Scotney Court Farm, Scotney Court extension and Wall Farm) are currently being worked and near exhaustion at Lydd Quarry. The continued safeguarding of these sites is therefore not considered necessary. Furthermore, the area around Lydd Quarry is constrained by both National and International environmental designations and further working is not feasible due to the environmental constraints which are considered overriding.

¹⁴ The area around Lydd Quarry which includes Broomhill is constrained by both National and International environmental designations. Mineral working at Broomhill would therefore not be feasible due to the significant harm mineral working would cause to the interests of designated sites which are considered overriding. Broomhill is therefore no longer safeguarded.

¹⁵ British Geological Survey guidance for Mineral Safeguarding published in 2011.

presumption that resources defined in Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be worked. To ensure safeguarding is effective and provides a meaningful function, the Plan seeks to safeguard resources.

- 6.46 In addition to Mineral Safeguarding Areas, Minerals Consultation Areas have also been defined by the Authorities. These are areas where Local Planning Authorities (District & Borough Councils) will consult with the Authorities on alternative development proposals, not including excluded development. They have been identified using information on known minerals resources, existing permitted extraction and transport infrastructure sites. The Mineral Consultation Areas in the Plan Area cover the same areas as the Mineral Safeguarding Areas plus a 100-metre buffer. Further bespoke Mineral Consultation Areas based on site specific circumstances, other than those included within Policy RM7, may be considered through future reviews of the Plan. Policy RM7 sets out consultation requirements for developments within or proximate to Minerals Consultation Areas.
- 6.47 There might be specific circumstances when the Local Planning Authority may wish to consult the Mineral Planning Authority for proposals which do not fall within a Minerals Consultation Area but are near to a minerals site. This will be down to the judgement of the Local Planning Authority but could include, for example, a proposed development that potentially would be affected by Heavy Goods Vehicle movements from an existing minerals site.
- 6.48 Where an application is made for non-mineral development within a Minerals Safeguarding Area identified in this Plan, then the determining authority will consult the Minerals Planning Authority for its views on the application and take them into account in its determination. For non-minerals development determined by the Authorities e.g. schools and waste management, the safeguarding policies will equally apply.

Review of Mineral Safeguarding Areas

- 6.49 The Authorities have not received any evidence or intelligence to support the inclusion of any new or amended Minerals Safeguarding Areas, therefore other than the Mineral Safeguarding Areas included on the Policies Map, no other Mineral Safeguarding Areas are confirmed within the Plan.
- 6.50 The Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be reviewed under future reviews of the Plan. Any intelligence provided, such as geological data and workability of the resource, by the industry or site operators will be taken into consideration in the review process. Other matters to be taken into account in these reviews include:
- Proposed urban extensions and site allocations for non-minerals uses in adopted local plans;
 - Consultation with stakeholders including landowners and local district/borough councils;
 - The accessibility of the minerals resource i.e. whether it can be practicably and feasibly worked.
- 6.51 Furthermore, as part of future reviews of the Plan the need to safeguard infrastructure (safeguarded by Policy RM5), and production and manufacture sites (safeguarded by Policy RM6) will also be reviewed.

Minerals Resource Assessments and Prior Extraction

- 6.52 The National Planning Policy Framework requires that Mineral Planning Authorities should set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place.
- 6.53 Where non-mineral development is proposed which could potentially sterilise minerals resource, developers will be required to carry out investigation work to ascertain whether economically feasible mineral resources are present and whether prior extraction is practicable. It is for the developer or site proposer to demonstrate whether prior extraction is not feasible. The results of this work should be reported in a 'Minerals Resource Assessment' which should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal (for more detail see [separate guidance on safeguarding](#)). The developer will be expected to have regard to [The Minerals Products Association and the Planning Officers' Society Minerals Safeguarding Practice Guidance \(April 2019\)](#) in preparing a Mineral Resource Assessment.
- 6.54 For the Authorities to raise no objection to the non-mineral development, they will need to be satisfied that either minerals sterilisation will not occur (either because the mineral resources are not economically feasible or that an appropriate and practicable level of prior extraction can take place) or because there is an overriding need for the development.
- 6.55 In forming its view on the proposed development the Mineral Planning Authority will consider the conclusions of the Minerals Resource Assessment, including on prior extraction, and provide advice to the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.56 Where planning permission is granted for the prior extraction of minerals, conditions will be imposed to ensure that the site can be adequately restored to a satisfactory after-use should the main development be delayed or not implemented.

Sharp Sand & Gravel

- 6.57 Storm beach deposits have been worked in the past in the Plan Area. However, these deposits have now either been sterilised, exhausted or are constrained by both national and international designations. Consequently, no provision is made in the Plan for the working of storm beach deposits.
- 6.58 Permitted extraction sites (Scotney Court Farm, Scotney Court extension and Wall Farm) are currently being worked and near exhaustion at Lydd Quarry. The continued safeguarding of these sites is therefore not considered necessary. Furthermore, the area around Lydd Quarry, including Broomhill, is constrained by both national and international environmental designations and further working is not feasible due to the irreversible harm this would cause to the interests of designated sites which are considered overriding. Therefore, Broomhill is no longer safeguarded.
- 6.59 Within the Plan Area, river terrace deposits are located within very narrow seams and several of these sites are located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and South Downs National Park. There has been no historical interest to extract these resources. Furthermore,

surface development on river terrace deposits is unlikely due to the limitations of building on riverbeds and on floodplains.

- 6.60 Given these limitations, the Authorities consider it highly improbable that any sharp sand and gravel resource in the Plan Area would be workable in the future and that safeguarding this resource would not therefore be appropriate.

Soft Sand

- 6.61 In considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments and conservation areas¹⁶. However, the soft sand resource within East Sussex lies entirely within the boundary of the South Downs National Park. This soft sand resource then extends through the South Downs National Park and its boundary in West Sussex and Hampshire.
- 6.62 Soft sand resource is a regionally important mineral that, for certain end uses, cannot be easily substituted. It is relatively limited and constrained by a number of designated landscapes¹⁷. The Authorities have entered into a *Statement of Common Ground* with Kent County Council, West Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council and Maidstone Borough Council in which the agreed position is to safeguard any soft sand resource in the respective plan areas. Moreover, the South East England Mineral Planning Authorities have agreed a *Joint Position Statement on Soft Sand* that sets out the overall supply position within the South East and is designed to underpin statements of common ground. Therefore, the Plan safeguards the extent of the soft sand resource in East Sussex.

Other Minerals

- 6.63 Clay sites and permitted Gypsum reserves are safeguarded. No strategic need for chalk extraction was identified in the Waste and Minerals Plan, and there is no evidence to suggest that the situation has altered. No areas have therefore been identified to safeguard chalk resource within the Review.

Policy RM3: Minerals Safeguarding Areas

Mineral Safeguarding Areas, as shown on the Policies Map, identify potentially feasible land-won mineral resources and permitted sites which remain feasible .

Proposals for non-minerals development on or near the Mineral Safeguarding Areas that would sterilise or prejudice the extraction of the mineral resource, or result in incompatible development, should not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated, within a Mineral Resource Assessment, that:

- a) the development is not incompatible with any permitted minerals operations; and

¹⁶ National Planning Policy Framework December 2023 paragraph 217.

¹⁷ South East Soft Sand Position Statement.

b) mineral extraction in advance of surface development (prior extraction) would not be practical and feasible.

Safeguarding Minerals Infrastructure (RM5)

Explanation

Safeguarding protects existing, planned and potential infrastructure, such as railheads and wharves, which are integral to the supply, storage and transportation of minerals. Within the Plan Area, wharves at the ports of Newhaven, Shoreham and Rye are safeguarded in order to preserve mineral landing capacity, along with railheads at Newhaven and the British Gypsum rail facility near Robertsbridge. It is, therefore, important to review safeguarding arrangements at the same time as a review of mineral provision.

The introduction of sensitive land uses in close proximity to minerals operations can have a detrimental impact on their ability to effectively operate. Issues such as noise and dust from existing infrastructure sites can affect incompatible development such as residential uses negatively. It is necessary to protect these mineral facilities from encroachment of non-minerals development to support continued effective working of these facilities, therefore it is proposed that reference to the Agent of Change principle (para 193 of National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)) is added to the Policy. The list of safeguarded minerals infrastructure sites will be moved to the Policies Map.

The Newhaven Enterprise Zone, and its Strategic Framework, which includes the Port of North Quay has been considered as part of the review. However, it is considered that there is no need to change the direction or wording of the policy.

Since the 2020 consultation, the direction of the policy has not changed, however amendments have been made to the supporting text. The term 'disturbance' is now defined within the supporting text. The wording within the policy has also been amended to ensure consistency with other policies.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces Safeguarding Railheads and Wharves Policy (WMP15) on pages 89-90 of Waste and Minerals Plan and pages 26-27 of the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan, and Policies WMP15 and SP9 are superseded by RM5.

Purpose of Policy RM5

To ensure the continued provision of minerals to the plan area by protecting essential minerals infrastructure from encroaching development.

- 6.64 National Policy requires Mineral Planning Authorities to assess the need for existing, planned and potential wharf and rail facilities to be safeguarded and to encourage and promote the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of minerals. Sustaining imports of marine aggregates

through local wharves is particularly important in the Plan Area because of the scarcity of feasible land based mineral resources in this area.

- 6.65 Marine borne aggregates are currently imported at the Ports of Rye, Newhaven and Shoreham. Material for the plasterboard factory at Robertsbridge is imported by rail. Bottom ash produced by the Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility is exported by rail to a processing facility outside the County. Crushed rock and other aggregates are imported by rail into the Plan Area at Newhaven. The majority of aggregates movements within the Plan Area are currently made by road.
- 6.66 There are currently no active chalk sites in the Plan Area and more recently chalk has been imported by road from West Sussex. Clay resources are linked to brickworks and none of these sites are close to rail facilities or ports to transport bricks within or out of the Plan Area. More detailed support for a modal shift in transportation of minerals is covered in Policy WMP 18.
- 6.67 Proposals for other uses at minerals wharves must demonstrate that sufficient alternative mineral wharf capacity (tonnage) is deliverable and available to ensure no net loss of capacity within the port before the Authorities would accede to alternative development of the site. Proposals for new residential, business or amenity development in proximity to aggregate wharves should be assessed to ensure the impact of existing operations is fully addressed. The safeguarding arrangements would apply to all existing permitted, planned and potential (e.g. when new sites come forward or when suitable sites are released from their previous use) sites regardless of whether they are currently in use.
- 6.68 Proposals affecting safeguarded mineral infrastructure sites or the associated Mineral Consultation Areas including rail depots, wharves, concrete batching and asphalt plants, and aggregate recycling sites should be supported by a Mineral Infrastructure Assessment. This should provide sufficient evidence which is proportionate to the nature and type of development, to enable the Minerals Planning Authority to assess whether the proposed development is likely to have an adverse effect on the facility including its capacity. Further guidance on preparing the Minerals Infrastructure Assessment can be found within the [separate guidance document on safeguarding](#). Proposals will be expected to have regard to [The Minerals Products Association and the Planning Officers' Society Minerals Safeguarding Practice Guidance \(April 2019\)](#) in preparing a Minerals Infrastructure Assessment.
- 6.69 The National Planning Policy Framework requires that existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Development proposals in the vicinity of safeguarded wharves (including vacant wharves) and railheads should be designed to minimise the potential for conflicts of use and disturbance (e.g. light disturbance, noise pollution, dust, odour, other emissions, impact on visual amenity of potential occupiers and impacts arising from traffic movements associated with Minerals

Infrastructure sites), in line with the Agent of Change principle as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework ¹⁸.

- 6.70 The [*Joint Area Action Plan for Shoreham Harbour*](#) which was adopted in October 2019 sets out the future vision and planning policies for the Shoreham Harbour regeneration area. The intention is to consolidate port related uses in the eastern harbour arm. It is important that wharf safeguarding policies are applied to ensure capacity is maintained whilst regeneration proposals come forward.
- 6.71 Shoreham Port is partly within West Sussex, so landings at wharves in the West Sussex part may also help meet demand in the western part of the Plan Area. On that basis, provision of equivalent capacity (tonnage) of minerals wharfage within either part of Shoreham Port may be acceptable subject to similar safeguarding by West Sussex County Council as Minerals Planning Authority. Future joint working by authorities on the Joint Area Action Plan has been addressed through a Statement of Common Ground which has been agreed between the Shoreham Harbour Planning Authorities and the Shoreham Port Authority.
- 6.72 The wharves and railheads safeguarded for the purposes of minerals transportation are listed on the Policies Map. A list of the permitted mineral infrastructure sites is published alongside the Annual Monitoring Report on the County Council's website.
- 6.73 Policy RM5 must be read in conjunction with the Excluded Development List, please refer to paragraph 6.40 for further details.

Policy RM5: Safeguarding Minerals Infrastructure

Existing, planned and potential minerals wharf and railhead facilities (including rail sidings) and their consequential capacity are safeguarded in order to contribute towards meeting local and regional supply for aggregates and other minerals as well as supporting modal shift in the transport of minerals. The need for railheads and minerals wharves will be monitored.

Capacity for landing, processing and handling and associated storage of minerals at wharves in Shoreham, Newhaven and Rye Ports is safeguarded. Alternative use proposals should demonstrate that there is no net loss of capacity for handling minerals within a port.

Proposals for non-minerals related uses within the vicinity of an infrastructure site should be designed to minimise the potential for conflicts of use and disturbance in accordance with the Agent of Change principle. Proposals for incompatible non-minerals development should not be permitted.

The Authorities will support the co-location of railheads and minerals wharves with processing capacity subject to it being demonstrated that this does not adversely affect space requirements for operational use.

¹⁸ Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023).

Safeguarding other minerals plant and infrastructure (RM6)

Explanation

To ensure the Plan remains relevant throughout the Plan period, it is proposed that the list of safeguarded facilities is removed from the policy wording and is moved to the Policies Map.

Since the 2020 consultation, the direction of the policy remains the same. The Policy has been amended to strengthen the wording and emphasise the limited circumstances in which permission may be granted. Reference to the agent of change principle has been added to supporting text to ensure consistency with other policies.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces pages 27-28 of the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan. Policy SP10 is superseded by RM6, as drafted below.

Purpose of Policy RM6

To ensure adequate provision of minerals of the plan area by protecting infrastructure facilities from encroaching development.

- 6.74 National policy requires other types of mineral infrastructure to be safeguarded. This includes existing, planned and potential sites for the handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material. No such sites were received in response to the Call for Evidence and Sites consultation, and a need for additional facilities has not been identified. However, existing and potential sites are safeguarded. Safeguarded facilities will be reviewed through future reviews of the Plan.
- 6.75 Whilst the development management of concrete batching and similar facilities are generally district and borough council planning matters, in order to provide a comprehensive safeguarding mechanism for minerals infrastructure in the Plan Area it is considered appropriate to safeguard such sites in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan.
- 6.76 Development proposals within the vicinity of safeguarded minerals plant and infrastructure facilities must be compatible with the operations at the safeguarded sites in accordance with the Agent of Change Principle and national policy¹⁹. Where the operation of an existing facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') is required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed. Proposals should be accompanied by a proportionate Minerals Infrastructure Assessment comprising a compatibility assessment. Further guidance on preparing the Minerals Infrastructure Assessment can be found within the [separate guidance document on safeguarding](#). Proposals will be expected to have regard to [The Minerals Products Association and the Planning](#)

¹⁹ Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) states that proposals must ensure that the new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities, and that existing business and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.

Officers' Society Minerals Safeguarding Practice Guidance (April 2019) in preparing a Minerals Infrastructure Assessment.

6.77 Safeguarded facilities are identified on the Policies Map.

Policy RM6: Safeguarding other minerals infrastructure

Facilities for production and manufacture, including concrete batching, plasterboard production and brick manufacture etc. are safeguarded against development that would unnecessarily sterilise the facility or prejudice its use. Where these facilities are situated within a host quarry, wharf or rail depot facility they are safeguarded for the life of the host site. The safeguarded facilities are identified in the Policies Map.

Development proposals that do not comply with the Agent of Change requirements and that would prejudice the use of the facility, or result in incompatible development, should not be permitted. Planning permission will only be granted where it is demonstrated that:

- the proposed development is in accordance with a site allocation in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan;
- the site is no longer needed;
- the proposal is of a temporary nature; or
- the capacity of the site can be relocated elsewhere.

Minerals Consultation Areas (RM7)

Explanation

Based on local constraints and changes to the surroundings of safeguarded sites, it is proposed that the extents of some Mineral Consultation Areas are altered dependent on the constraints of each site. These can be found on the Policies Map.

The proposed wording of this policy would allow the Minerals Planning Authority discretion to raise concern in cases where the minerals sites and facilities may be adversely affected by non-minerals development.

In response to representations received during the 2020 consultation, to avoid confusion, reference to Mineral Safeguarding Areas has been removed from the supporting text and the exemptions list has been moved earlier in the document.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces Minerals Consultation Areas (SP11) on pages 28 & 29 of the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan.

Purpose of Policy RM7

To ensure appropriate consultation is undertaken by Local Planning Authorities on alternative development proposals.

