



PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2020

10.00 am REMOTELY VIA TEAMS AND CC1, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

++Please note that this meeting is taking place remotely++

MEMBERSHIP - Councillor Bob Bowdler (Chair)
Councillors Godfrey Daniel (Vice Chair), John Barnes, Martin Clarke,
Chris Dowling, Nigel Enever, Darren Grover, Pat Rodohan, Stephen Shing,
Andy Smith and Barry Taylor

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of the previous meeting (*Pages 3 - 8*)
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Disclosures of interests
Disclosures by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- 4 Urgent items
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgent.
- 5 Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) 2021/22 (*Pages 9 - 60*)
Report by the Chief Executive.
- 6 Use of Office Automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Systems (*Pages 61 - 78*)
Report by the Chief Operating Officer.
- 7 Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council (*Pages 79 - 108*)
Report by the Review Board.
- 8 Scrutiny Review of Road Repairs - monitoring report (*Pages 109 - 118*)
Report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.
- 9 Work programme (*Pages 119 - 132*)
- 10 Any other items previously notified under agenda item 4

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17 November 2020

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NOTE: As part of the County Council's drive to increase accessibility to its public meetings, this meeting will be broadcast live on its website and the record archived. The live broadcast is accessible at: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/webcasts/default.htm

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee held remotely via Teams and CC2, County Hall, Lewes on 23 September 2020.

PRESENT Councillors Bob Bowdler (Chair) Councillors Godfrey Daniel (Vice Chair), John Barnes, Martin Clarke, Chris Dowling, Nigel Enever, Darren Grover, Pat Rodohan, Stephen Shing, Andy Smith and Barry Taylor

LEAD MEMBERS Councillors Nick Bennett, Claire Dowling and Keith Glazier

ALSO PRESENT Philip Baker, Assistant Chief Executive
Kevin Foster, Chief Operating Officer
Rupert Clubb, Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Stephanie Everest, Project Manager – Highways Funding and Development
Pippa Mabey, Service Development Manager, Contracts Management Group
Dale Poore, Contract Manager Highway Infrastructure Services

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1.1 The Committee RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019 as a correct record.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 There were no apologies for absence received from members of the Committee. Apologies were received from the Lead Members, Councillors Bill Bentley and Rupert Simmons.

3 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

3.1 Councillors John Barnes and Stephen Shing declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in item 5 Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources (RPPR) as they are Conservators of Ashdown Forest which is referred to in the savings plan under this item.

4 URGENT ITEMS

4.1 There were none notified.

5 RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES (RPPR) 2021/22

5.1 The Assistant Chief Executive introduced the report. He outlined that the State of the County report in July was a key milestone in setting out the current position, but due to the ongoing financial uncertainty, it has not been possible to articulate a revised Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at that stage. Cabinet will receive a further report on 2 October 2020

updating them on the Council's financial position and a Whole Council Forum will be held on 28 September 2020. A review of the priority service delivery outcomes and the Core Offer is being undertaken and they will be amended in the light of the response to the Covid19 and the financial uncertainty. Councillors will continue to be kept up to date with the financial position and Scrutiny will have the opportunity to comment on the revised MTFP when becomes available.

5.2 Members of the Committee discussed the financial situation and the challenges for this years RPPR financial planning process. The comments made by the Committee are summarised below.

5.3 The Committee commented that due to the uncertainty around the Council's finances and the large number of unknown factors it is very difficult for the Scrutiny Committee to contribute to the RPPR process at this stage. It would be helpful for the Committee to know how they can best work with officers over the coming months and to have an indicative timetable of when more detailed financial information is likely to be available.

5.4 The Committee understands that the Council will be compensated by Government for the additional expenditure incurred due to Covid19 and for the loss of income. However, it would like to know if the Council has been fully compensated.

5.5 The existing savings planned for services within the remit of the Committee were noted. Some Committee members commented that they would not be comfortable with cutting services further at this point in time as Covid19 has made people more dependent on the Council's services. It would be helpful to know if further savings are required, for example due to loss of income from Council Tax or not being able to deliver existing savings, and the areas of search for any new savings.

5.6 The Committee asked if there is any scope for further efficiency savings to be made by reviewing office accommodation and through office automation with the use of new technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). The Chief Operating Officer explained that a review of office accommodation with respect to buildings and office space requirements is underway. The Council has made large savings over the last ten years in back office systems through office automation and consequently there is limited scope to make further savings. A briefing paper or report can be prepared for the Committee outlining the work that has been done in this area.

5.7 It was noted that the lateness of the announcement by Government of the Financial Settlement for local government also presented challenges, together with the speed of other announcements regarding funding and the postponement of the Fair Funding Review. There are a number of other issues such as Brexit and the Devolution White Paper which add further challenges to financial planning. It was clarified that no indication as yet had been given on the future funding levels for Public Health.

5.8 The Assistant Chief Executive outlined that modelling work is being undertaken to assess the impact of the loss of income and other changes. There is a regular response meeting which examines the impacts of any changes on the Council's financial position. Any changes will be reported through the quarterly Council Monitoring reports and updates will be made throughout the RPPR process.

5.9 The Committee discussed and agreed to form an RPPR Board to provide comments to Cabinet on the RPPR budget setting process. It was agreed that the membership of the RPPR Board will be Councillors Bob Bowdler, Godfrey Daniel, John Barnes, Chris Dowling, Stephen Shing and Andy Smith.

5.10 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 1) To note the difficulties in providing accurate financial estimates for the MTFP at this stage in the RPPR process due to the exceptional circumstances created by a number of factors;
- 2) Request information on the need for any further savings, and any changes to the existing savings plans; and
- 3) Form an RPPR Board comprised of the members of the Committee listed in paragraph 5.9 above.

6 SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ROAD MARKINGS

6.1 Councillor Godfrey Daniel, Chair of the review board, introduced the report. Councillors Barry Taylor and Stephen Shing comprised the other members of the review board, which examined the renewal and maintenance of road markings across the County. There was a general recognition by East Sussex County Councillors that road markings in some places needed renewing and the review examined the current position. Councillor Daniel thanked all those involved in the review which is an excellent example of scrutiny working collaboratively with officers, the Lead Member for Transport and Environment and Councillors.

6.2 Councillor Daniel outlined the six recommendations of the report. Recommendation 4 recommends that road markings are given greater priority for funding, which has been recognised through the allocation of an extra £165,000 of funding. Recommendation 5 recommends recharging the cost of renewing parking enforcement road markings to the parking budget. This is consistent with the way in which the other costs of operating a Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme are funded. This will then free up money for the maintenance of highway road markings. Recommendation 6 looks at future areas of funding and members of the Committee are engaged with the re-procurement of the Highways Maintenance contract which can address this need (recommendation 6c).

6.3 The members of the Committee discussed the report of the review board. It was clarified that the £24,000 that would be recharged to the parking budget if recommendation 5 is agreed, would be used on other road marking work and makes logical sense given the way other CPE costs are charged. The Director of Communities, Economy and Transport added that this would also reduce the parking surplus available to carry out other transport schemes.

6.4 Members of the review board and Committee commented on the positive improvement they had seen in the condition of road markings in their Divisions since the additional road marking team had been working across the County. The Committee noted the thoroughness of the review and supported the recommendations contained in the report of the review board. The Committee agreed the report of the review board and resolved to make recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council.

6.5 The Committee RESOLVED to endorse the report and make recommendations to Cabinet for comment, and Full Council for approval.

7 HIGHWAYS HISTORIC INTEREST STREET FURNITURE AND MATERIALS - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

7.1 The Project Manager, Highways Funding and Development introduced the report. The current approach, with the exception of the 18 streets listed in the policy, is to replace street furniture with modern materials that have a longer asset life that are easier and more cost effective to maintain. The Department does not have a specific budget for the maintenance or replacement of items of street furniture of historic interest on a like for like basis. Therefore, funding has to be found from the existing highway maintenance budgets or other sources.

7.2 Currently, the Council shares planned maintenance and replacement programmes with Conservation Officers, who can then raise issues or consult wider on any proposed changes. A

review of the existing policy has been carried out together with the Conservation Officers from the District and Borough Councils. A new policy has been developed as outlined in the report and the Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on the proposed new approach.

7.3 The Chair drew the Committee's attention to the written comments submitted by Councillor John Ungar on the report and outlining some of the issues experienced in his Division on this subject. The Committee discussed the report and the proposed new policy. A summary of their comments is given below.

7.4 The Committee commented that it was timely to look at the policy and approach to street furniture of historic interest. In many areas, such as historic villages and older parts of larger settlements, the condition of heritage assets has a direct impact on tourism and the attractiveness of these areas which needs to be considered. The preservation of the historic character of these areas will bring benefits to the County. The Project Manager, Highways Funding and Development explained that the team do explore other areas of funding, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) where possible and the use of embellishments to make modern replacements more in keeping and sympathetic to the character of local areas.

Maintenance and Utility Reinstatements

7.5 It was noted that inappropriate maintenance such as the use of jet washing and road sweepers can damage surfaces and historic features such as stone setts and pavements. Also, there is a problem with Utility Company re-instatement work not replacing materials like for like and therefore damaging the appearance of areas, including the newly constructed Eastbourne town centre scheme. The Director of Communities, Economy and Transport responded that Utility Companies can be challenged on the quality of re-instatement works, but they do have the ability to make temporary reinstatements following emergency works and then follow up later with a full reinstatement. The Contract Manager, Highway Infrastructure Services explained that street sweeping and cleaning is the responsibility of District and Borough Councils, but the team do liaise with them on maintenance issues.

Cast Iron Heritage Light Columns

7.6 It was clarified that the way in which cast iron lamp posts are unsafe is due to the cast iron material used in their construction and their location at the front edge of the pavement where they can more easily be struck and damaged by vehicles. The re-use of historic light columns elsewhere is done at the cost of other authorities (e.g. Borough, District, Town and Parish Councils). They need to be refurbished and made safe before they are re-installed in another location.

7.7 Cast iron is a brittle material and it is not possible to test the structural integrity of cast iron columns in situ in the same way as steel columns. It is very costly and impractical to send old cast iron columns away for safety testing. When they reach end of life, it is not possible to ensure they are safe with any certainty. Consequently, they are replaced to steel columns located at the rear of the pavement. When old columns are relocated to parks and other locations they are in positions where they are less likely to be hit by vehicles and therefore pose a lower risk.

Summary

7.8 In general, the Committee supported the new policy approach, but were clear that local County Councillors must be given prior notification of any works or proposals that affect street furniture of historic interest. This would give them time to speak to residents and research alternative sources of funding if there is a desire to retain more ornate or historical items of street furniture. In that respect the proposed new policy needs strengthening so that County Councillors are notified.

7.9 The Committee recommended that the flow chart on page 133 of the report be amended to reflect this and consideration be given to involving Parish and Town Councils, who may be in a position to fund alternatives to modern replacements. For example, through the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding or through their precept raising powers. The Director of Communities, Economy and Transport agreed to amend the flow chart and policy accordingly.

7.10 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 1) Recommend that the proposed new policy and flow chart be amended so that County Councillors are notified in advance of works or changes to items of street furniture of historic interest; and
- 2) Endorse the proposed new policy approach that moves away from a focus on the 18 streets and takes a broader view of street furniture features that have historic interest and contribute to the character of local areas.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 The Committee discussed the work programme and the reports for the forthcoming Place Scrutiny Committee meetings. It was agreed to defer the update report on the Scrutiny Review of the Effectiveness of School Travel Plans from the November meeting to the meeting to held on 17 March 2021.

8.2 It was agreed to add a report to the Committee's work programme on the use of office automation and AI in back office systems, as discussed in paragraph 5.6 of the minutes.

8.3 The Committee discussed the progress of the various projects to introduce temporary measures to promote walking and cycling under the Active Travel Scheme. It was noted that an announcement had not been made on the proposals made under tranche 2 of the scheme. The Committee discussed whether to add a report on this topic to a future meeting agenda. It was agreed that the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport would provide a verbal update to the Committee at the meeting on 25 November 2020 under the work programme item.

8.4 The Committee RESOLVED to amend the work programme in accordance with paragraphs 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 above.

The meeting ended at 11.28 am.

Councillor Bob Bowdler (Chair)

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Report to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 25 November 2020

By: Chief Executive

Title: Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Purpose: To provide an update on the Council's business and financial planning process, Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR), and the Committee's comments and requests for further information.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) consider the information in the attached RPPR Cabinet report of 2 October 2020 (appendix A), including the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP); and**
 - (2) identify any further work or information needed to aid the Scrutiny Committee's contribution to the RPPR process for consideration at the December RPPR Board, or as part of the Committee's ongoing work programme.**
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1. Background

1.1 In October, Cabinet considered a Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) update report. Following on from the State of the County report in July, the report set out an updated picture of how the Council will need to reset its service and financial plans to deal with the future, as we continue to live with the reality of a world with COVID-19 and the significant impact this has on people's lives, as well as a fast-moving national policy agenda.

1.2 The report also confirmed that, as a result of the ongoing rapidly evolving context, it remains very challenging to quantify future need for services and national expectations for local government and to reflect these in the Council's future service offer and financial planning. The report therefore provided Cabinet with the latest best assessment of the policy and financial context that will continue to inform ongoing planning for 2021/22. The report (attached at Appendix A) included:

- updates on key national and local policy context developments since July;
- an update on the review of the Council's priority outcomes and delivery outcomes;
- an update on the review and reset of the East Sussex Core Offer;
- the updated Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021/22-2023/24; and
- updates to the Capital Programme.

1.3 The report highlighted that the RPPR process, bringing together the Council's policy, business and financial planning and risk management, provides the vehicle for service and financial recovery. The process of planning, through RPPR, for 2021/22 and beyond will take into consideration the immediate and future impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside other trends and pressures, to form an integrated forward view and to ultimately translate this into service and financial plans which reflect recovery alongside ongoing work.

2. Scrutiny engagement in RPPR

2.1 At the September meeting the Scrutiny Committees reviewed the Portfolio Plans for the services within the Committees' remits, the savings plans that were agreed by Council in February 2020 and the Financial Budget Summary 2020/21 to ensure a baseline understanding of the current context and future pressures. Whilst the attached Cabinet report provides the committees with updates on significant developments that have occurred since the September meeting round, details of the outcome of the Government's spending review, now confirmed to be for a single year only, are not scheduled to be released until 25 November 2020. Full information on the provisional local government finance settlement may not be received by the Council until December or early January.

2.2 The **November 2020 Scrutiny Committees** are invited to:

- consider the information in the Cabinet update report (attached as Appendix A)
- review the updated MTFP (see Appendix 5 of the Cabinet report) and updated savings schedules (see Appendix 6 of the Cabinet report)
- identify any further work or information needed to aid the Scrutiny Committee's contribution to the RPPR process, for consideration at the December RPPR Board; and
- fine tune the scrutiny work programme to ensure the committee is in the best position to contribute to the ongoing RPPR process.

2.3 The committee's **RPPR Board** will meet on 22 December 2020 to agree detailed comments and any recommendations on the budget proposals and emerging portfolio plans to be put to Cabinet on behalf of the committee in January 2021. The Chairs of the People and Place Scrutiny Committees are invited to attend the RPPR boards of both committees.

2.4 The **March 2021 Scrutiny Committees** will review the process and their input into the RPPR process and receive feedback on how scrutiny input has been reflected in final plans. Any issues arising can be reflected in the future committee work programme.

2.5 Running alongside this process, there will be a number of opportunities for all Members to engage in the RPPR process.

BECKY SHAW **Chief Executive**

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Local Member: All

Background Documents:

None

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Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	2 October 2020
By:	Chief Executive
Title of report:	Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) – Update
Purpose of report:	To update Members on the latest policy context, the review of priority and delivery outcomes, the review and reset of the East Sussex Core Offer and the updated Medium Term Financial Plan and capital programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i. note the updated national policy context and local position as set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 and appendix 1;**
 - ii. agree the updated Council priority outcomes and delivery outcomes as the basis for ongoing planning (appendix 2);**
 - iii. agree the updated East Sussex Core Offer as the basis for ongoing planning (appendix 3);**
 - iv. agree the updated Medium Term Financial Plan as the basis for financial planning (appendix 5); and**
 - v. agree to continue lobbying for a sustainable funding regime to meet the needs of the residents of East Sussex and which recognises the significant impact of COVID-19 on the Council's expenditure and income.**
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1. Background

1.1. In July, Cabinet considered the State of the County report, a key milestone in the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process, its integrated business and financial planning cycle. The report set out the demographic, economic and service evidence base; the national and local policy context; and updates on our medium term financial planning position and capital programme based on the current understanding at that time. It also set out that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on our communities and services and created both a need and opportunity for the Council to review our priority and delivery outcomes and the Core Offer, to ensure they remain relevant in the new context we are working in.