- 6.78 Policies RM3, RM5 and RM6 seek to safeguard land-won minerals resources and minerals infrastructure from sterilisation and incompatible development. Minerals Consultation Areas are required to be defined by National Policy (National Planning Policy Framework 2023). They are a means to ensure that, in determining non-minerals development by another local planning authority within the Plan Area, account is taken of the need to safeguard such assets. Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority can achieve this consideration within their own decision taking. In the County of East Sussex outside the South Downs National Park, local planning authorities need to consult the Minerals Planning Authority on relevant applications. To ensure a manageable process, Policy RM7 below sets out how the consultation process will be implemented.
- 6.79 Minerals Consultation Areas are drawn up based on the safeguarded site boundaries and extended to include a buffer zone of 100 metres. In cases where the Mineral Planning Authority has observed that the effect upon a safeguarded area or site is potentially greater in a particular locality, bespoke Minerals Consultation Areas have been included. These areas are Rye Harbour and East Quay, Newhaven. Future bespoke Mineral Consultation Areas may be considered through future reviews of the Plan.
- 6.80 At Rye Harbour, the Minerals Consultation Area extends to include the two safeguarded wharf sites (Rastrums Wharf and the “Old ARC” Wharf) and a wider area around the harbour to ensure the Minerals Planning Authority is consulted on proposals for residential or other types of sensitive development. Similarly, at East Quay, Newhaven, a wider buffer is applied to reflect the urban surroundings.

Policy RM7: Minerals Consultation Areas

Within the County of East Sussex outside the South Downs National Park:

- Types of planning applications not included within the excluded development list which fall into a Mineral Consultation Areas will require the consultation of the Minerals Planning Authority.
- The local planning authority will consult the Minerals Planning Authority on non-minerals development that affects or may affect, existing minerals sites and facilities identified on the Policies Map.
- Neighbourhood planning groups will also need to consult the relevant Minerals Planning Authority where allocating land affecting Mineral Safeguarding Areas in their Neighbourhood Plan.

- 6.81 Minerals Consultation Areas do not apply to development considered unlikely to affect Mineral Safeguarding Areas. Please see Excluded Development (page 34) for further details.

7. Development Management Policies

- 7.1 The Development Management Policies section in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan sets out policies to be used in the determination of waste and minerals applications covering a range of topics such as environmental enhancement, transport, design and operation.
- 7.2 The Authorities' monitoring indicated that these policies are broadly operating as expected, and do not require altering at this time. However, it was identified that the supporting text of Policy WMP27 was factually incorrect and requires alteration. All other policies within this section apart from WMP27, which is to be replaced by Policy RD1 below, remain unchanged.

Environment and Environmental Enhancement (RD1)

Explanation

Policy WMP27 and its supporting text seeks to conserve and enhance the environment. This is a development management policy and is intended to be a general policy that can be applied to a wide range of proposals. Several changes are being proposed to this policy and its supporting text:

1. Addition of specific reference to net gain in biodiversity

In the NPPF it is identified that plans must contribute to net gain of biodiversity. Presently, WMP 27 seeks to maximise opportunities to increase biodiversity and habitat creation. The NPPF now requires almost all development to result in net gains in biodiversity. The policy has been updated to reflect this new emphasis. The policy text has also been shortened and made more flexible by identifying environmental and historic designations as a whole, instead of listing specific designations.

2. Alteration of supporting text in relation to Habitats Regulation Assessments The supporting text of WMP27 provides guidance in a grey box to be used when undertaking

Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA)²⁰, which the Authorities are required to undertake at specific times set out in law. The first part of the HRA process is called screening, which identifies if further assessment is required.

Within the guidance in the grey box the third paragraph and footnote 89 makes reference to the advice given in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges which indicates "that if the increases in traffic [arising from a development] will amount to less than 200 Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDV) movements per day the development can be scoped out of further assessment".

In 2017, a High Court judgement in the case of Wealden District Council v. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority [2017] EWHC 351 (Admin) found that in following the advice of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges by using a 200 HDV vehicle limit as a threshold for screening, Lewes District

²⁰ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transposes the Habitats Directive and elements of the Birds Directive into English Law. These directives seek to protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora and require certain assessments to be undertaken in certain circumstances.

Council, when undertaking a Habitats Regulation Assessment on their Joint Core Strategy, had failed to consider the cumulative impact of the development proposed in their local plan in combination with those proposed within the Wealden Local Plan. The judgement also undermined the use of a 1% threshold to determine if a scheme may be screened out. The supporting text in the WMP, which was based on the best advice available in 2013, follows an approach similar to Lewes District Council. The Authorities are, therefore, seeking to amend the supporting text in order to update it in light of the judgement.

3. Alteration to supporting text to include reference to soils in relation to biodiversity and climate change.

The importance of the biodiversity within soils and its potential to store carbon has significantly increased in the last few years. Measures for protecting and minimising disturbance to soils should be included in an Environmental Statement. Reference to this requirement is therefore included in the supporting text.

4. Additional changes between 2020 and 2021 version

Following the consultation on the Draft Revised Policies in 2020, Policy RD1 was revised. In summary:

- The policy text has been altered to align more closely with the NPPF (2023), and now refers to the Sussex Nature Recovery Network and any future Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Additional supporting text to reference the NPPF and the requirements within it have been added.
- The ambiguity in the policy text referring to 'a) above' has been clarified.
- The list of designations has been moved from the Policies Map to Appendix 3 of this document.
- Reference to landscape added; this was accidentally omitted when WMP27 was first transposed.

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

This section replaces Environment and Environmental Enhancement (WMP27) on pages 113-116 of the WMP. Policy WMP27 Environment and Environmental Enhancement would be superseded by RD1 Environment and Environmental Enhancement.

Purpose of Policy

To conserve and enhance the built and natural environment including: natural assets; biodiversity and geodiversity; landscapes; historic environment; geology and geomorphology; Heritage assets; and landscape character.

- 7.3 The Plan Area has a range of natural and built features which are recognised for their environmental and / or historic qualities, a number of which are formally recognised via international, national, or local level designations. Within the existing policy hierarchy, sites or

features designated at a national or international level receive statutory protection via legislation. Others designated at a more local level carry less policy weight in decision-making, although the Authorities recognise that such features are an important part of the local environment and should be safeguarded.

- 7.4 Policy RD1 sets out the Plan's policy in respect of proposed minerals and waste development and the natural and historic environment. This policy is based on the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The National Planning Policy Framework also details information which applicants are expected to provide and contains guidance on how planning applications that affect environmental and historic sites should be determined in certain circumstances. Applicants are expected to provide the information as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Authorities will follow the policy set out when determining planning applications.

Policy RD1: Environment and Environmental Enhancement

To conserve and enhance the built and natural environment development should:

- a) protect and enhance designated sites, areas and features of environmental, landscape and historic importance, as listed in Appendix C;
- b) provide measurable net gain in biodiversity and enhancement of natural capital, as guided by the Sussex Nature Recovery Network and any future Local Nature Recovery Strategy, following the mitigation hierarchy with gain provided on site where possible, or at the best strategic location for nature's recovery; and
- c) maximise opportunities for functional habitat creation including inter-connectivity between habitats within and outside the site.

Permission will not be granted where:

- x) a site or area of national importance (such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest) is adversely affected (either individually or in combination with other developments). The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- y) a site or area of international importance is adversely affected, or an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project may adversely affect the integrity of the site or area, unless there are no alternative solutions and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development; or
- z) the development would have a significant adverse impact on such a site, area or feature as referred to in a) above.

- 7.5 Proposals are expected to assess the topics raised under this Policy within an Environmental Statement, particularly if there are known features in the vicinity of the application site. The level

of biodiversity net-gain to be provided using the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs metric is set at a minimum of 10% in Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, which came into effect during 2023. Net gain is interpreted as per the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Applicants should seek to secure a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity wherever possible, while maximising opportunities for functional habitat creation including inter-connectivity between habitats within and outside the site. Any proposals for net gain in biodiversity to be achieved should be proportionate to the proposed development and its location in relation to the Nature Recovery Network. Applicants are expected to follow the latest biodiversity net-gain best practice when addressing this policy.

- 7.6 The importance placed on the biodiversity within soils and its potential to store carbon has significantly increased in the last few years. Both waste and minerals development can result in a large amount of soil disturbance. The Environmental Statement accompanying such proposals should therefore include details of how soil disturbance is to be minimised. Best practice examples are set out in the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs publication ‘Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites’, and the Institute of Quarrying’s [Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings](#). Natural England currently recommends the adoption of the “Bed/Strip by Strip” methods (as described by Sheets A-D of the Guide), to minimise damage to soil structure and achieve high standards of restoration.
- 7.7 A list of different types of designated sites, priority, legally protected and notable species & habitats, (including irreplaceable habitats) are included in Appendix C. To assist in identifying where there may be potential impacts on Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Areas of Conservation, Natural England have published Impact Risk Zones on the magic.defra.gov.uk website. Applicants are advised to review the Impact Risk Zones and may wish to consider pre-application advice from Natural England. Where there is evidence that identifies an un-designated environmental or historic site, area or feature as important, these are considered in the same way as designated sites of similar characteristics, following best practice guidance in relation to species.
- 7.8 A functional habitat is defined as habitat which is capable of supporting the relevant species and populations, biodiversity, and ecosystem processes over time, including its role in the wider landscape and habitat network. Considerations include, but are not limited to, scale, connectivity, physical characteristics such as soils, geology and hydrology, and pressures or barriers such as disturbance. For example, a development could propose the creation of a wildlife corridor to connect two existing habitats, providing a commuting corridor for bats. To demonstrate the habitat will be functional for this purpose, proposals should include details on links with the wider habitat network, scale and structure of the wildlife corridor, appropriate species planting, adequate distances from disturbance such as noise and light pollution and demonstrate how the habitat will serve certain functions for a specific species.
- 7.9 When assessing significance, the appropriate tests as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), where relevant, should be applied. At the time of publication, this is

paragraphs 182, 186, 187 (natural environment), 200 and 203-211 (heritage assets) of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023).

- 7.10 In the cases where proposed development may affect the integrity of sites or areas that are subject to the Habitat Regulations and Appropriate Assessment, the presumption is that development should not be permitted. This follows the broad approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and the Habitats Directive and will be appropriate for the vast majority of proposed developments. The Habitats Regulations do make an exception in instances where, subject to a number of strict requirements, there are clear imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development. When considering the proposal due weight will be given to the approach the applicant has taken to follow the Habitats Regulations, and the reasons of overriding public interest that are put forward.
- 7.11 Where appropriate, the Authorities will include planning conditions that provide for notification, evaluation and (if confirmed) recording of important natural or archaeological features that may be encountered and, where relevant, the retrieval of finds and placing in recognised national collections. Agreements for restoration, after-care and after-use will be flexible to allow for active conservation of any interest, as they are discovered, throughout the life of the planning permission.

8. Implementation and Monitoring

How the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is amended

The implementation and monitoring table in section 7 of the Waste and Minerals Plan (pages 120-137) is updated. Entries for policies WMP4, WMP7a, WMP7b, WMP11, WMP14, WMP15 and WMP27 would be deleted and replaced with the table below.

Introduction

8.1 Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the policies in the Plan is important to establish whether they are being successful in achieving their aims. Monitoring also allows corrective action to be taken if the aims of the Plan are not being met. Performance of the policies is currently and will continue to be evaluated yearly and reported via the Local Aggregates Assessment and Annual Monitoring Report.

8.2 In this table ESCC means East Sussex County Council, BHCC means Brighton & Hove City Council, and SDNPA means South Downs National Park Authority.

Policy	Delivery Body/Mechanism	Key Delivery Partners	Delivery Target (how much, when, where)	Delivery Indicator	Trigger	Action
RW1 - Sustainable Locations for Waste Development	ESCC, BHCC, SDNPA Strategic waste facilities developed in the most sustainable locations.	Waste industry Minerals industry	Strategic facilities located consistent with the approach identified in the Plan.	Locations of waste facilities consistent with policy.	Pattern of regular approval of developments not in conformity with Policy RW1.	Review of policy approach to locating new waste facilities as part of the review of the Plan.
WMP4	ESCC , BHCC, SDNPA Identification of locations for mineral infrastructure, processing of secondary minerals, and for recycling of mineral resources.	Minerals industry Environment Agency Landowners Port Authorities	A proportional increase in use of secondary or recycled materials in relation to total minerals used. Sufficient primary and secondary aggregates	Data about minerals produced in the Plan Area or imported into the Plan Area. Data about construction and demolition waste	A sustained decrease in the proportion of secondary and recycled aggregates used in the Plan Area.	Review of evidence to consider why the use of secondary and recycled aggregates is declining to inform the review of the Plan.

			provided to the Plan Area over plan period.	being recycled at permitted waste sites.	Duty to Cooperate discussions and/or survey data indicating a decline in available supply from outside the Plan Area	Review strategic policy approach to minerals provision as part of the review of the Plan to take into account reduced available supply of secondary and recycled aggregates.
RM0 Sustainable Use of Aggregates	ESCC, BHCC, SDNPA, Change in construction practices	District/Borough Councils Development Industry	Sustainable use of aggregates being a considered as a design consideration in the design of all developments.	Policy Citation Consideration of aggregate usage in design in random sample review of Design and Access Statement / Planning Statements. Demonstrable reduction in aggregate use.	Sustainable use of aggregates not being a design consideration in the majority of developments sampled.	Review development management approach to policy implementation.
RM1 Provision of Aggregates	ESCC, BHCC, SDNPA Importation of aggregates by sea, rail, and road. Provision of recycled and secondary aggregates for use in the Plan Area	Minerals industry CDEW industry Environment Agency Landowners Port Authorities MMO	Sufficient primary and recycled/secondary aggregates provided to the Plan Area over plan period.	Data on imports of aggregates to the Plan Area Sales of aggregates in the Plan area.	See WMP4 above	See WMP4 above

		Crown Estate Mineral Planning Authorities		Data about C&D waste being recycled at permitted waste sites. Aggregate monitoring survey data.		
RM2 - Provision for an additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm	Policy RM2 is monitored under the arrangements for WMP13 Provision of Clay.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM3 - Safeguarding Mineral Resources and Prior Extraction of Minerals Resources	ESCC, BHCC, SDNPA Safeguarding of land-won resources and identifying consultation areas. Development industry to undertake prior extraction of minerals where feasible. Review Minerals Resource Assessments.	District/Borough councils. Minerals industry Environment Agency Natural England Development industry Mineral Planning Authorities	No viable resources sterilised	Number of applications for built development on safeguarded or consultation areas. Tonnage figures of prior extracted resources. Review of Minerals Resource Assessments and number of applications for prior extraction proposals	Viable resources sterilised by alternative development.	Review reasons for viable resources not being extracted to inform an assessment of the need to review the policy approach.
RM5 - Safeguarding Minerals Infrastructure	ESCC & BHCC Identify and safeguard sites and capacities at wharves and railheads.	District/Borough councils and regeneration area partners Port Authorities Minerals industry	No net loss of wharf/rail capacity in the Plan Area.	Annual monitoring of wharf status (active or redundant) and existing rail sidings/tracks. Number of applications for built development on	Net loss of minerals wharf/rail capacity in the Plan Area	Consider options for increasing wharf/rail capacity in the Plan Area through a review of the plan.

	Review Minerals Infrastructure Assessments.	Waste industry Network Rail Mineral Planning Authorities		safeguarded wharves/rail sidings. Review of Minerals Resource Assessments and number of applications for prior extraction proposals		
RM6 -Safeguarding Facilities for Concrete Batching	ESCC, BHCC, SDNPA Industry to address environmental protection in proposals.	Waste/minerals industry Environment Agency Natural England Mineral Planning Authorities	No net loss of concrete batching facilities. Proposals should be compatible with batching plants.	Ongoing monitoring of conditions on waste developments.	Net loss of concrete batching facilities	Review policy approach to safeguarding concrete batching facilities as part of the review of the Plan.
RD1 - Environment and Environmental Enhancement	ESCC, BHCC, SDNPA Industry to address environmental protection in proposals.	Waste/minerals industry Environment Agency Natural England Sussex Local Nature Partnership	Proposals should avoid and minimise environmental impacts and mitigate where necessary. Overall maintenance and enhancement, of environmental assets in the Plan Area. A net gain in biodiversity is delivered across the Plan Area.	Ongoing monitoring of conditions on waste developments. Enforcement cases or complaints about environmental assets related to waste/minerals developments. Percentage of relevant proposals resulting in biodiversity net gain.	Target not met in consecutive years.	Review development management approach to policy implementation.