1.2. The RPPR process, bringing together our policy, business and financial planning and risk management, provides the vehicle for the Council's service and financial recovery. The process of planning, through RPPR, for 2021/22 and beyond will take into consideration the immediate and future impact of the pandemic, alongside other trends and pressures, to form an integrated forward view and to ultimately translate this into service and financial plans which reflect recovery alongside ongoing work.

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1.3. This report sets out our updated understanding of how we will need to reset our service and financial plans to deal with the future, as we continue to live with the reality of a world with COVID-19 and the significant impact this has on people's lives, as well as a fast-moving national policy agenda. In this rapidly evolving context it remains very challenging to quantify future need for services and national expectations for local government and to reflect these in our future service offer and financial planning. The report therefore provides our latest best assessment of the policy and financial context that will continue to inform our planning for 2021/22, and includes:

- updates on key national and local policy context developments since July;
- an update on the review of the Council's priority outcomes and delivery outcomes;
- an update on the review and reset of the East Sussex Core Offer;
- the updated Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021/22-2023/24; and
- updates to the Capital Programme.

2. National context update

2.1. The national context the Council is operating in continues to change rapidly. Since the State of the County report in July there have been a number of national developments which are expected to affect the Council's future work and business and financial planning, although the detailed implications for ESCC are uncertain in many areas. These developments are outlined in appendix 1 and include:

- Launch of the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) – to set Government departments' resource budgets for 2021/22-2023/24, although this will now almost certainly be reduced to 2021/22 only. Government had confirmed that department spending would grow in real terms across the CSR period but that there would be tough choices in areas of spending outside the priorities at the review (which for public services were 'supporting the NHS, taking steps to cut crime and ensure every young person receives a superb education'). The CSR or Spending Review is expected to impact future central government resource allocations for areas of county council responsibility and those of our partners. The future national approach to sustainably funding Adult Social Care remains an urgent issue. The outcome of the Spending Review had been expected to be announced in the Autumn Budget which has since been cancelled. It is understood that a Spending Review will still take place this autumn, but the cancellation of the Budget demonstrates the fast moving and uncertain context we are working in.
- Economic outlook update - the Office for Budget Responsibility published a commentary on public sector finances in August which outlined that the budget deficit has continued to rise sharply with Government borrowing £150.5bn between April and July; public sector net debt is now over 100% of GDP and tax returns for April-July were 31% lower than a year earlier. Although projections vary, a reduction in national economic output (GDP) of around 10% is expected this year. There is evidence of increases in job losses nationally and there is expected to be a further increase following the closure of Government employment support schemes at the end of October, although the Chancellor has announced further employment and business support measures to support

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job retention through the winter. Two quarters of negative growth mean the UK economy is now in recession;

- Publication of the Contain Framework – which guides the approach to prevention and containment of local coronavirus outbreaks and the national escalation steps to be taken to augment local activity in areas with outbreaks. Government has also recently reinstated some nationwide restrictions following a national increase in COVID-19 case rates since early September;
- A Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper was due to be published this autumn, although this now seems to be in doubt. It was expected to propose a new phase of local government reorganisation and creation of Combined Authorities as the first step to securing further devolution deals to deliver economic recovery and renewal;
- Launch of the final phase of negotiations on the future relationship with the EU – with a future trading relationship between the UK and EU still to be agreed;
- Publication of the Planning for the Future White Paper – intended to overhaul the planning system, with potential implications for funding and delivery of infrastructure improvements to support housing developments in East Sussex; and
- Publication of the ASC Taskforce Report and ASC Winter Plan – which includes extensive actions for local authorities, the Department for Health and Social Care and the NHS to ensure that high-quality, safe and timely care is provided to everyone who needs it, whilst protecting those that need care, their carers, and the social care workforce from COVID-19 this winter. Many of the actions are already taking place within the East Sussex Health and Social Care System but there are new requirements for ESCC, including to produce an East Sussex Winter Plan by 31 October and complete a care market sustainability self-assessment.

2.2. Further detail and more developments are included at **appendix 1**. We expect the detail of policy changes and the resulting implications for the County Council to become clearer in the coming months and will continue to factor these into planning for 2021/22 and beyond.

3. Local position

3.1. As with elsewhere in the country, East Sussex saw an increase in COVID-19 infections in September, although at a rate slower than the national average. Public Health continually monitor the situation in consultation with health and borough and district partners. The second iteration of the East Sussex Outbreak Control Plan was reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board in September. This included a new escalation framework which set out the points at which local cases or outbreaks may require an escalated response, communications and action with partners. In consultation with local partners, the Director of Public Health agreed East Sussex should move from 'monitor and contain' to 'raised local alertness' on the escalation framework in September in response to the rising number of cases.

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3.2. The pandemic has had a significant effect on the East Sussex economy and labour market, with the latest local data showing:

- nearly 100,000 people in the county were in receipt of government support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (71,500 claims) and Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (28,000 claims) at the end of July;
- Between March and July, the number of Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit (searching for work) claimants in East Sussex more than doubled to 20,000;
- In July, 47% of the East Sussex working age population were claiming Universal Credit, Job Seekers Allowance or receiving support from a Government COVID-19 income support scheme; and
- 10,700 businesses in the county have received grants for small businesses who are experiencing difficulties. There were 22,900 business enterprises in the county in 2019.

3.3. The 100,000 people on furlough or claiming self-employment income support at the end of July represents 31% of the East Sussex working age population. This is above the national average of 29% and indicates that, while levels of unemployment have already increased, there is a risk of further increase when these schemes cease at the end of October. We would expect this to have an impact on future need for council services and Council Tax income revenue. The East Sussex Economy Recovery Plan has been developed within this context and agreed by Team East Sussex to inform urgent work to be delivered over the next 12-18 months to support changes required in response to the pandemic and capitalise on the opportunities it presents for the East Sussex economy.

3.4. For the Council, the period since July has seen our staff and services continue to transition from temporary arrangements put in place during lockdown. We have closely followed public health and Government guidance to ensure that the steps taken are appropriate in the context of continuing to contain the spread of the virus. Changes to ways of working have been based on robust assessment of what is needed to effectively deliver services to residents. Some staff have continued to work from office bases or directly with clients throughout, with appropriate safeguards in place, where this has been essential to maintain services. Where staff have been working remotely as part of containment measures, a return to buildings has been prioritised for services where remote working is not sustainable or as effective. This approach is being kept under review with regular checkpoints. As part of this transition, all departments have also reviewed opportunities to take forward positive outcomes and learning from the new ways of working and new partnerships that have arisen from the local pandemic response. Member meetings have continued to take place online and are being discussed through the Member reference group.

3.5. A renewed Adult Social Care and Health Programme has been established to look at how we can continue to provide social care services to those that need them safely, effectively and efficiently, in light of the changes to working that have been made in response to the pandemic and any lessons learned. The programme will look at all areas of the department's activity to reshape and improve ways of working and will not impact levels of service provided. The programme will run until August 2021 and any financial implications will be included in 2021/22 budget setting. One

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of the project workstreams will consider opportunities to work with partners to build on the success of the multi-agency Community Hubs, to build community capacity and prevent escalation of need in East Sussex.

3.6. Orbis continues to support staff to effectively deliver all services that we can remotely to reduce the risk of coronavirus spread. Across the Council we have seen improvements in productivity due to modernised processes and increased flexibility of working. Staff management and new service delivery practices are enabling staff to work in this increasingly flexible way. Opportunities to embed and expand digital technologies and processes that have enhanced service delivery and working processes in lockdown are being explored. There is some indication that the shift to increased remote working and economic uncertainty has increased applications to County Council job vacancies, including previously hard-to-recruit roles.

3.7. Work has also taken place to begin to assess the impact of the pandemic and accompanying economic disruption on future need and service pressures over and above pre-COVID trends in demand. This assessment will be an ongoing process throughout the autumn as the impact continues to emerge. The following will need to be taken into account:

- How people currently on temporary COVID-19 care pathways will translate into ongoing core demand for ASC. This will become clearer as further assessments take place throughout the autumn;
- The support we will need to provide if advice to shield the most clinically vulnerable is re-activated nationally or locally, and the impact of that beyond the current financial year. As set out in appendix 1, a new national shielding framework is expected to require councils to assess and meet the food and other basic needs of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people if shielding is reactivated at a future date;
- The re-opening of schools is resulting in an increase in referrals of children newly in need. Modelling is taking place to assess the potential for an increase in children in need but understanding the scale of this need and how it will translate into future years will take time and be an iterative assessment;
- We will need to assess the impact of COVID-19 on ongoing work to support mainstream schools to improve families' confidence in local Special Educational Needs Provision; and
- Whether there are longer-term requirements to provide additional Home to School Transport capacity (as outlined in appendix 1) beyond this school term and whether additional grant funding will be provided for this.

3.8. It is clear that we will need to take account of the ongoing reality of COVID-19 in our plans. In the short to medium term we are likely to see new waves of infection which will need services to flex and respond rapidly to changing circumstances once again. The longer-term impacts of COVID-19 will not be felt evenly across our services and are not yet fully clear.

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3.9. In this ongoing period of uncertainty it is important that we apply our existing robust political and business planning processes to develop our plans for the short, medium and longer term.

4. Priority and Delivery Outcomes

4.1. Cabinet agreed in July to review the Council's four priority outcomes and their subsidiary delivery outcomes in light of the changed context, and revise these as needed to ensure the priorities we are working to deliver, and the way we measure the performance of our activities and services, remain appropriate in the changing operating context.

4.2. An expansion of the cross-cutting priority outcome 'making best use of resources' to 'making best use of resources in the short and long term' has already been considered by Cabinet. This reflects the Council's ambitions for carbon neutrality and better reflects that the Council's decisions should be guided by a test priority that we ensure sustainability of our resources, both in terms of money and environmental assets.

4.3. As a result of the review several further amendments to the delivery outcomes which support the four priorities are proposed. The amended outcomes are shown in **appendix 2** with the key proposed changes detailed below.

4.4. Priority outcome: Driving sustainable economic growth –

- A new delivery outcome has been added to reflect the Council's role in supporting local businesses to recover and grow through the delivery of the Economy Recovery Plan in conjunction with partners.
- Delivery outcome 1, relating to employment and productivity rates, has been amended to reflect the changed context – the revised wording reflects the focus on recovery and the aim to maximise employment and productivity rates.
- Delivery outcome 3, on skills and employment, now includes reference to meeting the needs of the future East Sussex economy, recognising the potentially significant shifts in ways of working, differing impacts across sectors and potential new opportunities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and other developments in the local economy.
- A new delivery outcome has been included to recognise the opportunity to maximise the influence of the County Council's role as a significant employer within the county and a buyer of local goods and services both in terms of supporting local economic recovery and longer term.

4.5. Priority outcome: Keeping vulnerable people safe –

- An additional delivery outcome has been included to reflect the Council's role, working as part of the wider health and care system, to support people affected by COVID-19 to achieve the best health outcomes possible.

4.6. Priority outcome: Helping people help themselves –

- Delivery outcome 9 has been broadened to include vulnerable people of all ages and to better reflect the range of ways in which support is provided.

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- Delivery outcome 10 has been re-worded to reflect the opportunity to build on the mutual support systems that have been developed in partnership within communities so that these can continue to support the COVID-19 response, its impacts on people's lives and to help people help each other longer term.

4.7. Priority outcome: Making best use of resources in the short and long term -

- The wording of delivery outcome 12 has been enhanced to reflect the increased strength and long term importance of partnership working across sectors and its role in making best use of all available resources for the benefit of local people.
- Delivery outcome 16 is proposed for deletion as a strategic commissioning approach is now embedded in the Council's ways of working and does not require a specific delivery outcome.

4.8. Whilst other delivery outcomes may not have changed it is important to acknowledge that delivery of some of these will present a significant challenge in light of the increasing needs of individuals, communities and families as a result of the pandemic and its consequences, and uncertainty about the future.

4.9. Cabinet is recommended to agree the updated priority and delivery outcomes attached at **appendix 2** as the basis for ongoing planning for 2021/22 and beyond.

5. Core Offer

5.1. As a consequence of austerity and the requirement to find £138m of savings since 2010, the Core Offer was developed last year to define the Council's minimum reasonable service offer to our residents in this context, and to ensure resources were directed to areas of highest need. The Core Offer represents a level of service below which we should not go in order to meet the needs of residents, not only for the services we provide but to play our part in supporting them in their wider health and wellbeing needs. Savings already planned will take us to the minimum core service offer by 2022/23. Alongside this, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it additional roles and expectations for local authorities and changes in demand for existing services.

5.2. We have reviewed whether the activities within the current Core Offer, and the volumes of those activities, are regarded as core to meeting residents' needs in the new operating context. We have considered where local need for services and prioritisation of services have diverted from our current Core Offer as a result of the pandemic and whether the offer should be amended to include these in the longer term. We have also considered if there are existing elements of our Core Offer that are no longer priorities in the new operating context.

5.3. The review has shown that the Core Offer remains largely appropriate as an expression of our minimum locally appropriate service offer to residents in a time of austerity. It continues to reflect our statutory responsibilities, core functions and the range of services required to meet local needs. It includes a commitment to delivering good value for money in all we do. However, in many areas the way in which services are provided has changed and may continue to change, and demand has already increased in some areas, affecting the volume of activity needed to

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deliver the Core Offer. The anticipated increase in demand for some services in light of the pandemic and the associated pressures on resources are reflected in financial planning.

5.4. As a result of the Core Offer review some specific changes have been identified to reflect the changed context as shown in **appendix 3**. The key proposed changes are summarised below.

5.5. As one Council

- Additional wording has been included to reflect the preventative focus of work with the voluntary and community sector.
- Wording has been updated to reflect the increasing importance of working within wider systems, for example in health and social care.
- The addition of a new core requirement to respond effectively as an organisation to the impact of COVID-19 and to maximise learning from this response.

5.6. Schools

- Wording has been added to reflect the new core responsibility to address the specific impact of COVID-19 on pupils' progress and outcomes.

5.7. Public Health

- Inclusion of specific wording to reflect enhanced responsibilities in relation to local outbreak planning and response as part of our health protection role.
- Several points relating to the commissioning of specific public health services have been replaced with a single overarching point focused on commissioning public health services to meet needs. This reflects the outcome of the public health review and the strategic commissioning approach to services.

5.8. Cabinet is recommended to agree the updated Core Offer attached as **appendix 3** as the basis for ongoing planning.

6. Medium Term Financial Plan

6.1 It remains difficult to plan for 2021/22 and beyond. The level of Government funding that ESCC will receive between 2021/22 – 2023/24 is yet to be confirmed; Spending Review (SR) 2019 was for a single year and therefore funding for this planning period will be announced at SR20 in the autumn, the date of which is still to be confirmed. Due to the ongoing uncertainty related to the end of the Brexit transition period and COVID-19 it is increasingly likely that there will be a single year SR similar to SR19. Cabinet, at its meeting in November 2019, welcomed the one-off funding of £4.4m that is now rolled into base funding. Additionally, the Fair Funding Review and Business Rate Retention reform have been confirmed delayed until at least 2021/22.

6.2 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated to provide a baseline position before further refinement of pressures, including those relating to

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Children's Services, the future impact of COVID-19, and reduced income from council tax and business rates. A number of scenarios based on the potential for further funding announcements are set out in section 6.7. For financial planning purposes, the working assumption is that the authority will be conducting business as usual from 1 April 2021. Should there be a loss of income or extra pressures arising in 2021/22 from COVID-19, these will be managed through our normal quarterly monitoring process. The assessment at this stage is for the potential loss of income to be £2.0m whilst cost pressures may be in the region of £1.1m.

6.3 The baseline position includes: (1) Normal updates for regularly calculated adjustments and the additional year 2023/24, summarised at **appendix 4**; (2) Proposed updates following review by CMT via the Pressures Protocol, also summarised at appendix 4; (3) A review of deliverability of approved savings (see section 6.4).

6.4 The deliverability of existing savings plans has been reviewed, and whilst no savings have been identified as undeliverable, there will be slippage of £2.316m of savings into 2022/23 and 2023/24. The detail is set out in **appendix 6**.