				<p>Percentage of biodiversity net gain secured.</p> <p>Number and type of biodiversity units lost or gained.</p> <p>Location of secured biodiversity net gain (on-site or off-site).</p> <p>Number of proposals considered to have an adverse impact on designated sites (see policy for definition of designated sites).</p>		
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Appendix A: Summary of Amendments

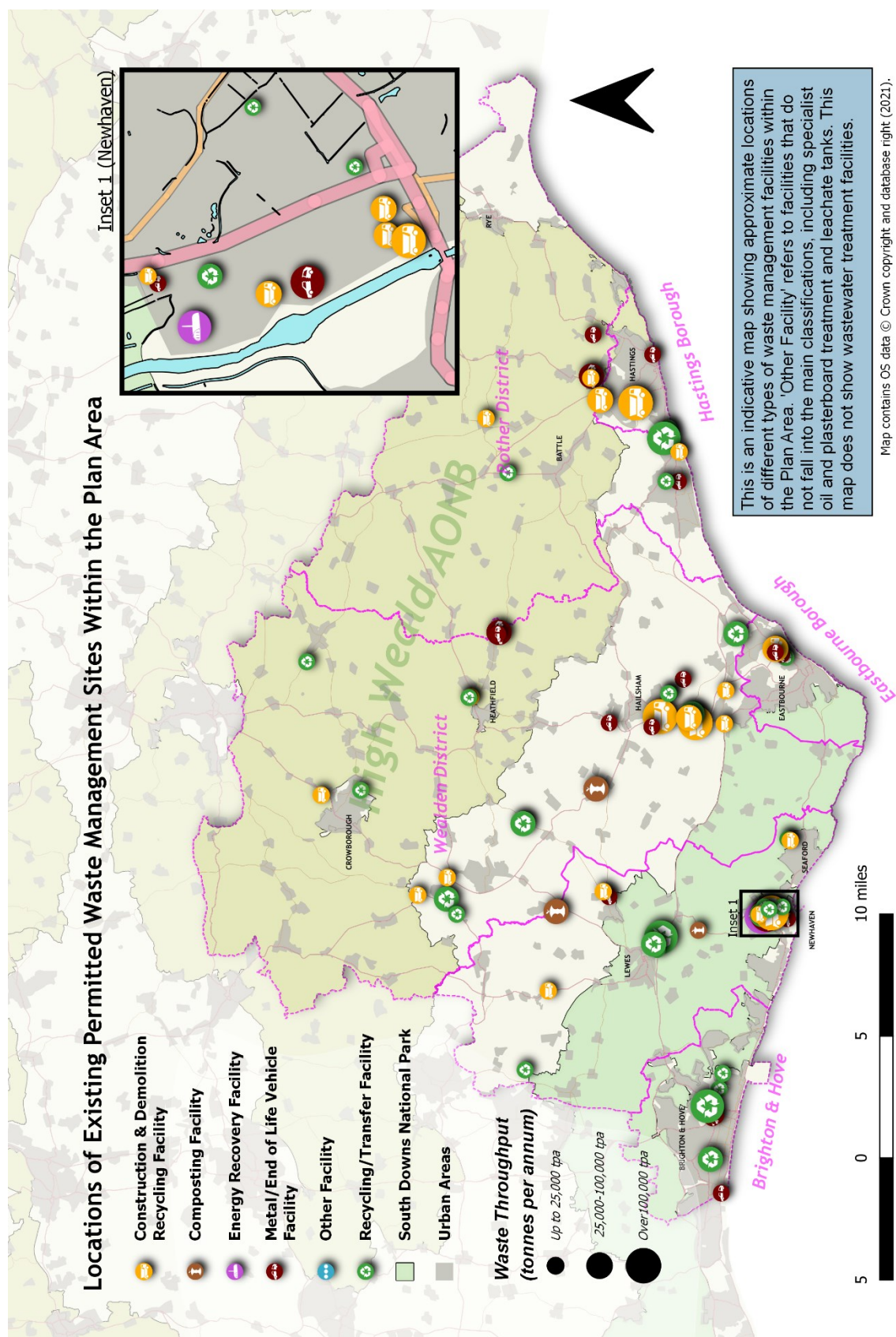
Document - Section [Page numbers]	Proposed Amendment(s)	Reason(s) for Review
WMP - Overarching Strategy: Local Strategy Statement - Approach to Key 'Larger than Local' Matters [p25-32]	The section Local Strategy Statement - Approach to Key 'Larger than Local' Matters is deleted.	Factual update.
WMP Minerals and Waste Development in the South Downs National Park (WMP2)	Replaced by RPD - Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (RV1) [p13-17]	Clarification of policy and factual update.
WMP - Sustainable Locations for Waste Development (WMP7a, 7b) [p59-62]	Replaced by RPD - Sustainable Locations for Waste Development Policy (RW1) [p17-21]	To clarify an ambiguity in the existing policy requirements.
N/A	New Policy RPD - Sustainable Use of Aggregates (RM0) [p21-23]	New policy introduced to ensure sustainable use of aggregate.
WMP - Provision of Aggregates (WMP11) [p78-81]	Replaced by RPD - Provision of Aggregates (RM1) [p23-30]	To reassess the approach to aggregates provision in the context of depleting permitted land-won reserves in the Plan Area. Following consideration of reasonable alternatives, the new approach does not allocate any additional sites, but will rely on imported material and recycled aggregate.
WMP - Provision of Clay (WMP13) [p84-85]	Additional Policy added RPD - Provision for additional extraction area at Aldershaw Farm (RM2) [p31-33]	To support area of additional clay extraction area for clay extraction at the existing Aldershaw Quarry in response to a submission to the 'call for sites'.
WMSP - Section 4 Providing for Minerals paragraphs 4.1 to 4.6 [p24]	WMSP - Section 4 Providing for Minerals paragraphs 4.1 to 4.6 [p24] are deleted.	Factual update to reflect proposed amendments.
WMP - Safeguarding Minerals Resources (WMP14) [p86-88]	Replaced by RPD - Safeguarding Minerals Resources (RM3) [p33-41]	To consolidate the policy requirements into a single policy for added clarity.

WMSP - Safeguarding Minerals Resources (paragraphs 4.1-4.23) and Policy SP8 Minerals Safeguarding Areas for land won minerals resources within the Plan Area [p24-25]		New policy requirement to require extraction of mineral resources prior to alternative development proposals commencing within Minerals Safeguarding Areas in some circumstances
WMP - Safeguarding Railheads and Wharves (WMP15) [p89-90] WMSP - Safeguarding Wharves, Railheads and Concrete Batching: Wharves and Railheads (paragraphs 4.12-4.19) and Policy SP9 Safeguarding wharves and railheads within the Plan Area, Sand [p26-27]	Replaced by RPD - Safeguarding Wharves and Railheads (RM5) [p41-43]	To incorporate reference to the 'agent of change' principle introduced in the revised National Planning Policy Framework
WMSP - Safeguarding Wharves, Railheads and Concrete Batching: Concrete Batching Plants (paragraphs 4.20-4.21) and Policy SP10 Safeguarding facilities for concrete batching, coated minerals manufacture and other concrete products within the Plan Area	Safeguarding other minerals plant and infrastructure (RM6) [p44-45]	To remove the list of safeguarded facilities from the policy wording and instead illustrate on the Policies Map, to enable easier updating.
WMSP - Minerals Consultation Areas (paragraphs 4.22-4.23) and Policy SP11 Minerals Consultation Areas [p28-29]	Replaced by RPD - Minerals Consultation Areas (RM7) [p45-46]	To revise the extents of Mineral Consultation Areas to take into account the constraints of each site.
WMP - Environment and Environmental Enhancement (WMP27) [p113-116]	Replaced by RPD - Environment and Environmental Enhancement (RD1) [p47-51]	1. To add a requirement for a net gain in biodiversity. 2. To update the policy requirements to take into account the judgement in Wealden District Council v. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority [2017]

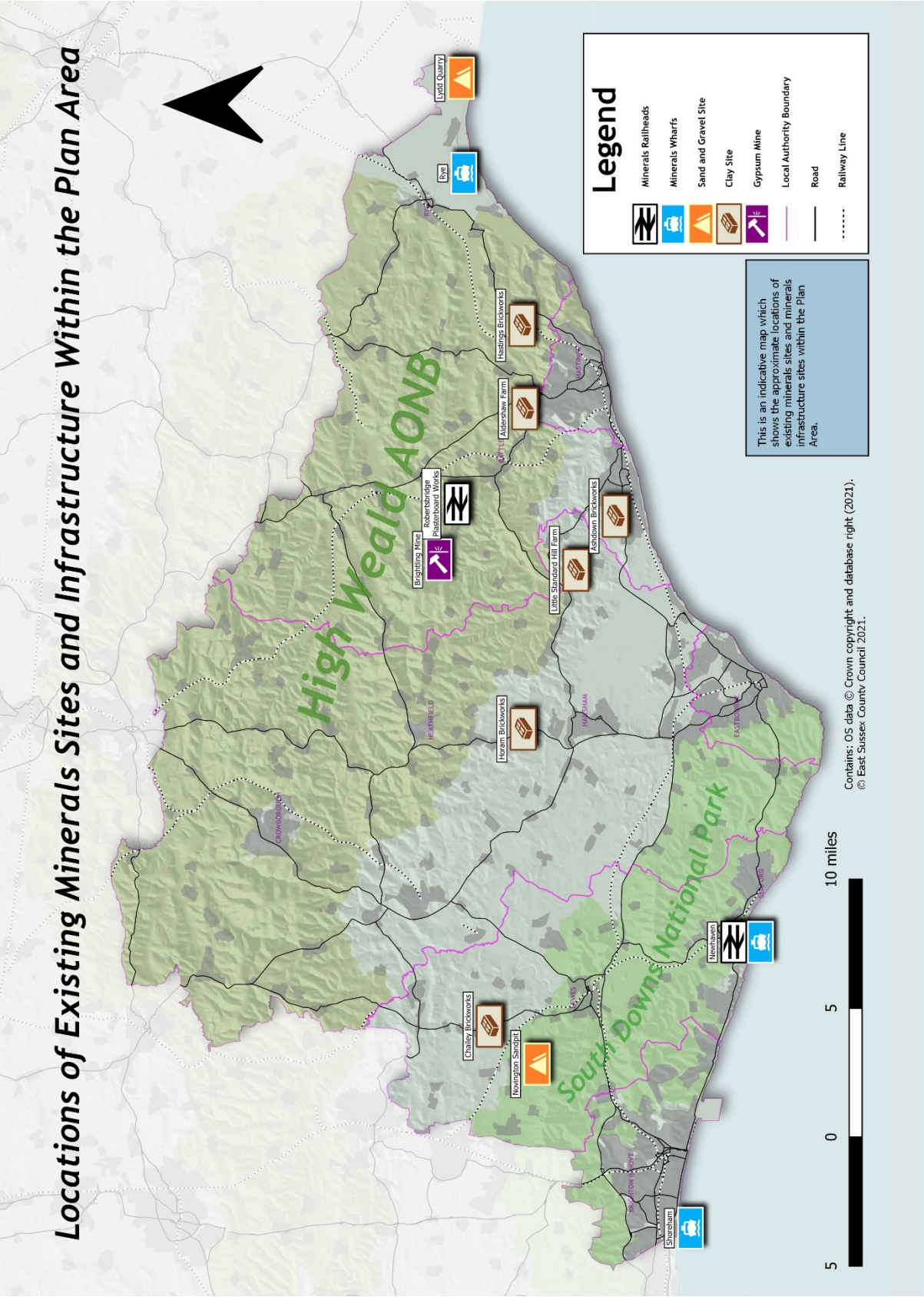
		<p>3. Factual update to incorporate reference to soils conservation</p> <p>4. Additional changes between 2020 and 2021 following consultation.</p>
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Appendix B: Maps

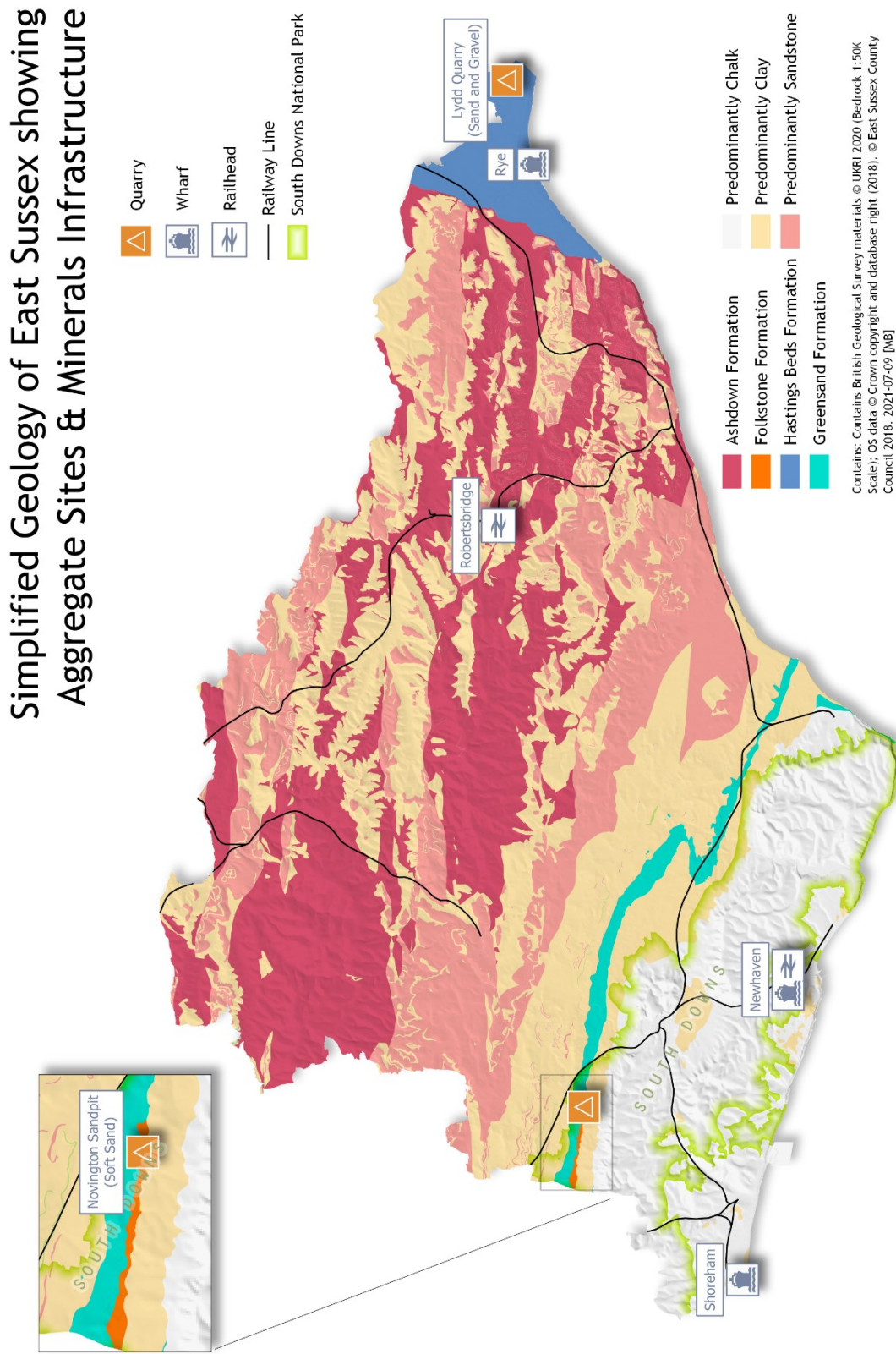
Appendix B.1 Location of Waste Management Facilities Map



Appendix B.2 Minerals Sites and Infrastructure Map



Appendix B.3 Simplified Geology Map



Appendix C: List of Designated Sites, Areas and Features (RD1)

Historic

- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Registered Battlefields
- Designated Wreck Sites
- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas

Environmental

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- South Downs National Park
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Special Protection Areas
- Ramsar Site
- National Nature Reserves
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Ancient Woodlands
- Marine Conservation Zones
- High Quality Agricultural Land
- [*UK BAP Priority Habitats \(JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation\)*](#)
- The species and habitats of [*Section 41 Species*](#) (naturalengland.org.uk)
- Local Nature Reserves
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Biodiversity Net-Gain Sites

Landscape

- [*East Sussex Landscape Character Areas*](#)

Appendix D: Glossary

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) - a yearly report produced by the Authorities which monitors the effectiveness of the Local Plan and its policies.

Area of Focus - broad locations that are considered suitable, in principle, for the development of waste recycling and recovery facilities as defined in paragraph 5.7 of this document.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) - area with a statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Call for Evidence and Sites (CfES) - a public consultation event where a council or authority asks for landowners, developers or any other interested parties to submit a site to be considered for inclusion in a Local Plan.

Commercial and Industrial Waste (C&I) - waste produced by business and commerce, which includes waste from restaurants, offices, retail and wholesale businesses, and manufacturing industries.

Construction, Demolition and Excavation waste (CDEW) - Waste arising from the construction and demolition of buildings and infrastructure. Materials arising in each of the three streams (i.e. Construction; Demolition; Excavation) are substantially different: construction waste being composed of mixed non inert materials e.g. timber off cuts, plasterboard, metal banding, plastic packaging; demolition waste being primarily hard materials with some non inert content e.g. bricks, mortar, reinforced concrete; and excavation waste being almost solely soft inert material e.g. soil and stones.

Energy Recovery - covers a number of established and emerging technologies, though most energy recovery is through incineration technologies. Many wastes are combustible, with relatively high calorific values - this energy can be recovered through processes such as incineration with electricity generation, gasification or pyrolysis.

Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) - a burnt residue produced as a by-product of burning of waste at high temperatures under controlled conditions.

Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) - a yearly monitoring report required by the NPPF in which the Minerals Planning Authority forecast and assess the aggregates produced, imported and used within the Plan Area.

Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) - formally known as Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), is waste that is collected by a waste collection authority. The majority is household waste, but LACW waste also includes waste from municipal parks and gardens, beach cleansing, cleared fly-tipped materials and some commercial waste.

Marine Dredged Aggregates (MDA) - aggregates sourced by dredging from the sea bed.

Marine-Borne Material - minerals including aggregates transported and imported by sea, which may be either dredged from the sea bed or transported from other areas.

Materials Recovery Facility - facility which receives and sorts recyclable materials for processing.

Mineral Consultation Areas - areas of where district and borough planning authorities should notify the County Council if applications for development come forward. This should prevent mineral resource being lost ('sterilised') or minerals infrastructure being adversely affected.

Minerals Infrastructure - sites and facilities required for the landing, importation, storing, handling, sorting, processing and transportation of both land-won and marine-borne minerals.

Minerals Infrastructure Assessment - a document to assess whether the proposed development is likely to have an adverse effect on the infrastructure facility including its capacity. For further information see Minerals Product Association / Planning Officers Society guidance.

Minerals Resource Assessment - an assessment to provide sufficient information to enable the Minerals Planning Authority and Local Planning Authority to consider the potential effect of non-exempt development in MSAs/MCAs on safeguarded minerals resources, and the viability of prior extraction of mineral ahead or in conjunction with the non-mineral development. For further information see Minerals Product Association / Planning Officers Society guidance.