6.5 These movements are summarised in the table below and provide a deficit budget position by 2023/24 of £23.860m.

Medium Term Financial Plan	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	Total £m
Council 11 February 2020 DEFICIT/(SURPLUS)	1.443	7.879	0.000	9.322
Normal Updates (appendix 4)	(2.106)	(1.441)	8.872	5.325
Proposed Updates (appendix 4)	9.895	(0.206)	(0.477)	9.213
Savings Reprofile (appendices 4 & 6)	2.316	(1.074)	(1.242)	0.000
Deficit / (Surplus) AFTER UPDATES TO THE MTFP	11.548	5.158	7.154	23.860

6.6 A detailed MTFP after normal updates and proposed pressures is shown at **appendix 5**.

6.7 As set out above, our known deficit for 2021/22 is £11.5m with an aggregate deficit of £23.9m. However, we know there is uncertainty about future funding allocations. In resetting the MTFP and presenting the budget for 2021/22 and beyond, a number of scenarios have been considered that could impact the possible level of budget deficit that will need to be addressed and these are set out in the table below. Scenario 1 includes potential options for further national funding which have yet to be clarified. For example, is it likely that we will have flexibility to raise Council Tax by a further 1%, will Revenue Support Grant receive an inflationary increase to Baseline Funding levels, and/or is it likely that we will get further one-off funding? If the council receives all of these then our position will reduce to a £3.0m deficit in 2021/22. Further scenarios presented below consider additional possible national announcements and their impacts on ESCC.

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Scenarios	Estimate (£m)			
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER NORMAL UPDATES	(0.663)	6.438	8.872	14.647
Total Proposed Updates to the MTFP	12.211	(1.280)	(1.719)	9.213
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER PROPOSED UPDATES	11.548	5.158	7.154	23.860
Local Considerations				
New Homes Bonus retain in revenue	(0.252)	0.138	0.114	0.000
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER Local Considerations	11.296	5.296	7.268	23.860
Scenario 1, Likely				
Funding announced at SR20 similar to SR19				
Adult Social Care Precept and / or increase in referendum limit @ 1%	(2.983)	(0.068)	(0.070)	(3.121)
Revenue Support Grant (inflationary increase to Baseline Funding level)	(0.935)			(0.935)
One off grant – per previous years	(4.417)	4.417		0.000
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER Scenario 1, Likely	2.961	9.645	7.198	19.804
Scenario 2, Less Likely				
Government Funds 2020/21 Business Rates loss	(0.237)	0.237		0.000
		(0.178)	0.178	0.000
			(0.119)	(0.119)
Government Funds 2020/21 Council Tax loss	(2.263)	2.263		0.000
		(1.697)	1.697	0.000
			(1.131)	(1.131)
Increase in referendum limit @ 1%	(2.983)	(0.068)	(0.070)	(3.121)
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER Scenario 2, Less Likely	(2.522)	10.202	7.753	15.433
Scenario 3, Unlikely				
Business Rates, Proceeds of Pooling 2021/22	(1.279)	1.279		0.000
Income Guarantee: Government compensation for 75% of losses of income after the first 5%.	tbc			tbc
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER Scenario 3, Unlikely	(3.801)	11.481	7.753	15.433

6.8 Although at this point in the RPPR process it is not possible to present a balanced MTFP due to the considerable level of national funding uncertainty and the everchanging requirements to meet the response to COVID-19, there are no plans to seek to identify further savings. Current savings plans (at appendix 6) get the Council to its Core Offer and any further savings would take it below that. Over the coming months, we will work to refine the budget to update for the impact of the Local Government Settlement, in whatever form that takes, whilst reflecting updated assessments of budget pressures, including Council Tax and Business Rates. If there is a deficit on the 2021/22 budget, and in line with our robust financial management policies and procedures, the plan at this point will be to use reserves to mitigate this position until the medium-to-longer term funding position is clarified.

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7. Capital Programme

7.1 The approved capital programme was reported to Cabinet in July 2020 as part of RPPR State of the County report, where it was agreed that the impact of COVID-19 on the planned programme during 2020/21 would be reported as slippage and/or under/overspend as part of the capital monitoring process. The table below provides an updated programme. These variations including funding updates are detailed at **appendix 7**.

Capital Programme Gross (£m)	2020/21	MTFP Period			2024/30	Total
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		
Approved Programme as at State of the County	96.889	69.391	59.285	51.688	293.076	570.329
Updates to the programme	0.535	1.982	-	-	-	2.517
Revised Programme	97.424	71.373	59.285	51.688	293.076	572.846

7.2 As part of the RPPR process, service finance and departmental capital teams will complete a capital programme refresh as part of the Quarter 2 monitoring process which will be formally used to provide a realigned capital programme. There have been no revisions to the capital targeted basic needs proposals to support post COVID-19 service offer at this stage.

8. Lobbying and Communications

8.1. Work has been ongoing over the summer to understand the impact of COVID-19 on East Sussex residents through a range of both open access and targeted surveys, research and engagement. We received over 10,000 responses to an online survey open to all residents and held telephone interviews with a sample of 1,000 residents designed to ensure we heard from a representative cross-section of the local population.

8.2. Residents responding online identified improving the local economy as their top priority for the future, whereas respondents to the phone survey placed stronger public services at the top of their list. The uneven impact of the pandemic was reflected in research findings with around a third of online respondents feeling closer to their community, whereas around a quarter felt more distant. Almost a third (31%) of telephone interviewees had seen household income somewhat reduced, with a further 10% indicating their income had been greatly reduced as a result of the pandemic. A third of respondents expect they will need public services more than before COVID-19 over the next 12 months. A third of people expect that public services will have fewer resources to help them, whereas a third expect services to be resourced at about the same level as now. Looking at how the pandemic may change future behaviour, nine in 10 people expect to do more tasks and interaction online, six in 10 intend to do more to reduce their environmental footprint and more than half say their main focus will be on increasing their or their family's income. Findings from this research will feed into the evidence base that informs our planning for 2021/22 and our ongoing lobbying.

8.3. We are doing all we can, in the context of significant uncertainty, to understand and plan to meet local need, but we greatly need assurance we will have

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sufficient funding to deliver all that is required to support local residents and businesses in the wake of the pandemic; and deliver an ambitious local and national recovery agenda in the future. We also urgently need a sustainable long term settlement for Adult Social Care, where demand is increasing year on year against a background of diminishing resources. While proposals for longer term reform of social care are still awaited, assurance that the short term support provided in 20/21 will be at least matched in 21/22 is a minimum requirement now.

8.4. South East 7 Leaders have written to the Chancellor this summer to set out the urgent need for certainty that in-year pressures from coronavirus will be met and that we will have adequate funding provision next year. The Leader and Chief Officers have also worked to help Government Departments evidence local government spending need in support of their submissions to the Comprehensive Spending Review and to explain the cost of not adequately funding councils in the current context. Lobbying will continue concertedly in partnership with others, including our local MPs, in the autumn.

9. Next Steps

9.1. This report demonstrates the high level of uncertainty within which planning for 2021/22 is taking place and the scale of the challenge we face. Much is to be determined around national spending allocations and priorities for 2021/22 onwards, and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and economic upheaval on our services is still emerging. National government will be looking to local government to support the ongoing COVID-19 response and economic and social recovery, as well as delivering significant reform in a range of areas. We need certainty as early as possible that we will receive an adequate level of funding next year to enable focus on this work. We will redouble our lobbying efforts to ensure absolute clarity of this message to Government.

9.2. Work will continue throughout the autumn and winter to understand the impacts on our residents and services of the coronavirus pandemic, the detailed funding picture as it emerges and the implications of national policy developments. This analysis will feed into our ongoing business and financial planning.

9.3. Subject to agreement by Cabinet, the Council's updated priority and delivery outcomes, Core Offer and Medium Term Financial Plan will be used as the basis for more detailed business and budget planning for 2021/22 and beyond.

9.4. Members will continue to be involved in developing plans through Cabinet, County Council, Scrutiny Committees, Whole Council Member Forums and specific engagement sessions throughout the 2020/21 RPPR process.

BECKY SHAW
Chief Executive

Policy Outlook Update – October 2020**1. Introduction**

1.1. There have been a number of national developments since the local and national policy outlook was reported to Cabinet in July that are expected to have implications for the County Council's future work and business and financial planning. These are detailed below.

2. Overall Context**Containing and managing local coronavirus outbreaks**

2.1. Government launched a national COVID-19 Contain Framework in mid-July, which set out how NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) will work with local authorities, Public Health England (PHE) and the public to contain and manage local COVID-19 outbreaks. The framework provided further guidance on roles, responsibilities and powers of Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLA) in managing local outbreaks, following publication of Local Outbreak Management Plans by all UTLAs in June. Government has allocated funding to UTLAs to support development and delivery of these plans. ESCC has received £2.5m which will be used to support implementation of the East Sussex Local Outbreak Control Plan approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in July. The move to localised management of outbreaks is part of the Government's strategy to undertake a targeted response, employ smarter restrictions and limit nation-wide restrictions as far as is possible to manage the pandemic. Government has reinstated some nation-wide restrictions following a national increase in COVID-19 case rates since early September.