Mineral Safeguarding Areas - areas of known mineral resource that are of local or national importance (such as building stones) to warrant protection for the future.

Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) - the planning authority responsible for planning control of minerals development.

Mitigation - actions to prevent, avoid, or minimise the actual or potential adverse affects of a development, plan, or policy.

Non-inert Waste - Waste that is potentially biodegradable or may undergo any significant physical, chemical or biological change when deposited at a landfill site. Sometimes referred to as 'non-hazardous waste'.

Plan Area - The geographical area covered by this Plan. This encompasses the historic County of East Sussex, i.e. East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and the area of the South Downs National Park within East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Primary Aggregates - naturally-occurring mineral deposits that are used for the first time.

Recovery - 'Recovery' refers to waste treatment processes such as anaerobic digestion, energy recovery via direct combustion, gasification, pyrolysis or other technologies. These processes can recover value from waste, for instance by recovering energy or compost, in addition they can reduce the mass of the waste and stabilise it prior to disposal. The definition of recovery set out in the EU Waste Framework Directive applies which states: 'recovery' means any operation the

principal result of which is waste serving a useful purpose by replacing other materials which would otherwise have been used to fulfil a particular function, or waste being prepared to fulfil that function, in the plant or in the wider economy."

Recycled Aggregates - are derived from reprocessing waste arisings from construction and demolition activities (concrete, bricks, tiles), highway maintenance (asphalt planings), excavation and utility operations. Examples include recycled concrete from construction and demolition waste material, spent rail ballast, and recycled asphalt.

Recycling - the processing of waste materials into new products to prevent waste of potentially useful resources. This activity can include the physical sorting of waste which involves separating out certain materials from mixed waste.

Restoration - methods by which the land is returned to a condition suitable for an agreed after-use following the completion of waste or minerals operations.

Secondary Aggregates - recycled material that can be used in place of primary aggregates. Usually a by-product of other industrial processes. Examples include blast furnace slag, steel slag, pulverised-fuel ash (PFA), incinerator bottom ash, furnace bottom ash, recycled glass, slate aggregate, china clay sand, colliery spoil.

Sustainability Appraisal - a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a sustainability appraisal to be undertaken for all development plan documents.

Sustainable Development - in the broadest sense, sustainable development is about ensuring well-being and quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come, by meeting social and environmental as well as economic needs.

Transfer Facility - facility where waste is bulked up before being transported to another facility for further processing.

Waste and Minerals Local Plan (WMLP) - term used to describe the suite of Plan Documents and other items prepared by the Authorities, that outline the planning strategy for waste and minerals for the Plan Area.

Waste and Minerals Plan (WMP) - the plan that sets out the long-term spatial vision for the area and the strategic policies to deliver that vision.

Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (WMSP) - the plan that details specific sites where waste and minerals development is preferred.

Appendix E: Abbreviations

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CDEW	Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste
CfES	Call for Evidence and Sites
C&I	Commercial & Industrial Waste
DtC	Duty to Cooperate
DSG	Desulphogypsum
LAA	Local Aggregate Assessment
LACW	Local Authority Collected Waste
MCA	Mineral Consultation Area
MDA	Marine Dredged Aggregate
MIA	Minerals Infrastructure Assessment
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MPA	Minerals Planning Authority
MRA	Minerals Resource Assessment
MSA	Mineral Safeguarding Area
mt	Million tonnes
mtpa	Million tonnes per annum
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
RPD	Revised Policies Document
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SDNP	South Downs National Park
SDNPA	South Downs National Park Authority

SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WMP	Waste and Minerals Plan
WMLP	Waste and Minerals Local Plan
WMSP	Waste and Minerals Site Plan

Appendix F: References

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Appendix G: Copyright Notices

Adopted:

Published: July 2024

Version: 2024-07-0000

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Acronyms

East Sussex County Council: ESCC

South Downs National Park Authority: SDNPA

Brighton & Hove City Council: BHCC

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Acknowledgements / Data sources:

Base Map & Roads, Ordnance Survey, 2019. Archaeological Notification Areas, ESCC, 2019. Conservation Areas, Lewes District Council, Wealden District Council, Rother District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, Hastings Borough Council, BHCC, 2019. Listed Buildings, Historic England, 2019. Registered Battlefields, Historic England, 2019. Scheduled Monuments, Historic England, 2019.

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Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), Natural England, 2019. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Natural England, 2019. Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Natural England, 2019. Special Protection Area (SPA), Natural England, 2019.

Other information sourced internally from East Sussex County Council, the South Downs National Park Authority, and Brighton & Hove City Council and through submissions during the consultation process.

All data used in this document is correct up until 21 April 2023.

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East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove
Waste and Minerals Local Plan

Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review

**Sustainability Appraisal
Main Modifications Addendum**

August 2023

Preamble & Copyright

Version: 27
Date: 25/08/2023

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is an addendum to the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan: Revised Policies Document Sustainability Appraisal (August 2021).
- 1.2 The East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Revised Policies Document (RPD) is a draft local plan document that sets out the Authorities proposals to amend the WMP and WMSP by changing the land use strategy in relation to aggregate provision and making a number of other alterations to those plans.
- 1.3 The Sustainability Appraisal is based on, and updates previous sustainability assessments undertaken during the preparation of the Waste and Minerals Plan (WMP) and Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (WMSP). Using the updated framework, it contains an assessment of the RPD and makes recommendations which the Authorities preparing the RPD can consider during its preparation.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this Sustainability Appraisal, “the Plan” refers to the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (WMP), East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (WMSP) and East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Revised Policies (RPD) in combination, also known as the Waste and Minerals Local Plan (WMLP), whilst the RPD or revised policies refers to the proposed amendments.

2. Context for Addendum - Proposed Main Modifications

- 2.1 Since the publication of the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan: Revised Policies Document Sustainability Appraisal in August 2021, East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority, which are collectively known as the Authorities, held a public consultation on the legal compliance and soundness of the Draft Revised Policies, after which the RPD and its supporting documents were submitted to Government. This then started the current Public Examination being undertaken by independent Government Inspectors.
- 2.2 During the Public Examination, the Authorities have proposed several modifications to the RPD to address some of the matters raised in the consultation and Public Examination. Other modifications have also been proposed to fix factual, typographic, and other minor errors.

- 2.3 This addendum consists of two main parts, the first is an assessment of whether the proposed modifications alter the conclusions of the SA, and if so a reassessment of the relevant sections of the SA forms the second part of this addendum. It will focus on those modifications considered to be “main modifications”, i.e., those that have the potential to make the biggest difference, rather than the more minor corrections.
- 2.4 As these modifications are refined policies based on previously selected options as set out in the SA, the options considered, and their assessments do not require update at this time.
- 2.5 Since the publication of the Sustainability Appraisal in August 2021 the legislative, policy, guidance context is broadly unchanged. The Government is currently seeking to introduce proposals to reform the planning system through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework; and are also seeking to introduce a mandatory 10% gain in biodiversity requirement for most future development. In the Plan Area, no new environmental sites of national or international importance have been designated, nor have any existing designations been altered since the publication of the Sustainability Appraisal. The issues present in the Plan Area identified in the Sustainability Appraisal remain unchanged. There are, therefore, no updates to other sections of the Sustainability Appraisal in this addendum.

3. Criteria for deciding if reassessment is required.

- 3.1 To assess whether a re-assessment of a policy and its supporting text is required, the following process is used:
- 3.2 First, the changes proposed are identified. Of the changes identified, those that are minor in nature, such as minor typographical corrections, are discounted.
- 3.3 Consideration is then given as to if a reassessment is required, in doing so, the following questions are considered:
- Are the proposed changes likely to alter the outcome of the assessment of any of the criteria against which the policy was assessed?
 - If so, would the change in outcome result in a significant change? i.e., would a criterion previously assessed to be not applicable, now be relevant, or where an assessment took place, a significant change to the impact or significance of that effect?
 - Additionally, would the proposed change result in additional areas or localities being affected and / or mitigation being recommended?

- 3.4 If it is identified that the answer to any of the above questions is yes, then a reassessment of that policy and its supporting text is likely to be appropriate.

4. Assessment of Proposed Modifications

4.1 The table below sets out the key changes and an assessment of whether reassessment is required.

Section [Main Mod No.]	Key Alterations Proposed Following Public Hearings	Is Sustainability Appraisal reassessment required?
1. Introduction & 2. Summary of Policy Review [MM01]	Change of Plan Period to match Waste and Minerals Plan Vision, i.e., to the year 2030.	No - Alteration of plan timescale, reducing it from 15 to 11 years, does not alter the principle and contents of the policies being assessed within the Sustainability Appraisal.
1. Introduction & 2. Summary of Policy Review [MM01]	New paragraphs added to explain and justify the modified plan period to 2030.	No - The additional supporting text provides the reader with an explanation for the plan period change and justifies the change.
2. Summary of Policy Review [MM01]	Additional column is added to the summary of policy review table at section 2 to provide further information on whether policy review is likely to have an impact on other policies in the WMLP.	No - This modification provides clarity on how revised policies will affect other policies in the WMLP. The proposed modification will not have an overall effect on the conclusion of the SA.
4. Overarching Strategy - Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs (RV1) [MM02]	Modifications to policy to explain how development should contribute to the outcomes, objectives and priorities of the relevant Management Plan of the South Downs National Park or High Weald AONB and modifications to the supporting text reducing the use of acronyms in the document.	No - Alterations do not materially affect the policy's aims and likely outcomes and the removal of acronyms result in further clarity of the policies phrasing.

4. Overarching Strategy - Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs (RV1) [MM02]	Additional policy wording added clarify acronyms and provide clarification of what constitutes a designated area.	No - Minor modifications to policy wording to ensure policy is clear, this does not have an effect on the intention of the policies or the outcome when the policy is applied. Further reassessment is not required.
4. Overarching Strategy - Minerals and Waste Development affecting the South Downs (RV1) [MM02]	Modifications to two footnotes to policy RV1 To make clear how major development is determined in relation to development in the protected landscapes and to ensure consistency in what is deemed a small-scale waste facility.	No - The modifications proposed to the footnotes will ensure the policy can be applied consistently by the user, the modifications do not change the outcome expected when the policy is applied, and, therefore, there is no need for re-assessment.
5. Providing for Waste (RW1) [MM03]	<p>Clarification of supporting text in introduction to specify the types of application that the policy relates to.</p> <p>Additional supporting text added summarising relevant sections of the NPPF that informed the policy.</p> <p>Additional supporting text added providing context in relation to net self-sufficiency, the South East Waste Planning Authority Group Statement of Common Ground, waste management provision within the WMLP and Policy WMP5.</p> <p>Additional supporting text justifying the chosen Area of Focus in policy.</p> <p>Added cross reference to WMP19 Co-location of Complementary Facilities.</p>	No - Clarification provides helpful guidance to reader but does not alter scope of the policy's applicability. Added supporting text provides context and justification but does not alter the effect of the policy.
6. Providing for Minerals - Sustainable	Modifications to policy removing reference to "innovative" development and altering text to	No - Removing the word 'Innovative' and its replacement with "maximise the sustainable use of aggregates" does not impact upon the aims and

use of Aggregates (RM0) [MM04]	<p>read “maximise the sustainable use of aggregates” and aligning it with existing policy WMP3a.</p> <p>Clarification in policy in respect of who will be supported during local plan preparation.</p> <p>Deletion of supporting text in 6.6; paragraph 6.7 moved into policy for clarity.</p>	<p>objectives of the policy in terms of encouraging the sustainable use of aggregates. Other clarifications will not affect assessed likely effects of policy. The alterations are considered to not impact upon the assessment within the Sustainability Appraisal.</p>
6. Providing for Minerals - Provision of Aggregates for the Plan Area (RM1) [MM05]	<p>Additional supporting text providing context and justification in relation to the provision of aggregates.</p> <p>Additional supporting text addressing the determination land-won aggregate development.</p> <p>Review of quantity of aggregate provision stated within policy.</p> <p>New policy clause added (3) which now includes support for proposals for land won aggregate extraction.</p>	<p>Yes - The addition of a new policy clause (3) which allows for land won extraction will affect the intention of Policy RM1 and the potential outcomes when the policy is applied. Clause 3 allows for the support of new land-won aggregate extraction where any proposal complies with other relevant policies within the Development Plan and does not result in unacceptable adverse impacts.</p>
6. Providing for Minerals - Provision for an additional extraction area at Alder-shaw Farm (RM2) [MM06]	<p>Clarification of the requirements within the policy including the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment and safeguarding of Beauport Park Local Wildlife Site.</p> <p>Additional supporting text providing guidance on required Transport Assessment and Site Management Plan for management of impacts arising from vehicle movements.</p>	<p>No - The amendments to the policy do not materially impact on either the likely outcome of the policy or the existing assessment of the policy within this Sustainability Appraisal.</p>

6. Providing for Minerals - Introduction to Minerals Safeguarding [MM07]	Insertion of new introduction to minerals safeguarding.	No - This additional introductory text is considered to be a <i>de minimis</i> alteration (minimal alteration) and to have no impact on the Sustainability Appraisal.
6. Providing for Minerals - Safeguarding Mineral Resources (RM3) & Prior Extraction of Mineral Resources (RM4) [MM08]	<p>Merging of Policies RM3 and RM4 into single Policy.</p> <p>Alteration to policy text in relation to when development will be acceptable. Remove reference to “satisfaction of MPA” and “operation”.</p> <p>Clarified definition of “sites” in policy.</p> <p>Additional supporting text detailing the approach in plan to extent of mineral safeguarding areas for sharp sand, and justification for departing from national policy, where applicable. Include detail of approach as to what criteria and intelligence is required when safeguarding.</p> <p>Additional supporting text explaining application of policy in respect of Mineral Resource Assessments and Prior Extraction.</p>	<p>Yes - By combining the two policies it is considered that the new joint policy will need to be reviewed to see if any material alterations to the Sustainability Appraisal will result.</p> <p>Policy RM3 now covers both Minerals Safeguarding Areas and non-sterilisation of mineral resources. There is alteration to wording relating to Minerals Safeguarding Areas which now says that areas are feasible rather than viable, this semantic change could lead to potentially more sites being safeguarded and therefore have a knock-on impact on the results of the previous Sustainability Appraisal. The policy although supporting further safeguarding, also permits development near Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it can be demonstrated in an Assessment that specific identified requirements are met.</p>
6. Providing for Minerals - Safeguarding Minerals Infrastructure (RM5) [MM09]	Consequential change as a result of MM07 and MM08 that removes the references to the Minerals Infrastructure Safeguarded Areas being periodically reviewed as required in policy text.	No - Change does not affect direction of policy and re-assessment unlikely to return different results.
6. Providing for Minerals - Safeguarding facilities for concrete	Introduction text clarified in relation to brickmaking plant / factory & plasterboard.	No - The proposed alterations are considered to not significantly change the direction of policy and consequently are assessed to be <i>de minimis</i> .

batching (RM6) [MM10]	Reference to Agent of Change added to policy and supporting text. Modification to remove specified facilities and reverting of policy wording to refer to “minerals infrastructure”. Modification to include manufacturing within RM6.	
6. Providing for Minerals - Minerals Consultation Areas (RM7) [MM11]	Additional supporting text providing context and justification in relation to extent of Mineral Consultation Areas. Policy text reworded for clarity; no material change to policy.	No - Policy direction is not changed and re-assessment unlikely to return different results.
7. Development Management Policies - Environment and Environmental Enhancement (RD1) [MM12]	Explanatory text now explicitly refers to the safeguarding of designated areas, local, national and international. Alterations to text of when permission will not be granted and addition of ‘functional habitat’ clause.	Yes - Changes proposed to clarify the handling of soils and definition of functional habitat. Clarification of when the benefits of development can outweigh protected designations added to policy schedule. These alterations could possibly lead to alterations to the outcomes determined in the Sustainability Appraisal.
8. Implementation and Monitoring [MM13]	No significant alterations however amendments to the wording of the original explanatory text and text within the Monitoring Tables.	No - Alterations proposed are very minor and considered to be a <i>de minimis</i> alteration and to have no impact on the Sustainability Appraisal.

5. Updated Assessments

5.1 Further to the assessment undertaken under section 3 of this document, the following assessments have been updated:

- 6. Providing for Minerals - Provision of Aggregates for the Plan Area (RM1) [MM05].
- 6. Providing for Minerals - Safeguarding Mineral Resources (RM3) & Prior Extraction of Mineral Resources (RM4) [MM08].
- 7. Development Management Policies - Environment and Environmental Enhancement (RD1) [MM12].

5.2 The re-assessments were undertaken using the same methodology as set out in Section 5 of the Sustainability Appraisal, (pages 44 - 53).

RM1: Provision of Aggregates

Policy RM1 revises Policies WMP11. The revised policy changes the direction of the strategy from the existing strategy which monitoring has indicated is unlikely to be achieved. The assessment below has been undertaken using that as the status-quo.

Change Log

SA Version	Note
Regulation 18 Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial assessment.
Regulation 19 Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment republished unchanged.
Proposed Main Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Modifications Re-assessment: Key change(s) - New clause (3) added to policy which allows for the support of new land-won aggregate extraction where any proposal complies with other relevant policies within the Development Plan and does not result in unacceptable adverse impacts. This is intended to address speculative applications; the plan does not include any new allocations.