2.2. A range of indicators are monitored to provide situational awareness of COVID-19 transmission and prevalence across England. The indicators used fall into four primary groups: PHE and NHS Test and Trace data (e.g. the number and rate of increase of positive cases and the number of outbreaks in an area), syndromic surveillance (e.g. increase in NHS111 calls regarding COVID-19 like symptoms), NHS activity (e.g. hospital admissions for COVID-19), and other indicators (e.g. mortality data). Detailed local data on the above indicators is now shared with local public health teams.

2.3. These indicators are used to assess the level of risk in each area and are the basis of PHE's weekly surveillance reports, which include a watchlist of areas with higher-than-average incidences of COVID-19. Areas are placed in one of three 'escalation categories' if it is deemed additional resource or approaches are required to augment local responses. Escalation categories are:

- areas of concern - UTLAs work with partners, supported by regional PHE and NHS Test and Trace resource, to take additional actions to manage outbreaks and reduce community spread of the virus to more normal levels.
- areas of enhanced support – area provided with increased national support, capacity and oversight, including additional resources deployed to augment the local teams where this is necessary.
- areas of intervention - are defined where there is divergence from the lockdown measures in place in the rest of England because of the significance of the spread of COVID-19. There are a range of non-pharmaceutical interventions available to local and national leaders, from extensive communications and expanded testing, to restrictions on businesses and gatherings.

2.4. A number of areas across the country have been placed in the above categories over the summer. The interventions taken in each place has varied according to local

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circumstances and the national support available to augment local arrangements continues to develop. In August it was announced that councils in areas of intervention would be expected to reach consensus and bring forward proposals, informed by case data, on the geography that should be included in the area of intervention. The intention is that areas with lower rates of infection are not subject to restrictions unnecessarily.

2.5. Supplementary to the Contain Framework, publication of a COVID-19 Shielding Framework is expected to inform local authority planning to support Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) individuals in the event that shielding guidance is reintroduced on a local or national basis. Any decision to reintroduce shielding will be taken at a national level, and the framework is expected to set out that in the event this happens councils will now be responsible for assessing the food and basic support needs of CEV individuals and facilitating delivery of that support. Funding to support councils in assessing and meeting these needs is anticipated but details are to be confirmed.

2.6. There is now a legal requirement for people to self-isolate when they test positive for COVID-19 or are instructed to by NHS Test and Trace. New fines have been brought in to enforce the requirement. People on lower incomes who cannot work from home and have lost income as a result of being asked to self-isolate will receive a payment of £500, administered via local government. The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government are engaging with local authorities on how this will work in practice.

Economic Outlook

2.7. In April, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) assessed the potential impact of coronavirus on the UK economy and public finances. The OBR updated the analysis in July to take account of Government's announcement of lifting lockdown restrictions. The analysis provided three medium-term scenarios for the economy and in all scenarios a reduction in GDP of over 10% was projected for 2020. In August, the OBR published further commentary on public sector finances:

- Public Sector Net Borrowing (the budget deficit) has continued to rise sharply with £150.5bn borrowed between April – July 2020;
- Public Sector Net Debt had topped £2tn for the first time and was 100.5% of GDP in July;
- HMRC cash receipts for the first four months of 2020/21 were 31% lower than a year earlier, with VAT accounting for the bulk of deterioration due to the Government's deferral scheme and lower consumer spending; and
- Central Government spending was 36% higher than a year earlier reflecting the cost of the coronavirus job retention and self-employment income support schemes, plus higher public services spending.

2.8. Similar forecasting by the Bank of England has indicated GDP will shrink by 9.5% this year, less severe than previously forecast, but that unemployment could almost double to 7.5% by the end of 2020. Latest figures published by ONS indicate that 695,000 fewer employees were on UK payrolls in August than in March; and there was a large drop in employment of 16 – 24 year olds between May and July (decreased 156,000), while there was a combined increase in employment on the previous quarter for those aged 25 – 64. The end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) and Self-employment Income Support Scheme on 31 October is expected to contribute to further job losses nationally, although the Treasury has announced further employment and business support measures to support retention of jobs through the winter. Other ONS figures released in August demonstrated that the UK economy is officially in recession following two quarters of negative GDP growth.

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2.9. The second report of the House of Commons Treasury Committee's inquiry into the economic impact of coronavirus looked at the national challenges of economic recovery and found them to be maintaining recovery of consumer confidence and spending, including potentially through a second wave; minimising long-term unemployment increases while enabling sufficient labour flexibility to allow structural change and movement from shrinking to growing sectors; dealing with elevated levels of corporate debt; and, in the long term, managing Government debt sustainably.

Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Budget

2.10. Government launched the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) at the end of July to set Government departments' resource budgets for 2021/22-2023/24 and capital budgets for 2021/22-2024/25. Given ongoing uncertainty around COVID-19 and the end of the Brexit transition period, it is highly likely this will now be reduced to a spending review for 2021/22 only. The following priorities have been set for the review:

- strengthening the UK's economic recovery from COVID-19 by prioritising jobs and skills
- levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people – thus closing the gap with our competitors by spreading opportunity, maximising productivity and improving the value add of each hour worked
- improving outcomes in public services, including supporting the NHS and taking steps to cut crime and ensure every young person receives a superb education
- making the UK a scientific superpower, including leading in the development of technologies that will support the government's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050
- strengthening the UK's place in the world
- improving the management and delivery of our commitments, ensuring that all departments have the appropriate structures and processes in place to deliver their outcomes and commitments on time and within budget

2.11. Government confirmed that department spending would grow in real terms across the CSR period but that there would be tough choices in areas of spending outside the above priorities at the review. Government departments have been asked to identify opportunities to reprioritise and deliver savings. The CSR consultation closed on 24 September.

2.12. The Autumn Budget 2020 was expected to confirm the CSR/Spending Review outcome and Government's longer-term fiscal plans. The Autumn Budget has now been cancelled but it is understood that a Spending Review will still take place this autumn.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

2.13. Government committed in the December 2019 Queen's Speech to publish an English Devolution White Paper to 'unleash the potential' of all English regions by increasing the number of mayors and doing more devolution deals across 'functional economic areas' to level up powers and investment.

2.14. A Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper was expected to be published this autumn, although that is now in doubt. The paper was expected to propose a new phase of local government reorganisation and creation of Combined Authorities as the first step to securing further devolution deals to deliver economic recovery and renewal.

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End of EU Exit Transition Period

2.15. Agreements on the future relationship between the EU and UK following the end of the transition period on a range of matters - including trade, security and control of fishing waters - are still to be agreed. On 7 September, the Prime Minister made a statement to open the final phase of negotiations with the EU in which he said that an agreement on trade must be reached by 15 October for the new relationship to be agreed in time. If an agreement is not reached, future trade with the EU will take place under World Trade Organisation rules from the end of the transition period on 31 December. There is a risk that ending the transition period without an agreed relationship between the UK and EU could result in disruption at Newhaven Port, in the local economy, to the coronavirus response and in delivery of the council's services and this has been captured on the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

2.16. Government is undertaking preparations for the end of the transition period. Plans for a post-transition Border Operating Model were published in July which set out that the Government has taken the decision to introduce the new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021. Government is also making plans for inland ports. A Border Facilities and Infrastructure (EU Exit) Special Development Order was laid in Parliament in early September to provide Government with emergency and temporary planning permission for the development of inland border facilities and associated infrastructure. 29 administrative areas in England were listed in the order, including East Sussex, although HMRC have confirmed they are not currently planning arrangements within East Sussex. The Trading Standards team are monitoring developments to understand regulatory requirements following the transition period and to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet new demands for enforcement and business advice.

3. Adult Social Care and Health

Adult Social Care Taskforce Report and ASC Winter Plan

3.1. Earlier this year, Government established an ASC Taskforce to oversee delivery of support to the social care sector in its response to COVID-19; and of the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) Social Care Action Plan. As part of its work, the Taskforce was commissioned to advise the Minister of State for Social Care on what needed to be in place in the care sector in England to respond to COVID-19 ahead of winter. The final report of the Taskforce includes 52 recommendations for Government, local authorities, the NHS and others within the health and social care system. We are working through the recommendations with our partners across the local health and social care system.