Assessment

Objectives	Short	Medium	Long	Comments	Prob	Dir/Ind	Rev?
1. To Avoid negative effects and enhance positive effects on health.	+	+	+	<p>The provision of minerals indirectly improves human health by enabling the continued development of villages, towns and cities. The use of existing sites and promotion of sustainable transport modes will concentrate traffic movements around existing facilities. However, these would have been considered when permission was originally granted.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Urban Areas</u>.</p>	M	I	X
2. To protect the amenity of residents and neighbouring land uses.	+/-	+/-	+/-	<p>The use of existing sites and promotion of sustainable transport modes will concentrate traffic moments around existing facilities. This potentially will have a negative impact on the amenity of residents and neighbouring land uses but will reduce impacts in other areas.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Minerals Facilities - Areas near</u>.</p>	M	D	X
3. To improve equality and access to sustainable waste management.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			

4. To minimise waste generation and disposal to land.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
5. To ensure the sustainable use of local mineral resources.	+	+	+	<p>The Policy in general contributes positively to the sustainable use of minerals. The Plan supports aggregate provision from all sources: recycled, secondary, marine and land-won. Continued emphasis on existing minerals importation facilities will also indirectly support their safeguarding.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Minerals Facilities</u>.</p>	H	D	X
6. To maintain and improve water quality.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
7. To seek the protection of and sustainable use of water resources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
8. To reduce risk and impact of flooding.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
9. To limit the causes of and adapt to climate change.	+	+	+	<p>Policy supports the provision of recycled aggregates facilities, which will reduce the need for raw materials.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Sand and Gravel Resource</u>.</p>	H	D	X
10. To protect air quality and reduce air pollution.	+/-	+/-	+/-	<p>The use of existing sites and promotion of sustainable transport modes will concentrate traffic movements around existing facilities, which should have suitable accesses to the road network. This is likely to help minimise the effect on areas suffering from air pollution. Likewise, the emphasis on sustainable transport methods may also help. On balance, it is assessed that it is likely to have a minor positive effect.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Minerals Facilities - Areas near</u>, <u>Minerals Facilities - Connecting roads</u>, and <u>areas near connecting roads</u>, <u>Ports & Wharves - Areas near</u>, <u>Ports & Wharves - Connecting roads</u>, and <u>areas near connecting roads</u>, <u>AQMA Designated Areas</u>.</p>	M	I	X
11. To reduce adverse impacts of transporting waste and minerals on the environment.	+/-	+/-	+/-	Existing facilities will enable the continued import of material into the Plan Area. Existing HGV travel patterns are likely to alter as Lydd Quarry reaches the end of its permitted reserves proportionate to its supply. The Plan anticipates that the material provided at Lydd is likely to be	M	D	X

				<p>replaced by supply from the ports and railheads within the Plan Area (Shoreham, Newhaven, and Rye). The Policy supports local supply of minerals, in the event of a speculative proposal, where it meets the policies as set out in the Development Plan. The policy also generally encourages use of sustainable transport of minerals and indirectly supports safeguarding of existing facilities by enabling development within sites.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Minerals Facilities (in and near Plan Area) - Connecting roads, and areas near connecting roads, Mineral Resources (Unconstrained and Viable) - Areas near.</u></p>			
12. To conserve and enhance important soil functions and types.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
13. To protect, conserve and enhance East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's countryside and historic and built environment.	+	+	+	<p>The use of existing sites should reduce the number of required facilities to be provided elsewhere. Clause three of the policy requires that it meet the other policies within the Development Plan, several of which specifically exist to protect the historic & built environment. A broad number of locations across the plan area that could benefit include the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, South Downs National Park, historic environment, and its setting including listed buildings etc, and features of local historic or architectural interest. The policy also seeks to used existing and developed land.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Plan Area.</u></p>	M	I	X
14. To protect, conserve and enhance East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's biodiversity and geodiversity.	-	-	-	<p>The Plans seeks to use marine dredged aggregate to in part meet the needs of the Plan Area. Marine dredging may have negative effects on marine biodiversity and marine habitats where it occurs. Assessment and mitigation of this effect will have been subject of assessment by the Marine Management Organisation in preparation of its Marine Plans and marine dredging licensing regime.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Licensed & Identified Marine Areas for Aggregate Dredging (Outside of Plan Area).</u></p>	M	I	✓
15. To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
16. To contribute to the growth of a	++	++	++	The continued provision of minerals will help support the construction of housing and infrastructure.	H	D	X

sustainable and diversified economy				Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Plan Area</u> .			
17. To provide employment opportunities and develop and maintain a skilled workforce.	+	+	+	<p>The continued support of existing landing and import facilities, particularly in the Rye and Newhaven areas, has the potential to provide skills in the minerals industry in those areas.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Port of Newhaven</u>, <u>Port of Rye</u>.</p>	M	I	X

RM3: Safeguarding Minerals Resources

Policy RM3 revises Policies WMP14 and SP8. The alterations to the policy involve the removal of naming safeguarded sites, although these are still identified on the policies map, and removing a direct reference to prior extraction, which is now addressed through RM4. The identified mineral safeguarding areas (MSAs) have been altered through the extension of the MSA over the entire, albeit limited, soft-sand reserve and the removal of the Scotney Court and Scotney Court Extension and Broomhill, Lydd MSAs. In the case of the removal of sites near Lydd, justification relates to the minerals being already worked or there being no potential to work or develop non-minerals development owing to environmental protection designations on those areas. Policy SP8 also states: "The prior extraction of minerals should be considered by the MPA in relation to any non-minerals development". This will be replaced by Policy RM3 and the assessment below assumes Policies WMP14 and SP8 as the status-quo.

Change Log

SA Version	Note
Regulation 18 Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial assessment.
Regulation 19 Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment republished unchanged.
Proposed Main Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Policies RM3 and RM4 merged into an updated version of RM3. Assessment combined and updated. After review, assessment conclusions remain unchanged from assessment of RM3 and RM4.

Assessment

Objectives	Short	Medium	Long	Comments	Prob	Dir/Ind	Rev?
1. To Avoid negative effects and enhance positive effects on health.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			

2. To protect the amenity of residents and neighbouring land uses.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
3. To improve equality and access to sustainable waste management.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
4. To minimise waste generation and disposal to land.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
5. To ensure the sustainable use of local mineral resources.	+	+	+	The requirement for prior extraction will ensure that all safeguarded minerals are not sterilised by development unless it cannot be extracted practically or feasibly. Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Safeguarded Mineral Resources</u> .	?	D	X
6. To maintain and improve water quality.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
7. To seek the protection of and sustainable use of water resources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
8. To reduce risk and impact of flooding.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
9. To limit the causes of and adapt to climate change.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
10. To protect air quality and reduce air pollution.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
11. To reduce adverse impacts of transporting waste and minerals on the environment.	+	+	+	Promotion of prior extraction will support local minerals provision. The odds of extraction occurring depend on the extent of safeguarding and location of development. Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Plan Area</u> .	?	D	X
12. To conserve and enhance important soil functions and types.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			

13. To protect, conserve and enhance East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's countryside and historic and built environment.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
14. To protect, conserve and enhance East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's biodiversity and geodiversity.	•	•	•	An initial assessment of this policy indicated that the prior extraction policy could conflict with policy protecting geodiversity (WMP27/RD1). A recommendation was made to include <u>clarification of supporting text</u> to provide guidance as to which policy has priority should there be conflict. It is understood this has been incorporated in the Plan and this criterion has been reassessed as neutral on the basis that the policies in combination should enable the most sustainable decision to be taken when an application is being assessed.			
15. To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
16. To contribute to the growth of a sustainable and diversified economy	?	?	?	The extraction of minerals that would otherwise be sterilised will support the provision of minerals for construction demand. The policy may affect the viability of proposed developments, which could affect other policy requirements placed on any sites, for example, prior extraction may reduce the viability of providing affordable housing provision on site. Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Safeguarded Mineral Resources</u> .	?	D	X
17. To provide employment opportunities and develop and maintain a skilled workforce.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			

RD1: Environment and Environmental Enhancement

The majority of the proposed alterations are considered to not significantly change the direction of policy and have been assessed to be *de minimis*. However, to bring the policy in-line with current national policy, a specific reference to biodiversity net-gain has been added. Additionally, during the Examination into the Revised Policies additional text in relation to good practice relating to the use of soils and the introduction of a definition of "functional habitat" was added into the supporting text. As this policy has not been subject to SA/SEA at during the formation of the NPPF, and there have been changes since the last assessment, an additional assessment is required.

Change Log

SA Version	Note
Regulation 18 Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial assessment.
Regulation 19 Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wording of policy has been revised as per description in Plan. Policy assessment reviewed, no change in assessment outcomes.
Proposed Main Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated assessment arising from proposed Main Modifications involving the clarification of policy, and additional supporting text in relation to the definition of functional habitats and best practice for the use of soils.

Assessment

Objectives	Short	Me- dium	Long	Comments	Prob	Dir/Ind	Rev?
1. To Avoid negative effects and enhance positive effects on health.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
2. To protect the amenity of residents and neighbouring land uses.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
3. To improve equality and access to sustainable waste management.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
4. To minimise waste generation and disposal to land.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
5. To ensure the sustainable use of local mineral resources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
6. To maintain and improve water quality.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
7. To seek the protection of and sustainable use of water resources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			

8. To reduce risk and impact of flooding.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
9. To limit the causes of and adapt to climate change.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
10. To protect air quality and reduce air pollution.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
11. To reduce adverse impacts of transporting waste and minerals on the environment.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
12. To conserve and enhance important soil functions and types.	• / ?	• / ?	• / ?	The additional supporting text directing readers to best practice in relation to soils and mineral extraction ensures that the readers / users of the Plan have a clear understanding of current best practice. This is considered to be positive in its overall effect compared with the baseline. However, given the strategy contained within the plan, there will only be limited number of occasions where it could be applied, i.e., the minerals strategy does not allocate any new development, and waste management is mostly directed towards existing sites and land in employment uses. Consequently, the assessment of unknown / uncertain is a more accurate reflection at this time.			
13. To protect, conserve and enhance East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's countryside and historic and built environment.	•	•	•	The change in the text relating to historic sites is likely to result in more emphasis being placed on the tests within the NPPF. However, the net effect of this on historic sites has been assessed to be neutral.			
14. To protect, conserve and enhance East Sussex and Brighton & Hove's biodiversity and geodiversity.	• / ?	• / ?	• / ?	The additional supporting text defining "functional habitat" ensures that the readers / users of the Plan have a clear understanding of what "functional habitat" means. This reflects current best practice and definitions in use, and is considered to be positive in its overall effect compared with the baseline. However, given the strategy contained within the plan, there will only be limited number of occasions where it could be applied, i.e. the minerals strategy is does not allocate any new development, and waste management is mostly directed towards existing sites and land in employment uses. Consequently, the assessment of unknown / uncertain is a more accurate reflection at this time. In relation to providing net-gain in biodiversity - as the policy is currently worded, it is likely to have no more impact than the existing requirement to	M	D	X

				<p>maximise biodiversity. In the medium to long term, if the Government mandates specific amounts of net-gain for development, this may result in more positive outcomes.</p> <p>Potentially Affected Locations: <u>Plan Area</u>.</p>			
15. To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			
16. To contribute to the growth of a sustainable and diversified economy	•	• / ?	• / ?	<p>In the near-term the effect of requiring net-gain in biodiversity has been assessed as neutral on business. However, in the medium to long term, if the Government mandates a specific level of net-gain in biodiversity this may add additional costs and affect the viability of minerals operations, waste facilities and waste businesses, their development and the products and services they provide.</p>	M	D	X
17. To provide employment opportunities and develop and maintain a skilled workforce.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No impacts identified.			

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Based on the proposed Main Modifications an assessment of if those modifications would require reassessment within the context of the sustainability appraisal. The following policies were identified as requiring reassessment which was then undertaken.
- 6. Providing for Minerals - Provision of Aggregates for the Plan Area (RM1) [MM05].
 - 6. Providing for Minerals - Safeguarding Mineral Resources (RM3) & Prior Extraction of Mineral Resources (RM4) [MM08].
 - 7. Development Management Policies - Environment and Environmental Enhancement (RD1) [MM12].
- 6.2 The updated assessments findings were broadly in line with the original assessments, and no additional significant effects were identified, nor are any additional mitigation measures are recommended. In the context of the Strategic Environment Assessment regulations and Directive, the main conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal remain unaltered.

7. Next steps

- 7.1 The Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review is currently at the Public Examination stage. During the Public Examination of the Revised Plan Policies modifications were suggested to ensure the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan. The Authorities have now proposed modifications, and these have been submitted to the independent Inspectors for their consideration.
- 7.2 This Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum has been published for alongside the Main Modifications for consultation. The Inspectors will consider all comments made during that consultation on the proposed Main Modifications and their effect on the legal compliance and “soundness” of the Plan.
- 7.3 Full details of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan Review can be found on [2022B - Examination - Keystone \(objective.co.uk\)](#).

Planning Policy & Development Management

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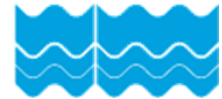
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Flexible Retirement Policy

Date:

Document summary

This policy sets out how managers and employees can work together to achieve flexibility for employees approaching retirement, by reducing the employee's working hours or grade while drawing their pension benefits. The policy applies to local government employees who are active members of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Enquiries

HR Advisory Team, 01273 481300

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Flexible Retirement Policy

1. What is flexible retirement?

- 1.1. Flexible retirement is a planned approach to retirement that enables employees to phase down and draw from their pension early to offset the reduction in salary. Phasing down could include:
 - Reducing working hours and/or
 - Moving to a job on a lower salary
- 1.2. Employees who are current active members of the Local Government Pension Scheme may seek their employer's agreement to draw their pension benefits from the age of 55 and continue working on reduced hours or move to a job on a lower salary.
- 1.3. There must be at least a 20% reduction in pay or hours for an employee to access the flexible retirement scheme. Managers should consider whether the new working arrangements meet the business needs of the service, including retention of skills, experience, and succession planning.

2. The benefits of flexible retirement

- 2.1. Flexible retirement enables employees to plan their retirement, financially and socially to make a gradual adjustment towards the end of their working life.
- 2.2. Services also benefit by retaining experienced staff with valuable skills. This can better enable effective succession planning.

3. Eligibility for flexible retirement

- 3.1. To be eligible for flexible retirement, employees must meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - Be employed by the County Council with a permanent contract of employment.
 - Be an active member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
 - Have reached the Normal Minimum Pension Age, currently age 55.
 - Working to a reduction in hours or pay of at least 20%

The scheme is not available to employees on Teachers' terms and conditions.

- 3.2. Managers must support an employee's application with a business case approved by their Assistant Director/Headteacher in consultation with HR Advisory. The business case should include details of the impact in service delivery and the benefit to the employee and school or department.
- 3.3. The Chief Executive's approval is required for applications for posts at Assistant Director level and above.
- 3.4. In the event a manager does not approve an employee's application, the employee may request that the decision is reviewed in accordance with the [Flexible Working Requests Guidance's](#) review process. There is no further right of appeal and no other procedure, such as the [Grievance Procedure](#), may be used.

- 3.5. There is no trial period for flexible retirement and, once it has been agreed, the decision cannot be reversed, because of the direct impact upon the pension benefits.

4. Conditions of service

- 4.1. In the event of an employee reducing hours in the same job, all the conditions of their contract of employment will be retained, including recognition of continuous service for purposes of annual leave and sick pay and for employment rights, such as redundancy payments and unfair dismissal.
- 4.2. If the employee starts a new job, they will receive a new contract of employment. Local government continuous service will be recognised for purposes of annual leave and sick pay and for employment rights, such as redundancy payments and unfair dismissal.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. Flexible retirement enables employees to draw their pension benefits and to continue working, either in the same job on reduced hours or in a new job at a lower grade. There are, therefore, two sources of income; pension benefits and income from employment.
- 5.2. The annual pension and lump sum retirement grant are paid with effect from the date of flexible retirement and Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC's) may be drawn if the employee so chooses. Pensions benefits will be reduced if accessing them prior to normal pension age, see Part 6.
- 5.3. Employees taking flexible retirement may contribute to the Local Government Pension Scheme in the new or continuing part time job and accrue further pension benefits within the LGPS that may be drawn when they finally retire. It is important to note that the new local government pension is a separate pension accrual. This means that the previous service (relating to the pension put into payment as a result of flexible retirement) will not count as accrued service in respect of the later benefits. This might affect entitlement to benefits such as ill health and could also affect any safeguarded "Rule of 85" protections. (See paragraph on "Rule of 85" below).
- 5.4. Employees are responsible for obtaining their own financial advice as the County Council is not able to provide this to staff, but the following information might be helpful:
- flexible retirement will have the effect of reducing salary and partially replacing this with pension benefits. Depending on the level of salary reduction and the amount of accrued pension benefits, the overall level of income received during the period of flexible retirement, or at the eventual date of retirement from the County Council, might be less than that received by continuing to work in the original contract until the LGPS standard retirement age of 65.
 - different inflation awards are applied to pension benefits and salaries. This means that each element will increase at a different rate throughout the period of flexible retirement, whereas pay could increase more overall.

- the pension is treated as taxable income and will, therefore, be subject to income tax deductions, in the same way as salaries.
- on reaching state pension age, employees might become entitled to state pension benefits over and above their local government pension benefits. There are also some options in relation to state benefits - such as deferring them so as to receive a larger state benefit later or a lump sum.

6. Pension Reduction and the Protection of 85-year rule

- 6.1. In most circumstances, employees will experience a pension reduction in accessing their pension as a result of taking flexible retirement prior to normal pension age. Some employees' pension may be protected in part, by the 'Rule of 85'.
- 6.2. The 'Rule of 85' was removed from the pension scheme from 1 October 2006, with some protection for those who had an expectation of meeting it. This rule is satisfied when your age in whole years, added to the length of your LGPS membership totals 85 or more at the time of retirement.
- 6.3. No reduction will apply to those members who retire at or after their normal pension age. Some pension scheme members will qualify for some of their pension to be paid unreduced when retiring before the normal pension, where they meet the transitional protection arrangements.
- 6.4. All pension scheme members who joined before 1 October 2006 and could have satisfied the '85 year Rule' prior to the age of 65 have some level of protection. Those who wish to retire when they have satisfied the Rule of 85 and are beyond the age of 60 will have the relevant protections applied when accessing their benefits. However, those who satisfy the 85 year rule prior to the age 60 and also retire prior to age 60 may have a reduction applied to their otherwise protected benefits on account of them being accessed prior to age 60 (the minimum retirement age at the time the 85 year rule was in operation).
- 6.5. East Sussex County Council will not waive any pension reduction under the flexible retirement scheme.
- 6.6. The abatement rules do not apply when employees draw their pensions under the Flexible Retirement policy.

7. Applying for flexible retirement

- 7.1. As part of regular supervision meetings, such as 1:1s and performance appraisals, employees and managers/headteachers should maintain an open dialogue about future aspirations, which may include the option to take flexible retirement. The prospect of a contractual change to access retirement benefits can then be discussed and explored as part of a collaborative process.

Get estimates of pension benefits

- 7.2. Employees will need to contact XXXX, who will obtain an estimate of pension benefits. This will include any reduction to these benefits if drawn before 65 years of age. Please note that only one request per annum for an estimate of pension benefits will be made free of charge.

Apply in writing

- 7.3. Employees should make a request for flexible retirement in writing to their manager/headteacher using the [Flexible Retirement Application Form](#). This should include an indication of a possible start date.
- 7.4. Whilst there needs to be at least a 20% reduction in hours or pay, managers will need to consider the overall reduction and whether this is enough particularly in the context of succession planning. The appropriate amount of reduction will need to be mutually agreed.
- 7.5. In cases where an employee intends to move to a lower grade/salary, their line manager will need to be aware of whether an alternative position has already been secured or whether the employee needs to be supported in the change to a different post.
- 7.6. Managers must meet the employee within 28 days of the request and notify the employee of the decision to support the application or agree an extension within 14 days of this meeting. An extension may be necessary, for example, after a manager agrees to support the request in principle but needs more time to look into the proposed new working pattern.

Managers supporting the request

- 7.7. Managers must:
- confirm their support of the request or any agreed adjustment to the original request in writing to the employee, please see para 7.5.
 - complete the business case section of the [Flexible Retirement Application Form](#). Please see below for more information on supporting the application with a business case. The HR Advisory Team can be contacted for advice and guidance.
 - send the [Flexible Retirement Application](#) onto their Assistant Director/Headteacher for approval.

Preparing a business case

- 7.8. Each flexible working case should be treated on a case-by-case basis and supported by a business case that considers:
- The impact on service delivery
 - Succession planning arrangements, to transfer knowledge and skills to others
 - How the employee will phase down to full retirement eg. 3 day working for 2 years, then 2 day working for 2 years, then retire completely.
 - any other costs or savings arising from the flexible retirement, for example, saving on the employee's salary, recruitment of a new employee, additional duties payments made to other members of staff, avoidance of redundancy payment.

Managers decline a request

- 7.9. Where a manager decides that, due to the needs of the service, they are unable to accept an employee's flexible working request, they should promptly meet with the employee to discuss the reasons and then confirm these in writing.
- 7.10. Managers will need to refer to the declining the request section in the [Flexible Working Requests Guidance](#) stating the business ground(s) as to why the request cannot be accepted and provide an explanation of why the business reasons apply in the circumstances.
- 7.11. If the employee is dissatisfied with this decision, they may follow the review process outlined in the [Flexible Working Requests Guidance](#). No other procedure of the County Council, such as the Grievance Policy can be used once this review procedure has been exhausted.

DRAFT

C. Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

1. To authorise, pursuant to the powers contained in the Highways Act 1980 (as amended):
 - (a) the erection and siting of buildings or structures (including but not limited to seats, signs, notice boards and bollards) or the carrying out of works (including but not limited to maintenance):
 - (i) within, over or under the highway and public rights of way;
 - (ii) in front of the prescribed building line;
 - (iii) of a private nature over or under the public highway, subject to securing appropriate bonding arrangements and commuted maintenance payments.
 - (b) interference with or obstruction to highways;
 - (c) the grant of permissions and licences;
 - (d) the grant of permissions and licences including but not limited to skips; trees/shrubs; scaffolding; builders materials and hoardings.
2. After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive to serve any notices and to exercise the powers of the County Council to authorise direct action or institute legal proceedings relating to:
 - (a) interference with or obstruction to or nuisance on any highway or land adjoining a highway; and
 - (b) a failure to comply with any prohibition or requirement of the Highways Act 1980, New Roads and Works Act 1991 (Part 3), the Traffic Management Act 2004, National parks and access to the Countryside Act 1949, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 or Builders' Skips (Markings) Regulations 1984.
3. (a) After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, appropriate District Council and local member (save in the case of temporary traffic restrictions), to make, give consent or object to the making of, apply or confirm any order under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended), the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Parking Act 1989 and the Rights of Way Act 1990, the Traffic Management Act, New Roads Works and Streets Act 1991, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Cycle Track Act 1984.

- (b) To make provision for the regulation of traffic, pursuant to the County Council's statutory powers, where formal orders are not required.
 - (c) To authorise the Assistant Chief Executive to make temporary traffic orders without recourse to the consultation procedure.
- 4. To approve, from time to time, a schedule of prospectively maintainable highways under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.
- 5. To authorise the entering into of agreements with developers under Sections 38 and 228 of the Highways Act 1980 and to exercise the powers of the County Council with respect to the formal adoption of private streets generally.
- 6. To authorise the entering into of any agreements under the Highways Act 1980 including (but not limited to) agreements under Sections 6 and 278 of that Act
- 7. To authorise entry onto any land, including for the purpose of survey and to place or leave on or in that land any apparatus for use in connection with that survey.
- 8. To exercise the discretionary powers of the County Council under the Land Compensation Act 1973 (as amended) and the Noise Insulation Regulations.
- 9. After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive to serve notices of exemption from the Advance Payments Code (Private Street Works) in appropriate cases where this would not prejudice the County Council.
- 10. To object, when appropriate on highway grounds, to applications to local licensing authorities for licences for goods vehicle operating centres.
- 11. To undertake the powers and duties of the County Council as Enforcement Authority under the Reservoirs Act 1975, including the service of formal notices and the authorisation of legal proceedings.
- 12.
 - (a) In consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, to grant permits under Section 115(E) of the Highways Act 1980 for the carrying out of trading and similar activities on footways and pedestrianised areas, in cases of unopposed applications.
 - (b) To deal with consultations by district councils exercising their own powers under Section 115(E) of the Highways Act 1980 and to give consent to the exercise of such powers.
 - (c) To authorise payment terms and associated conditions where permits are issued under Section 115(E) of the Highways Act 1980 for trading and similar activities on footways and pedestrianised

areas, in cases where the Highways Authority is the owner of the land.

13. After consultation with the Chief Operating Officer, to amend the fee for the service provided by the County Council in answering highway enquiries on the CON29 Enquiries of Local Authority Form, based upon current costs.
14. To determine the need for on-street parking bays for blue badge holders close to their residences, in terms of traffic problems.
15. To sign controlled waste transfer notes under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991 in respect of waste transferring between the County Council and another party.
16. After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, to determine claimed public rights of way pursuant to Section 53(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
17. After public consultation, and consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, and where no objections have been received, to authorise the withdrawal of Town and Village Green applications made under Section 15 of the Commons Act 2006.
18. After public consultation, and consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, to join applications for the de-registration and replacement of Common Land made under Section 16 of the Commons Act 2006.
19. After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive to exercise the powers of the County Council contained in the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, including to authorise enforcement action and the removal of obstructions
20. Pursuant to powers contained in the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, to exercise powers of entry, the appointment of wardens and agreements in relation to access.
21. To authorise, pursuant to the powers contained in the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009, the establishment and maintenance of the England Coast Path, the erection and maintenance and removal of notices and signs and powers of entry.

Public Transport

17. (i) To arrange such consultations as appear to him to be appropriate following the notification by an operator of an intention to change a local bus service.

- (ii) To take steps to provide for the provision at short notice of temporary gap filling journeys where an operator withdraws from a route.
- (iii) To award contracts, within established guidelines and policy, to the lowest tenderer.
- (iv) On behalf of the County Council, to enter into a 'de minimis' arrangement with an operator, subject to being satisfied that the particular arrangement is both appropriate and the most cost effective means of securing the provision of a journey.
- (v) To approve requests for fares increases on supported services which are broadly in line with the general level of inflation.

Development Control

- 18. To determine all applications for planning permission which fall to be determined by the County Council where the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan and current planning policies except where two or more objections on planning grounds have been received within the consultation period.
- 19.
 - (a) To determine applications for planning permission amounting to minor variations to applications already granted.
 - (b) To determine applications for non-material amendments to planning permissions made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
 - (c) To determine particulars submitted pursuant to conditions attached to planning permissions.
- 20. To determine any matter arising under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and associated legislation and any legislation which amends or replaces it.
- 21.
 - (a) To determine whether an application for prior approval is required under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.
 - (b) To determine, where there are less than two objections relating to matters that can be considered by the County Planning Authority under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, applications for prior approval under the aforementioned legislation.
- 22. To determine applications for a periodic Review of Old Mineral Permissions made under Paragraph 4 of Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 1995.
- 23. To determine applications for certificates of appropriate alternative development under Section 232(3) of the Localism Act 2011, in respect of decisions which fall to be made by the County Planning Authority.

24. To determine applications for Certificates of Lawfulness of Existing or Proposed Use or Development under Sections 191 and 192 respectively of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
25. To determine applications for Listed Building consent for alterations, extension or demolition of a Listed Building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, where the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan and current planning policies, except where two or more objections have been received within the consultation period.
26. To assess whether a proposal which is a departure from the Development Plan requires referral to the Secretary of State and, when deemed necessary, make the referral.
27. To respond to consultations by District/Borough Planning Authorities on applications for development in areas which have been notified to them as mineral consultation areas or waste consultation areas.
28. To respond to the appropriate government department on applications made under the Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats (Extraction of Minerals by Marine Dredging) Regulations 2001 unless the proposal raises issues of strategic importance.
29. To submit observations on behalf of the County Planning Authority and the Highway Authority in respect of proposals for development by District Councils.
30. To respond to the relevant District Planning Authority on behalf of the Highway Authority in respect of any statutory or other consultations in relation to proposals for development.
31. To submit observations on proposals for development by local authorities and government departments not involving formal consultation.
32. To give observations, if appropriate, on behalf of the County Council on applications to the Secretary of State for deemed planning permission under Section 90(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the erection of poles, pole mounted equipment and overhead electricity lines below 33kv.
33. To give observations, if appropriate, on behalf of the County Council on proposals for minor diversions or temporary routes on power lines up to 400kv where no objection is being raised.
34. After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, to decide whether to take and/or to discontinue formal enforcement action or initiate any other legal proceedings in any case where they consider it appropriate to do so; any action taken to be reported to a subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee.

35. In consultation with appropriate Directors to authorise the County Council to participate in planning obligations under Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
36. To consider requests for variations to agreements made under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in consultation with relevant Directors, the local Members and the Chair of Planning Committee where this materially affects the obligations of, or to the County Council, and to enter into such variation agreements as appropriate.
37. To exercise the powers delegated to the Council by another Planning Authority to provide the planning service for matters detailed in Paragraphs 18 – 24 and 33 – 35 above for sites and proposals that are in accordance with arrangements agreed with the other Planning Authority.

Development Plans and Consultation

38. To respond to consultations by other Planning Authorities on Draft Local Plans and any other Development Plan.
39. To consider, agree and sign Statements of Common Ground that are prepared in support of Development Plans by both the County Council and other planning authorities.
40. To respond to consultations by Town and Parish Councils and other Qualifying Bodies on Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders.
41. To respond on behalf of the Council as County Planning Authority, Highway Authority and/or Lead Local Flood Authority to consultations from government departments and other statutory and non-statutory organisations.
42. To make representations on Development Consent Orders at the Pre-application, Acceptance and Pre-Examination stages, and to further these representations and represent the County Council at the Examination stage.
43. To agree briefs for joint County and District Local Plan studies.
44. To agree to publish the Waste and Minerals Monitoring Reports and Local Aggregate Assessments.
45. To publish amendments to the Council's Local Development Scheme.

Other Matters

46. To make new Tree Preservation Orders and modify existing Orders.
47. To determine applications for consent to fell, top or lop trees included in a

Tree Preservation Order (where this is the responsibility of the County Planning Authority).

48. To submit observations when consulted on applications for felling licences.
49. To authorise the planting of trees, subject to funds being available within the agreed budget.
50. To authorise the service of Notices under Section 207 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requiring the replacement of trees.
51. To exercise the County Council's powers and duties under orders and regulations made under the Plant Health Act 1967 (includes Dutch Elm Disease).
52. After undertaking appropriate consultations, to decline the offer of an access agreement between the County Council and the landowner in respect of woods which clearly have insignificant recreational value.
53. To make arrangements for the transport of pupils and students to school or college where there is a statutory duty or it is the policy of the County Council to provide such transport.
54. To discharge any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality.
55.
 - (a) To discharge the powers, duties and responsibilities of the County Council under the legislation in respect of trading standards and animal welfare, which shall include but not be limited to the legislation listed in 55 below ('the trading standards and animal welfare legislation').
 - (b) To appoint and designate officers in Trading Standards as authorised officers in respect of the trading standards and animal welfare legislation. The Team Manager –Trading Standards is designated the Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures.
 - (c) To grant, amend, refuse, suspend and transfer licenses or certificates, and to register persons or premises, pursuant to the trading standards and animal welfare legislation.
 - (d) To authorise the institution of proceedings brought under the trading standards and animal welfare legislation.
56. The legislation set out below includes also any enabling enactment, statutory instrument, order in council, byelaw or other order, and any enactment repealing, amending or extending the provisions thereof.
 - Accommodation Agencies Act 1953
 - Administration of Justice Act 1970 – Section 40
 - Administration of Justice Act 1985
 - Agricultural Produce (Grading & Marking) Acts 1928
 - Agriculture Act 1970
 - Animal Health Act 1981

Animal Welfare Act 2006
Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
Cancer Act 1939
Celluloid & Cinematograph Film Act 1922
Children & Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco)
Act 1991
Children & Young Persons Act 1933
Clean Air Act 1993
Companies Acts 1985/2006
Consumer Credit Act 1974
Consumer Protection Act 1987
Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988
Courts and Legal Services Act 1990
Criminal Damage Act 1971
Criminal Justice Act 1988
Customs & Excise Management Act 1979
Education Reform Act 1988
Energy Act 1976
Enterprise Act 2002
Environmental Protection Act 1990
Estate Agents Act 1979
Explosives Act 1875
Fair Trading Act 1973
Farm & Garden Chemicals Act 1967
Fireworks Act 1951
Fireworks Act 2003
Food and Environment Protection Act 1985
Food Safety Act 1990
Forgery & Counterfeiting Act 1981
Fraud Act 2006
Hallmarking Act 1973
Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974
Housing Act 2004
Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1985
Knives Act 1997
Legal Services Act 2007 (S198)
Licensing Act 2003
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
(S16)
Malicious Communications Act 1988
Medicines Act 1968
Merchant Shipping Act 1995
Motor Cycle Noise Act 1987
Motor Vehicles (Safety Equipment for Children) Act
1991
Olympic Symbol etc (Protection) Act 1995
Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925
Poisons Act 1972
Prices Act 1974
Property Misdescriptions Act 1991

Protection of Animals Act 1911
Public Health Act 1961
Road Traffic (Foreign Vehicles) Act 1972
Road Traffic Act 1988 and 1991
Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Solicitors Act 1974
Telecommunications Act 1984
Theft Acts 1968 and 1978
Tobacco Advertising and Promotions Act 2002
Trade Descriptions Act 1968
Trade Marks Act 1994
Unsolicited Goods & Services Acts 1971 & 1975
Video Recordings Act 1984
Weights & Measures Act 1985

57. To authorise officers of the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service or another Local Authority to act as licensing officer and petroleum inspectors, under sections 18 and 19 of the Health and Safety At Work (etc) Act 1974 and the Petroleum Consolidation Act 1928, on behalf of the County Council.
58. In liaison with Action in Rural Sussex and the Chief Operating Officer to agree arrangements for the consideration of applications for assistance to Village Halls and to determine applications, subject to keeping the Lead Cabinet Member, opposition Group Spokespersons and the local member informed.
59. To determine applications for ordinary watercourse consent, under the Land Drainage Act (1991) as amended
60. After consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive, to decide whether to take formal enforcement action or initiate legal action under the Land Drainage Act 1991 or the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in any cases it is deemed appropriate to do so.
61. To respond to the relevant planning authorities on behalf of the County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority in respect of any statutory or other consultation in relation to the drainage and local flood risk aspects of proposals in applications for planning permission (including Notifications for Prior Approvals) and Development Plans.
62. To designate features which affect flood risk and to determine applications to alter or remove designated features under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010
63. To update the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for East Sussex in accordance with the requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009.
64. Under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 (as amended):

- (a) after consultation with the East Sussex Fire Authority, to carry out inspections and issue Safety Certificates subject to any matters of particular relevance being reported to the Regulatory Committee.
 - (b) to issue, serve and enforce prohibition notices.
- 65. Under the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987:
 - (a) after consultation with the East Sussex Fire Authority, to undertake the County Council's powers and duties: (i) in respect of inspections, determinations and the issue, amendment and cancellation of certificates under Part III of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987; and (ii) to enforce and institute proceedings under this legislation.
 - (b) to charge applicants for certificates up to the statutory maximum
- 66. In relation to libraries:
 - (a) to fix the opening and closing hours; and
 - (b) to set the fees and charges made by the Business Information Services.
- 67. To take the lead role in Arts related work, including determining applications for grant aid for support for the Arts where the sum applied for is £2,000 or less.
- 68. To amend the Commons Register following an application under Section 15(8) of the Commons Act 2006.
- 69. To undertake and be responsible for the day to day management and operation of the Lewes Public Library and Museum Charitable Trust.
- 70. To set charges for transport conditional permits within guidelines set by the Cabinet.
- 71. To publish a consultation draft of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and undertake all tasks under Regulations 4 to 12 inclusive, of The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023, in preparing and publishing a draft LNRS. To make representations on Local Nature Recovery Strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities.