3.2. The Taskforce recommendations have informed Government's ASC Winter Plan, published in September, setting out its ambitions for and challenges facing the social care sector this winter. The plan outlines actions DHSC is taking and actions local systems (councils, the NHS and Voluntary and Community Sector) should take to ensure that high-quality, safe and timely care is provided to everyone who needs it, whilst protecting people who need care, their carers and the social care workforce from COVID-19.

3.3. The plan outlines a wide-range of actions that local systems and DHSC are already taking to provide care while reducing transmission of COVID-19. Further actions the plan outlines DHSC is taking include:

- working up a designation scheme with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for premises that are safe for people leaving hospital who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are awaiting a test result – although it will remain councils' responsibility to provide alternative accommodation in local systems for supporting people with a positive test result requiring care;

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- providing free PPE (for COVID-19 needs in line with current guidance) to care homes and domiciliary care providers via the PPE portal until the end of March 2021;
- providing free PPE to local resilience forums (LRFs) who wish to continue PPE distribution, and to local authorities in other areas, to distribute to social care providers ineligible for supply via the PPE portal, until the end of March 2021;
- working with local authorities and the CQC to strengthen their monitoring and regulation role to ensure infection prevention and control procedures are taking place;
- publishing a new online Adult Social Care Dashboard, bringing together data from the Capacity Tracker and other sources;
- publishing information about effective local and regional protocols and operational procedures based on what we have learnt so far to support areas with local outbreaks and/or increased community transmission; and
- in partnership with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and Local Government Association, carrying out a Service Continuity and Care Market Review in the autumn to understand the robustness of the plans local authorities have in place, and what additional support may be needed.

3.4. The primary new and additional actions for ESCC resulting from the plan are:

- to put in a place an East Sussex Winter Plan building on existing planning, including the East Sussex Local Outbreak Plan and in the context of planning for the end of the Brexit Transition Period, by 31 October;
- provide free PPE to care providers ineligible for the PPE portal (supplied by DHSC) when required (including for personal assistants) directly until March 2021;
- to work with local partners to carry out learning reviews after each care home outbreak to identify and share lessons learned;
- to ensure care providers carry out testing as set out in the testing strategy and, together with NHS organisations, provide local support for testing in adult social care if needed;
- for the Director of Public Health to regularly assess of whether visiting care homes is appropriate, taking into account the wider risk environment and immediately moving to stop visiting if an area becomes an 'area of intervention' (see 2.3 above), except in exceptional circumstances such as end of life;
- to work alongside the Care Quality Commission to ensure care homes are taking necessary steps to prevent spread of the virus and follow up with care providers that are not limiting staff movement; and
- establish a weekly joint communication from the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and Director of Public Health to go to all local providers of adult social care.

3.5. Government has also requested all councils complete a care market sustainability self-assessment. This will be reported to the Minister of Care, through DHSC. The Minister is seeking assurance that care markets are sustainable though the winter period and where this cannot be provided the intention is to provide support to councils to address any identified challenges.

3.6. Government has committed to continue to engage across the sector to understand needs as they develop throughout the winter and provide appropriate support. We will continue to engage and emphasise the need for a sustainable funding settlement for social care, that reflects the scale of investment made in the NHS, and the need to limit self-assessment/ assurance/ Government reporting to free-up fundamental capacity to deliver.

3.7. Government has provided a second £546m tranche of Infection Control Funding, to be distributed by councils to care providers, to support delivery of the plan. The East Sussex allocation, conditions of this funding and reporting requirements are to be confirmed, but as with the first tranche, the expectation is the funding will help providers with the extra costs of

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infection prevention and control measures – including the payment of care workers who are self-isolating in line with government guidelines. We anticipate central designation of what proportion of the funding is provided to which parts of the care market. £588m has also been provided for the NHS to support people needing additional follow-on care after they have been discharged from hospital. From September 1 – 31 March 2021, the NHS will fund up to the first six weeks of support following hospital discharge, during which assessments will be carried out to determine ongoing care and funding arrangements.

National Institute for Health Protection and future of population health improvement

3.8. Government has announced the creation of a National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP) to advance the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and any future pandemics and health threats. The NIHP brings together Public Health England's health protection functions, NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre under a single leadership team in its shadow form.

3.9. Government has published a paper providing detail on the transition to the new NIHP, as well as scoping plans for the future of the health improvement/ preventative functions PHE also currently has responsibility for. The paper confirms prevention of ill health remains a national priority and PHE will continue its health improvement and wider prevention work in the coming months under the leadership of the NIHP. In this time Government will consider the best future arrangements for work on health improvement, including the range of non-health protection functions PHE provides, engaging with representatives across the public health system.

3.10. The paper outlines a number of options under consideration, including:

- devolving functions to a more local level such as local authorities and/or integrated care systems
- creating a separate national organisation dedicated to driving progress on prevention, health improvement and, potentially, public healthcare services
- retaining health improvement responsibilities within DHSC and/or other government departments
- embedding health improvement responsibilities into existing health arm's length bodies such as NHS England and NHS Improvement
- a combination of the above options

3.11. A new Population Health Improvement Stakeholder Advisory Group has been established to advise Government on the options, and input into an options paper to be published in October. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share views and we will consider the proposals and respond. The national budget of the NIHP and for future health improvement activities will be agreed in the Spending Review. Government intends to publish its final recommended approach and delivery plan by the end of 2020.

4. Children's Services

Support to schools

4.1. Pupils returned to schools and colleges at the start of September with education settings putting a 'system of controls' in place to keep students and staff safe, focussed around minimising direct contact and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

4.2. Education settings re-opened in places subject to local restrictions and Government has been clear that re-introduction of restrictions on education and childcare settings is to be considered only once all other possible measures have been taken. A tiered system of

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restrictions has been established to guide the phased introduction that would take place in circumstances where areas that are subject to national intervention require some level of restriction to education or childcare settings. Tier 1 restrictions apply to all areas subject to local intervention; all schools remain open but with a requirement for adults and pupils in settings educating years 7 and over to wear face coverings in communal areas where it is not possible to socially distance. Guidance has been provided to support settings to plan for how they would implement tier 2 restrictions - moving to a rota model, combining on-site provision with remote education - if required. Tiers 3 and 4 involve further limiting students attending on site in different education settings.

4.3. There has been an increased expectation on councils to support schools this year; with partial closure, with providing places for vulnerable children and children of keyworkers in lockdown, with provision of remote learning in lockdown, and recently with making preparations to re-open. In this new context, the focus of the Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service for the 2020/21 academic year will be on:

- Planning, preparation and support for schools in potential local lockdowns – see 4.2 above;
- Increased support for vulnerable pupils, including safeguarding, addressing learning loss and ensuring attendance;
- Ongoing co-ordination of services for schools;
- Managing the impact of COVID19 on early years providers and ensuring that we maintain sufficient places for the future; and
- Supporting young people into Education, Employment and Training during a period of rising unemployment and economic downturn that will disproportionately impact 18-24 year olds.

Home to School Transport

4.4. In the summer, national guidance was published on transport provision to support the return of schools and colleges in September. This set out that as capacity on public transport is limited, local authorities needed to put in place local demand management solutions for public services, and supplement the public bus network, and existing home to school transport, with additional capacity, to ensure that children could travel to school safely, and disruption for all passengers on the public network was minimised. The Transport Team made arrangements to support school returns accordingly, including working with operators to ensure sufficient provision on the network of bus services used by school children travelling to schools in East Sussex and to other neighbouring authorities.

4.5. The County Council has been allocated £464,596 by the Department for Education (DfE) to assist in securing additional transport capacity until the end of the October school term. There is uncertainty about the resource we will have for additional capacity after this period. All Chief Finance Officers have been asked by DfE to account for use of the funding provide to date, to inform a second tranche of funding for the second half of this term.