Registration Matters

- 72.
 - (a) To exercise the powers of the County Council under the Marriage Act 1994 and the Marriage (Approved Premises) Regulations 1994, save where a review has been sought which falls to be determined by the Approved Marriage Premises Review Panel.
 - (b) To convene a Panel of three Members, drawn from the membership of the Regulatory Committee, to review decisions made by the Proper Officer

for Registration under the Marriage (Approved Premises) Regulations 1995.

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Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy



Date: ~~Feb 2022~~ June 2024

Document summary

This Code sets out the minimum standards of conduct that employees will be expected to observe when carrying out their duties. The Code is there to protect you in the event that your actions are subject to challenge.

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<p>Accessibility help</p> <p>Zoom in or out by holding down the Control key and turning the mouse wheel.</p> <p>CTRL and click on the table of contents to navigate.</p> <p>Press CTRL and Home key to return to the top of the document.</p> <p>Press Alt-left arrow to return to your previous location.</p> <p>References shown in blue text are available on the Intranet/the Webshop.</p> <p>References shown in underlined blue text are links to other areas of this document.</p>	

Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy

Key Points:

- This policy applies to all County Council employees, including schools based employees where the Governing Body has adopted the policy (subject to such other changes which may have been adopted by the Governing Body of the school). Throughout this policy, reference to the 'County Council' includes County Council-maintained schools.
- The Code aims to ensure that confidence in the integrity of employees is maintained at all times.
- The Code forms part of your contract of employment and must be followed - breach of this code may be viewed as a serious disciplinary matter depending on the severity of the breach.
- The Code, where appropriate, must be read in conjunction with the [Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy](#), [Whistleblowing Policy](#), [Financial Regulations](#), [Procurement Standing Orders](#), the [Scheme of Delegations](#), and with any other more detailed County Council/Departmental operational instructions/guidelines.
- All potential conflicts of interest must be declared before the activity commences or the issue arises. If your circumstances change, it is your responsibility to immediately inform your manager and make a new declaration.
- All staff will be reminded of the need to declare potential conflicts of interest and required to complete an annual form.
- A separate [Members' Code of Conduct](#) applies to Councillors.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Code should be considered alongside relevant guidance from professional bodies, such as the Health and Care Professions Council. In Schools, this includes the 'Code of Conduct for Employees Whose Work Brings Them into Contact with Young People'.
- 1.2. Please take time to read this Code, and make sure that you understand it. Although this Code cannot be exhaustive, its intention is to provide sufficient information to make you aware of what is required of you. Therefore, if you are unclear, or want to know something specific, please talk to your manager.
- 1.3. It is important that you understand that a breach of the Code could lead to disciplinary action, and even dismissal, depending on the severity of the breach (please refer to the [Disciplinary Policy](#)). Ignorance of the guidelines in the Code will not be seen as a valid excuse.
- 1.4.

- 1.5. ~~Annually, all staff will be reminded of the need to declare potential conflicts of interest and required to complete an annual form, including where a NIL return has been made in the previous declaration~~ **It is the individual responsibility of each employee to make a conflict of interest declaration when they join the County Council and to ensure that their declarations are kept up to date. Employees should update their declaration either annually, even if this is to make a 'nil return', or when there is a significant change in circumstances.. If there is a change in your circumstances and a potential conflict arises, it is your responsibility to inform your manager as soon as possible so the conflict of interest can be considered.**
- 1.6.
1. Staff in corporate departments who have ~~an ESCC email account~~ **access to the intranet** should use the electronic form available via the intranet.
 2. Staff in corporate departments who do not have ~~an ESCC email account~~ **access to the intranet** should send their written declaration to their [departmental coordinator](#).
 3. Staff in schools should use the form available on the Webshop.
- 1.7. ~~You will be asked to review your declaration of interest form annually, including where you have made a NIL return in your previous declaration. However, if there is a change in your circumstances and a potential conflict arises, it is your responsibility to inform your manager as soon as possible so the conflict of interest can be considered.~~
- 1.8. Throughout this policy, where it is stated that Assistant Directors will determine whether a conflict of interest exists or whether a gift or offer of hospitality may be accepted, when the employee in question is an Assistant Director the determination will be made by the relevant Chief Officer and/or the Assistant Chief Executive. For Headteachers, the school's Governing Body should decide and a recommendation may be sought from the Director of Children's Services.
- 1.9. List of departmental coordinators: **PLEASE NOTE THESE CONTACTS WILL NOT BE LISTED IN THE CONSTITUTION WHEN PUBLISHED EXTERNALLY AS PART OF THE CONSTITUTION**

Adult Social Care	Kerry Sussex
Business Services	PA to Chief Operating Officer
Chief Executive's Office	Caroline Hodge
Children's Services	Julie Stevens
Communities, Economy & Transport	CETCorrespondence@eastsussex.gov.uk
Governance Services	Caroline Hodge
Public Health	Tracey Houston

2. Standards

- 2.1. You are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to members of the public, observing the standards of conduct which the law, the Council's [Standing Orders and Financial Regulations](#), Conditions of Service, this Code and any School /Departmental rules require together with any relevant guidance from professional bodies.
- 2.2. The Council has adopted the Nolan Committee's seven principles, which set the standards in public life. In performing your duties, you must act in accordance with the seven Nolan principles, which are:
 - Selflessness - You must act solely in terms of the public interest and not in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, family or friends.
 - Integrity - You should not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
 - Objectivity - You must make choices on merit when making decisions on appointments, contracts, or recommending rewards and benefits for individuals.
 - Accountability - You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public and you must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.
 - Openness - You should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
 - Honesty - You have a duty to declare any private interests relating to your work and you need to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
 - Leadership - You should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.
- 2.3. You are encouraged and expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to raise workplace concerns about risk, malpractice or wrongdoing in accordance with the County Council's [Whistleblowing Policy](#).
- 2.4. You must ensure that you use public funds entrusted to you in a responsible and lawful manner and in accordance with the County Council's Financial Regulations.
- 2.5. If requested to do so, you are expected to co-operate in any investigation being carried out by or on behalf of the County Council.

3. Political neutrality

- 3.1. Please note that Section 3 'Political Neutrality' is not applicable to employees on teachers' terms and conditions of employment.
- 3.2. You serve the County Council as a whole. It therefore, follows that you must serve all County Councillors and not just those of the majority group and you must ensure that the individual rights of all County Councillors are respected.

- 3.3. You must not be involved in advising any political group of the County Council or attend any of their meetings in an official capacity without the express consent of your Chief Officer. You must follow every lawful expressed policy of the County Council and must not allow your own personal or political opinions to interfere with your work. **Political Assistants appointed on fixed term contracts in accordance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 are exempt from these conditions.**

~~1. Political Assistants appointed on fixed term contracts in accordance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 are exempt from these conditions.~~

- 3.4. As an employee of the County Council you are not eligible to stand for office as an elected member of the County Council. For County Council staff (with the exception of staff on Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment), some posts are politically restricted and employees are prohibited from political activity as defined in the [Local Government and Housing Act 1989 \(as amended\)](#), either:
- (i) where the post holder gives advice on a regular basis to the Authority (meaning the County Council, the Cabinet, Lead Cabinet Member, any committee or sub-committee of the Authority, or to any committee on which the Authority is represented); and/or
 - (ii) the post holder speaks on behalf of the Authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

~~Advice on this can be obtained from the Assistant Chief Executive.~~ **Further information is available in the Politically Restricted Posts guidance available on the Intranet and Webshop.**

- 3.5. If your duties bring you into contact with County Councillors, you should be aware that guidance on relationships with Councillors is contained within the [Code on Member/Employee Relationships](#).

4. Using County Council equipment, materials and property

- 4.1. You must ensure that you use public funds entrusted to you in a responsible and lawful manner, and in accordance with the County Council's [Financial Regulations](#), and all other relevant County Council policies.
- 4.2. The facilities and equipment provided as part of your work belong to the County Council and should only be used for legitimate County Council business purposes. Please ensure that you:
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use personal protective equipment as required;
 - Take care of County Council property or equipment, keeping it secure and reporting any breakages or breaches of security;
 - Use equipment and facilities for authorised purposes only;
 - Do not use County Council equipment or property, including vehicles, for your own private benefit or gain or in fraudulent activity or for any unauthorised purposes.

- 4.3. Facilities and equipment is taken to mean, but is not limited to; computers, software, telephones, vehicles and intellectual property. The County Council reserves the right to access all IT systems (including telephone voice recordings), in the event of a policy or security breach. Please also refer to the [Personal Use of Council Equipment Policy](#), [Internet Access and Usage Policy](#), [Email Use Policy](#) and [Information Security and Data Protection Policy](#).

5. Gifts, bequests and legacies

- 5.1. It is a serious criminal offence for you to corruptly receive or give any bribe, gift, loan, fee, reward, or advantage for doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in your official capacity. If an allegation is made, it is for you to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained. Please also refer to the [Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy](#).
- 5.2. As a representative of the County Council it is important that you treat any offer of a personal gift, loans, fees, rewards or other financial or in kind advantage (collectively referred to here as ‘gifts’) with care. You must not accept gifts from contractors or potential contractors, including those who have previously worked for the County Council, service users, clients or suppliers.
- 5.3. You should handle the refusal of gifts with tact and courtesy. The intentions of those offering gifts may not have been corrupt but simply inappropriate to professional relationships in the public sector. It is therefore important, that where organisations make offers of gifts or hospitality, they are clearly made aware that such practice is unacceptable and should not be repeated.
- 5.4. If you receive any unexpected gifts they must be returned with a polite refusal letter to the sender, which makes it clear that County Council employees are not permitted to accept any gifts, other than those set out in sections 5.6 and 5.7.
- 5.5. All gifts offered including, but not limited to, inducements such as air miles, trading discounts, vouchers, or offers of hospitality, must be declared
1. Staff in corporate departments who have an ~~ESCC email account~~ **intranet access** should use the electronic form available via the intranet.
 2. Staff in corporate departments who do not have an ~~ESCC email account~~ **intranet access** should send their written declaration to their [departmental coordinator](#).
 3. Staff in schools should use the form available on the Webshop.
- 5.6. Minor articles such as diaries, calendars, mugs, office items and the like will not be regarded as a gift. If you have any doubt as to whether an item falls within the definition of a gift and / or is acceptable, you are expected to raise this with your manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.7. In the case of schools, low value items are frequently offered as a gesture of appreciation from pupils, parents or carers, at the end of term for example. These may be accepted if they are not in any way connected with the performance of duties. Discretion should be exercised where the items offered are in excess of £10 in value and then can only be accepted with the Headteacher’s approval and must be declared.

5.8. The same rules as above apply to bequests, which must be refused, unless there are special circumstances approved in writing by your Assistant Director in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive. In schools, this should be approved by your Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

5.9. In summary:

- You should not accept gifts.
- Declare the offer of any gifts (including bequests or legacies).
- You should handle the refusal of gifts with tact and courtesy and make those offering them aware that such practice is not acceptable and should not be repeated.
- Unexpected gifts must be returned with a polite refusal letter to the sender.
- All gifts offered for any amount must be declared.
- Minor articles of a promotional nature such as diaries, calendars, and mugs will not be regarded as a gift.
- If you have any doubt, as to what is acceptable, speak to your manager beforehand or at the earliest opportunity following receipt of the article or gift.
- In the case of schools, articles from pupils/parents/carers of less than £10 in value need not necessarily be refused.

6. Hospitality

6.1. You should exercise caution in offering and accepting accommodation, tickets or passes for an event, food or drink, or entertainment which is provided free of charge or at a discounted rate ('hospitality'). You should bear in mind how it might affect your relations with the party offering it or receiving it and how it might be viewed by a range of stakeholders, including:

- County Councillors;
- School Governors;
- other potential suppliers/contractors;
- the public;
- the media;
- your colleagues.

6.2. When considering any offer of hospitality, the following should be considered when determining whether it can be accepted:

- the invitation comes from an organisation or individual likely to benefit from the County Council;
- the organisation or individual is seeking a contract with the County Council, or one has already been awarded;
- in the case of a visit, it is genuinely instructive and does not constitute, or could be perceived as being, more of a social function;
- the scale and location of the hospitality is proportionate and relative to the event;
- the event takes place outside of normal working hours;
- it is being offered on a frequent basis;
- it is being offered just to you or others as well;
- the hospitality is purely a social or sporting event as opposed to an event which you are attending in an official capacity.

6.3. Examples of Hospitality which should not normally be accepted include:

- events that are purely social occasions;
- attendance at events that, if they had been funded by the County Council, would be perceived as a poor or inappropriate use of public funds;
- events where current or potential contractors pay for the meals or the table at the event; and /or
- attendance at corporate events, including sporting or cultural events.

6.4. Examples of events which may be accepted (subject to consideration of the factors listed in 6.2):

- events that are clearly of a training or development nature; and / or
- events where you are invited to attend as a formal representative of the County Council and attendance relates directly to the performance of your duties.

6.5. In all instances where you wish to accept hospitality, including site visits as part of procurement or similar activities, you must seek the approval in advance in writing from your Assistant Director/Headteacher and wherever possible the County Council should meet the cost of your attendance in full.

6.6. Particular care should be taken in the case of attendance at conferences, seminars or other training and development events, where current or potential contractors or suppliers offer to pay the associated costs. Whilst these may be business related events, it may be inappropriate hospitality to be funded by others. In such cases, advice should be sought from your Assistant Director/Headteacher but as a general rule, if the event is genuinely business related then it should be funded by the County Council and the expense subject to the normal authorisation process.

6.7. All offers of hospitality, whether accepted or not, should be declared. You are also reminded that, where organisations make inappropriate offers of gifts or hospitality, they should be made aware that such practice is unacceptable and should not be repeated.

7. Outside commitments

7.1. Regardless of grade, whether whole or part-time, permanent, temporary, relief or seasonal, you must seek the written permission of, and make a written declaration (an oral declaration is not sufficient) to, your Assistant Director/Headteacher before engaging in any other work or business (*) which might relate or in any way impact on your duties for the County Council. This includes paid or unpaid work, and will include one off pieces of work as well as regular employment.

1. Staff in corporate departments who have an ESCC email account should use the electronic form available via the intranet.
2. Staff in corporate departments who do not have an ESCC email account should send their written declaration to their [departmental coordinator](#).
3. Staff in schools should use the form available on the Webshop.

- 7.2. If you are paid at or above Single Status Grade 9 (spinal point 23 and above) or equivalent, you are specifically required to declare to, and obtain consent from, your Assistant Director/ Headteacher, if you wish to engage in any other business (*), or take up any additional appointment regardless of whether there is any conflict of interest anticipated. Such consent will not be unreasonably withheld. If your request is approved, the County Council must be mindful of its responsibility under the Working Time Regulations 1998, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its general responsibilities towards the health of its employees.
- 7.3. You must declare in writing to your Assistant Director any relatives, partners or friends who are engaged in a business, **including roles such as company directorships, company secretaries and so on**, which either currently provides services to the County Council or may do so in the future. In the case of schools based staff, you must declare in writing to your Headteacher any relatives, partners or friends who are engaged in a business which either currently provides services to your School, or schools with which your school collaborates or is federated to, or may do so in the future. This is in order to minimise the risk of suspicion that some influence may be exerted over a particular customer as to the choice of provider, or that the provider gained advantage in terms of information received.
- 7.4. You must not work privately for personal gain for a service user/pupil for whom you have a service provision role within the County Council unless you have written consent from your Assistant Director/Headteacher. This includes service users or pupils to whom an employee may not personally be giving a service but does receive a service from the County Council. Suitability of such work may depend on the scale of the work, the impact it has on an employee's performance and whether there is any potential for an employee to be perceived as taking advantage of their position to generate the work. This determination lies with your Assistant Director or Headteacher.
- 7.5. If you are permitted to engage in any other business or take up any additional employment, you must not undertake any work in connection with your additional employment in County Council time, or make use of any County Council equipment or facilities. It is the responsibility of each individual employee to declare any additional personal income to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).
- 7.6. If you have any doubt whatsoever you should make a declaration, so that the County Council can make the judgement as to whether a conflict exists.
- 7.7. The County Council is entitled to ownership of intellectual property e.g. copyright of material created by you in the course of your duties as an employee of the County Council. Please see [Guidance Notes on Ownership of Intellectual Property](#).

~~(*) - "engage in any other business" includes roles such as company directorships, company secretaries and so on.~~

8. Personal interests

- 8.1. Your off-duty hours are your own personal concern. However, you must not put yourself in a position where your job and personal interests conflict.

- 8.2. You must declare in writing any financial or non-financial interests that could in any way be considered to bring about conflict with the County Council's interests. This includes any relationship, discussions or correspondence over any employment or private interests with organisations or individuals that may have a past, current or future business connection with the County Council, including but not limited to circumstances where funds are being paid or received by the County Council or situations that could result in more favourable treatment or give advantage to an individual or organisation. If you have any doubt whatsoever you should make a declaration, so that your employer can make the judgement as to whether a conflict exists (see [Appendix 1: Making a declaration](#)).
- 8.3. You are required to disclose any personal interest that may conflict with the County Council's interests e.g. representative of an organisation which may seek to influence the County Council's policies (see [Appendix 1: Making a declaration](#)). **If a relative or friend accesses services provided by the County Council, you must declare any potential conflict between your job role and the services they receive. Employees must not access information or records related to Council services received by their relatives, friends, or anyone else they have a personal relationship with.**
- 8.4. You must inform your Assistant Director/Headteacher if you are declared bankrupt or are involved as a Director of a company which is wound up or put into voluntary liquidation, if it may potentially impact upon your role and duties. Bankruptcy may impact on the duties of employees who have a financial responsibility. The purpose of this is to ensure that a proper framework of support is in place.

9. Disclosure of information and confidentiality

- 9.1. It is generally accepted that open government is best. The law requires that certain types of information must be made available to members, auditors, government departments, service users, and the public. In particular, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a legal right of access to information held by the County Council, subject to certain exemptions. You must ensure that you are aware of the [Freedom of Information and Data Protection guidance](#), and guidance for staff issued in relation to this.
- 9.2. No politically or commercially sensitive information, should be released to anyone, including County Councillors, without authorisation from your line manager.
- 9.3. You must ensure that any personal information you work with is only processed in accordance with data protection legislation. When handling personal data you must always adhere to the [Information Security and Data Protection Policy](#) ~~Data Protection Guide for Employees~~ and [Confidentiality Code of Practice](#). Further training and guidance is available from the Council, and you should ensure you are familiar with it. **You must not access information or records related to Council services received by their relatives or friends, or anyone else you have a personal relationship with.**
- 9.4. If you are in any doubt about disclosing information then you are expected to seek guidance from your manager.

- 9.5. Confidential Committee papers must not be released without the consent of the Assistant Chief Executive. In schools, confidential Governor Papers must not be released without the approval of the Governing Body.
- 9.6. You must not use any information obtained in the course of your employment for personal gain nor pass it on to others who might use it in such a way or for any purpose for which it was not originally intended.
- 9.7. Any information which you might receive from a County Councillor/ Governor relating to his/her personal/private affairs and which does not belong to the County Council should not be divulged without the prior approval of that County Councillor/ Governor, except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by law.

10. Appointment and other employment matters

- 10.1. You must not be involved in the day-to-day line management, appointment, or any other decisions relating to the discipline, promotion or pay or conditions of another employee, or prospective employee, who is a relative, partner or friend. Managers should consider whether their relationship with a colleague may have an impact on their ability to carry out their duties. In schools, staff Governors should not be involved in making decisions about these matters when a colleague is the subject.
- 10.2. If you are responsible for appointing employees, you must ensure that decisions are based on merit and not on anything other than their ability to do the job. Similarly, you must not canvass on behalf of any applicant. (Please see the [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)).
- 10.3. If you have a connection in a private, social or domestic capacity with someone who also works for the County Council or who sits on a school's Governing Body that may potentially create, or be thought to create, a conflict of interest you need to declare this to your Assistant Director/Headteacher for them to consider.
- 10.4. Employees must inform their manager if they are being investigated by any professional body and any sanction imposed.
- 10.5. If you are in doubt about any of the above, please seek advice from the Personnel Advisory Team.

11. Employment after working at the County Council

- 11.1. The County Council is concerned to safeguard the integrity of the workings of local government and to avoid even the appearance of impropriety among its employees. It is in the public interest that people with experience of public administration should be able to move into business and other bodies. It is also important that whenever a County Council employee accepts a particular outside appointment, there should be no cause for any suspicion of impropriety. The rules set out in [Appendix 2](#) to this Code are aimed at safeguarding both the County Council and individual employees from such criticism or suspicion. The rules apply to appointments in the United Kingdom and across the European Union.

12. Criminal offences

- 12.1. Employees are expected to conduct themselves at all time (inside and outside of work) in a manner which will maintain public confidence in both their integrity and the services provided by the County Council. In general, what an employee does outside work is his/her personal concern, unless those actions would cause a breakdown in the employment relationship.
- 12.2. Employees must inform their manager if they are arrested/convicted/cautioned in respect of any offence as soon as possible. Employees do not need to disclose minor driving offences (such as fixed penalty notices for speeding tickets) unless either:
 1. driving is a key requirement of their role (e.g. they drive County Council vehicles or drive their own vehicle regularly for work); and / or
 2. the conviction results in disqualification from driving.(See the [Safe Use of Motor Vehicles Policy](#) for details.)
- 12.3. Disclosing all convictions does not necessarily mean disciplinary action will be taken against an employee. The extent to which a criminal offence may affect employment depends on whether the conduct:
 - Makes the employee unsuitable for their type of work; and/or,
 - May reflect adversely on the County Council's reputation or ability to perform its function.
- 12.4. Employees sentenced to immediate imprisonment may be dismissed without notice or compensation in lieu of notice.
- 12.5. Employees should always notify their manager if there is any doubt as to whether or not they need to share information about an arrest or conviction.
- 12.6. Any failure to disclose such information, even where no charges are brought against you, may lead to disciplinary action. Where it is deemed that there is an adverse impact on your employment, the [Disciplinary Policy](#) will apply.

13. Position of trust

- 13.1. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they maintain professional standards and do not abuse or appear to abuse their position of trust in the way they conduct their relationships with service users/pupils/contractors, their families or carers.
- 13.2. Specific examples of conduct which should be avoided include, but are not limited to:
 - meeting socially with pupils or service users (or their carers or families); and/or
 - exchanging personal contact details or connecting using social media.
- 13.3. Employees must refrain from conduct of this nature unless there is sound operational reason to do so, in which case the action must only be taken with the express written approval of the employee's Assistant Director/Headteacher.

- 13.4. If employees are engaging in activity or associating with people outside work whose current or past conduct could raise doubts or concerns about an employee's own integrity or ability to be in a 'position of trust' with regard to children or vulnerable adults, this could have a direct consequence on their employment.

14. Sponsorship

- 14.1. When an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is being asked to sponsor a County Council activity, the basic conventions concerning the acceptance of gifts and hospitality apply. Please refer to the East Sussex County Council's [Corporate Sponsorship Policy](#).
- 14.2. This section on sponsorship is not applicable to schools.

15. Relationships

15.1. Councillors

Employees are responsible to the County Council through its senior managers, except where a school's Governing Body is the employer. Your role may require you to give advice to councillors and senior managers. Mutual respect between employees and Councillors is essential to good local government. Close personal familiarity between employees and individual Councillors can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and Councillors. It should therefore be avoided.

15.2. Contractors

You must declare in writing to your Assistant Director/Headteacher any current or past relationships of a business or private nature with any outside organisation or individual that has a relationship with the County Council (see [Appendix 1: Making a declaration](#)). Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit and no special favour should be shown to any businesses, particularly those you have an interest in. If you have such an interest you must not be involved in any way in awarding work or orders or subsequent management of contracts. Similarly, you must not canvass on behalf of any outside organisation that has a relationship with the County Council.

Where your role within the Council means that you are involved with outside businesses and suppliers (e.g. through raising orders, letting contracts, contract management etc.) discussions over potential conflicts and gifts/hospitality should be had as part of regular performance and development conversations with your manager.

You must declare in writing to your Assistant Director/Headteacher, if you become aware that the County Council is entering a contract in which you have a direct interest, or if you are involved in assessing/evaluating tenders for business from an organisation in which you have a direct interest.

1. Staff in corporate departments who have an ESCC email account should use the electronic form available via the intranet.
2. Staff in corporate departments who do not have an ESCC email account should send their written declaration to their [departmental coordinator](#).
3. Staff in schools should use the form available on the Webshop.

15.3. Contract Tenders

If you wish to tender for a contract from the County Council, you must declare such an intention to the appropriate Assistant Director/Headteacher, as soon as intent has been formed, and at the earliest possible opportunity.

15.4. Foster Carers

If you act as a foster carer for the County Council or any other agency you must declare this (including the intention to do so if you are not already a foster carer) in writing as a potential conflict of interest.

15.5. The Press and Media

You must not deal direct with the press or the media in relation to anything related to County Council business unless required to do so as part of your duties, or you have been expressly authorised by your line manager in consultation with your Assistant Director/Headteacher.

If you speak as a private individual directly to the press or at a public meeting or other situation where your remarks may be reported to the press, you must take reasonable steps to ensure nothing you say might lead the public to think you are acting in your capacity as a County Council employee.

15.6. The Local Community and Service Users

You must always remember your responsibilities to the community which you serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the County Council.

16. Approvals

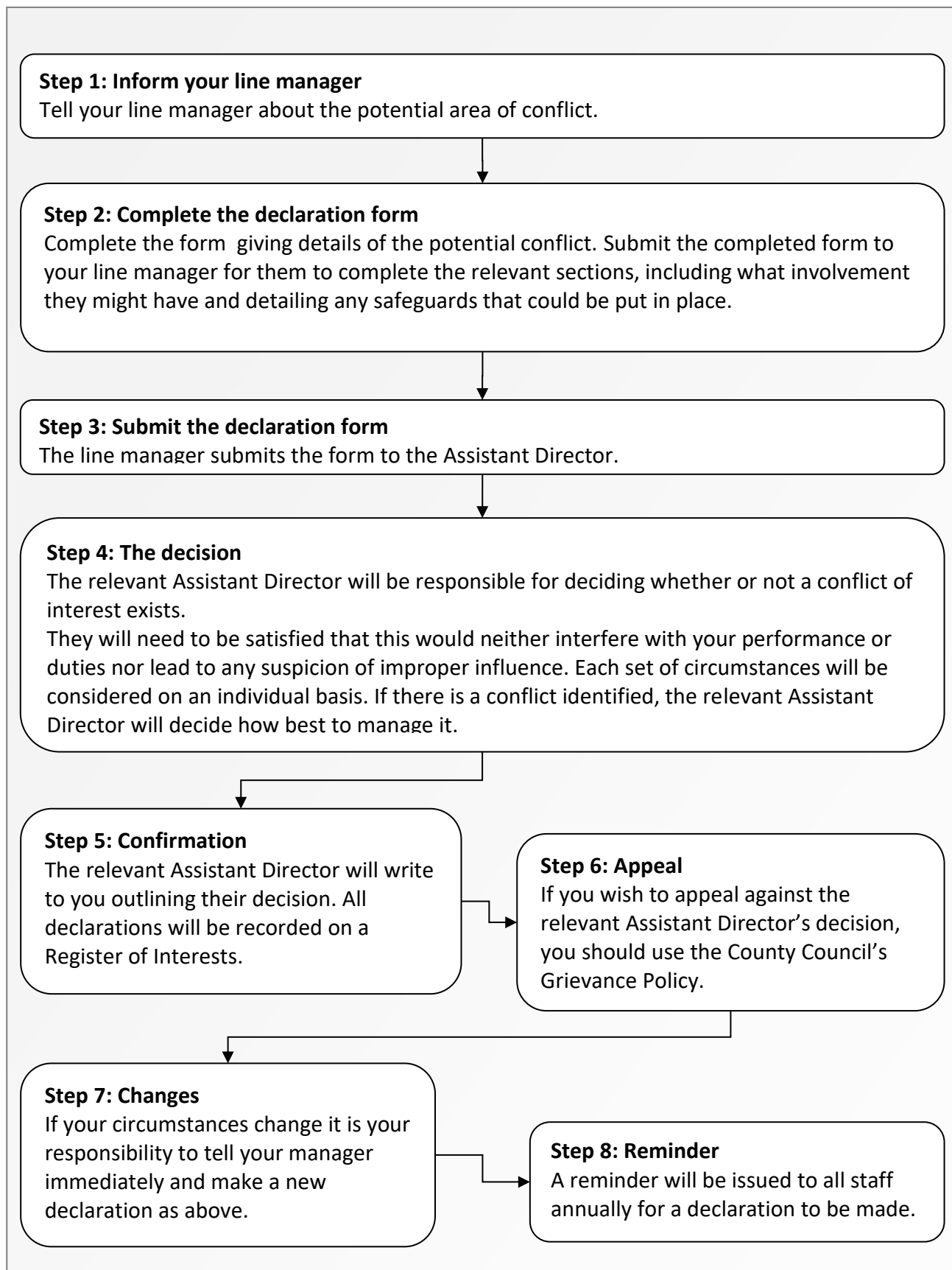
16.1. Where Assistant Directors, Deputy Chief Officers, and Chief Officers require approval or notification under the Code then this shall respectively be obtained from the appropriate Deputy Chief Officer, Chief Officer, or the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive shall obtain approval or notify either the Monitoring Officer, or the Section 151 Officer.

16.2. Where the Headteacher requires approval or notification under the Code then this shall be obtained from the Chair of Governors.

17. If in doubt

17.1. It is not possible to cover every situation you may face as an employee of the County Council. Simply because a particular action may not be addressed within the Code, this does not condone that action by omission. If you are in any doubt about anything contained within this Code, or are concerned about anything relating to your personal position, you should speak to your line manager immediately. Where necessary, line managers should seek advice from their Assistant Director/ Headteacher.

Appendix 1: Potential Conflicts of Interest



Appendix 2: Employment after working at the County Council

1. In order to safeguard the integrity of the administration of the County Council, and in order to counter any suspicion of impropriety in, among other things, the contracting process for local authority works and services, the County Council requires each of its employees to obtain the approval of their Chief Officer/Headteacher before accepting any offer of employment in business or other bodies outside the County Council which would commence within six months of leaving the employment of the County Council, whether full or part-time, or before establishing a consultancy in the following circumstances:
 - a. If you have had any material official dealings with your prospective employer (who, for the purpose of applying any of the clauses of these rules could be any organisation, individual or related undertaking including parent and subsidiary undertakings and associated undertakings as well as partners in joint ventures) during the last two years of employment with the County Council; or
 - b. If you have had any material official dealings of a continued or repeated nature with your prospective employer during the last two years of employment with the County Council; or
 - c. If you have had access to commercially sensitive information of competitors of your prospective employer in the course of your official duties; or
 - d. If you have been substantially involved in negotiations on behalf of the County Council in respect of any commercial or contractual arrangements with an external body or party; or
 - e. If, during the last two years of your employment with the County Council your official duties have involved advice or decisions benefiting that prospective employer, for which the offer of employment could be interpreted as a reward, or if your official duties have involved developing policy, knowledge of which might be of benefit to the prospective employer; or
 - f. If you are to be employed on a consultancy basis, either for a firm of consultants or as an independent self-employed consultant, and you have had any dealings of a commercial nature with outside bodies or organisations in your last two years of employment with the County Council.

Chief Officers to whom the rules apply are required to obtain approval from the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will need to obtain approval from the Governance Committee in the event that s/he proposes to take up an appointment which would lead to the rules applying to him/her. Headteachers to whom the rules apply are required to obtain approval from the Chair of Governors.

2. Approval for appointment to any position falling within the scope of these rules shall not be withheld unreasonably. In considering whether to approve an appointment, the Chief Officer/Headteacher will take into consideration the following matters:
 - a. The relationship of the County Council to the prospective employer;
 - b. The relationship between the applicant and the prospective employer during the course of the applicant's employment with the County Council;
 - c. The possibility that the applicant may have had access to trade secrets and/or confidential information about one or more of the prospective employer's competitors during the course of employment with the County Council;
 - d. The applicant's degree of seniority within the County Council; and / or
 - e. Any other relevant factors.
3. It will be open to those considering applications to recommend unqualified approval or to recommend approval subject to any waiting periods less than two years or other conditions which are appropriate to the particular circumstances of the applicant (e.g. seniority of the employee and the prospective employer).

Appendix 3: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest arises when a person's private or personal interests could be perceived to be able to influence or potentially influence a person's official responsibilities.

What should I do if I think there is a potential conflict of interest?

Inform your manager of the potential conflict and ensure you immediately complete the conflict of interest declaration form. If in doubt - declare it.

If the conflict concerns relationships between members of staff all parties must complete a declaration form.

What action should my manager take?

Your manager should ensure that:

- You do not directly supervise or that you are not directly supervised by anyone where there may be a potential conflict of interest.
- You do not have any Council business involvement with the declared conflict of interest, such as outside parties or specific contracts.
- Any claim forms you may submit e.g. travel, additional hours etc. or any invoices, orders or contracts are not authorised by anyone where there may be a potential conflict of interest.
- Any specific one-off requests are agreed by a neutral party.

What if someone I know applies for a job?

If you receive a job application from someone who is known to you, you should:

- Ensure you are not involved in any part of the selection process. This includes short listing, interview process, reference requests and decisions to appoint.
- If the person is successful you must declare the relationship and agree any necessary measures that need to be put in place, ideally prior to their commencing employment.

What should I do if I'm not sure whether there's a conflict of interest?

If you have any doubts as to whether a potential conflict of interest exists always talk to your manager about it.

Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment Summary

Date of assessment: 01 Feb 2024

Manager(s) name: Nicholas Earley

Role: Lead HR Consultant, Policy

Proposal, project, service, strategy or policy, that was impact assessed:

Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy

Summary of findings:

This policy does not discriminate against any group. Potential barriers concerning the accessibility of the policy are mitigated by employees being able to request the policy in different formats and having the policy printed for them by a manager with access to a computer/intranet.

Summary of recommendations and key points of action plan:

-

Groups that this project or service will impact upon

Please mark the appropriate boxes with an 'x'

	Positive	Negative
Age		
Disability		
Ethnicity		
Gender/Transgender		
Marital Status/Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Religion/Belief		
Sexual Orientation		
Other (carers, literacy, health, rurality, poverty)		
All	X	