Ofsted Inspections

4.6. Ofsted has announced interim inspections arrangements for a range of settings:

- Ofsted and CQC will begin visiting councils in October to understand the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families. They will look to find out what has worked well for them during this time, what the challenges have been, and lessons learned;
- As part of a phased return to the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) programme, Ofsted will be carrying out focused visits from the autumn. Inspectors will look at the experiences of children and how local authorities and providers have made the best possible decisions for children in the context of the pandemic. For

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councils, this includes how they have joined up schools and social care services while schools were closed, to ensure vulnerable pupils continued to be identified. Ofsted is intending to visit as many providers and local authorities as possible, prioritising those it has concerns about (i.e. an area of priority concern or judged inadequate). Ofsted will also visit a sample of local authorities judged good or outstanding at their last inspection to identify good practice that will help others with their recovery plans, which could include ESCC;

- Assurance visits of social care provider's children's homes, secure homes and residential special schools will take place from 1 September 2020 – 31 March 2021 and will look at the experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account the Covid-19 context;
- Ofsted will be undertaking interim visits of registered early years providers from September to ensure standards are being maintained and there is safe and effective childcare available for all who need it; and
- Interim visits of maintained schools and academies will take place from 28 September to December to look at how leaders are managing the return to full time education for their pupils, including considering remote learning and safeguarding in line with the guidance for full re-opening.

4.7. With all inspections, Ofsted will not give graded judgements but will set out findings in a published report/letter setting out what is going well and what needs to improve.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

4.8. There has continued to be an increase in asylum seekers and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) entering the country in recent months, particularly in Kent. As a result, in August, Kent County Council declared it could no longer safely accept UASC into its care.

4.9. In response, the Home Office has launched a consultation on introducing a more sustainable National Transfer Scheme (NTS). The focus is on creating a sustainable rota system that will take account of the broader range of support local authorities provide across the whole of the asylum system, including to care leavers and the dispersed population. This will include a broad and comprehensive approach to look at all the issues facing local authorities hosting the greatest number of UASCs – particularly those that are over their 0.07% allocation (i.e. UASC make up more than 0.07% of the total child population) and those with significant numbers of former UASC care leavers.

4.10. The consultation is seeking views on:

- how the Home Office might implement a voluntary transfer system and what the barriers might be for local authorities;
- the need for a mandatory scheme to force those local authorities who have been less willing/ able to engage in the NTS; and
- including care leavers in the 0.07% ratio

4.11. ESCC already works closely with the scheme and has taken a number of new arrivals via NTS. Our willingness to continue to work with the NTS will not change. There will however be implications in terms of planning for increased numbers of new UASC admitted into care at certain times of the year to reflect our place on the rota set against the number of spontaneous arrivals that we receive outside of the scheme as a local authority with a port of entry. At the moment, we are able to balance the impact of assuming responsibility for young

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people via the NTS and to sequence placements in a way that delivers good and safe outcomes for UASCs.

4.12. Whether the scheme continues to be voluntary or mandatory will arguably have a significant impact on the numbers and timing of young people who the Council is asked to take but a mandatory scheme would spread the requests more equitably. Including care leavers in the 0.07% ratio seems a sensible step given the ongoing commitment to that group of young people.

5. Communities, Economy and Transport

Planning for the Future White Paper

5.1. Published in August, the White Paper is open for consultation until the 29 October and proposes a fundamental reform of the planning system. The proposed reforms are heavily focussed on housebuilding and driven by the Government's clear aim of delivering a minimum of 300,000 new houses per annum. The paper proposes simplifying the role of Local Plans to focus on identifying land under three categories –

- Growth – areas suitable for sustainable development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
- Renewal - areas suitable for some development; and
- Protected - areas where development is restricted.

5.2. The White Paper sets out a vision for a reformed planning system so further detail will be required to fully understand the implications for ESCC. Whilst the reforms are likely to have a greater impact upon our District and Borough partners (as well as the South Downs National Park Authority), there are potentially significant implications for the County Council, particularly where we perform a statutory consultee role and/or are a key infrastructure provider. These implications include:

- Reforms to capture development value for infrastructure provision – it is proposed to replace Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy with a national Infrastructure Levy to be paid on completion of developments. Government acknowledge that this may impact on the ability to get new and improved infrastructure in place before developments are occupied and therefore suggest that councils consider forward funding the necessary infrastructure improvements. If this materialises, the implications on the County Council will be substantial as it could involve the need to forward fund and deliver infrastructure improvements ourselves. We would encourage Government to consider an alternative mechanism to deliver transport improvements that make development sites viable in transport terms;
- Abolition of the Duty to Cooperate – while broadly welcomed as it has been an ineffective mechanism for undertaking strategic planning nationally, the paper has not set out how cross-boundary planning issues will be addressed or how reforms will enable planning for large-scale and cross-boundary infrastructure proposals linked to housing and employment growth;
- Commitment to review resourcing of planning functions – while welcome, it is essential that this also considers the resourcing that is required for statutory consultees in the planning process;
- the White Paper has no mention of waste and minerals planning, so clarification is needed as to how the reforms will impact upon this particular sector of planning, for which ESCC has responsibility; and

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- further digitation of the planning system – this is welcome and a change authorities have been working towards.

5.3. ESCC's draft response to the White Paper will be considered by Lead Member for Transport and Environment, and in addition to the above points, will seek clarity and further detail on a number of areas; emphasise the need for the system to enable ESCC to continue delivering important public services, i.e. new school places; and that the system needs to be underpinned by democratic oversight and accountability for decisions.

5.4. Alongside the White Paper, the Government also published a consultation on changes to the current planning system. The majority of changes are unlikely to directly impact upon the County Council. However, of most significant consequence is the proposed revised formula for calculating the housing delivery target that each planning authority should aim to plan for, which if taken forward is likely to increase the demand on the Council's statutory consultees and those services tasked with planning and delivering infrastructure.

Pavement parking consultation

5.5. The Department for Transport has launched a consultation which will explore proposals to ban pavement parking in England. The Department for Transport is looking at three options: improving the Traffic Regulation Order process, under which local authorities can already prohibit pavement parking; legislative change to allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers to enforce against 'unnecessary obstruction of the pavement'; and legislative change to introduce a London-style pavement parking prohibition. The consultation will run until late November. The decision to allow authorities with CPE powers to enforce the obstruction would have implications for ESCC as we undertake civil parking enforcement in Hastings Borough, Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough and anticipate the order enabling CPE in Rother to be in place from 29 September.

Integrated Review

5.6. The Cabinet Office is currently undertaking an Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. Part of the review will consider national resilience and changes required to deliver resilient places and communities, including the future of Local Resilience Forums. Sussex Resilience Forum will be engaging in the review and making the case for the need for core funding for LRFs, particularly given their role in the COVID-19 response.

6. Support Services

Public sector exit payments

6.1. In April 2019, Government published a consultation seeking views on regulations implementing a £95,000 cap on exit payments in the public sector. In September, Government published a further consultation seeking information on

- i. the effects that the proposals for reform will have on the regulations which currently govern exit payments in local government; and
- ii. the impact the proposals will have on the local government workforce.

Full details of the regulations and how they will operate in practice are not yet known as they are subject to the latest consultation, although Treasury regulations to implement the cap have already been introduced to Parliament. However, it is expected that they will have significant implications for how we manage workforce change and reform.

[Proposed changes in red]

The Priority 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 **in the short and long term**. Making best use of resources **in the short and long term** is the gateway priority through which any activity and accompanying resources must pass.

For each priority outcome there are specific delivery outcomes. These are referenced to performance measures in this Portfolio Plan.

Driving sustainable economic growth - delivery outcomes

NEW: East Sussex businesses are supported to recover and grow through the delivery of the Economy Recovery Plan

1. The county's employment and productivity rates are ~~high throughout the county~~ **maximised**
2. Individuals, communities and businesses thrive in East Sussex with the environmental and **social** infrastructure to meet their needs
3. The workforce has and maintains the skills needed for good quality employment **to meet the needs of the future East Sussex economy**

NEW: The value of our role as both a significant employer and a buyer of local goods and services is maximised

4. All children progress well from early years to school leaver and into education, training and employment

Keeping vulnerable people safe - delivery outcomes

5. All vulnerable people in East Sussex are known to relevant local agencies and services are delivered together to meet their needs
6. People feel safe at home
7. People feel safe with **support** services

NEW: We work with the wider health and care system to support people affected by Covid-19 to achieve the best health outcomes possible

Helping people help themselves - delivery outcomes

8. Commissioners and providers from all sectors put people first when providing services and information to help them meet their needs
9. The most vulnerable **adults** get the support they need to maintain their independence and this is provided at or **as close to home as possible**
10. ~~Individuals and communities are supported and encouraged to be responsible, help others and make the most of community capacity and assets~~ Through our work with others, individuals and communities are encouraged to maintain and develop local mutual support systems

Making best use of resources in the short and long term - delivery outcomes

11. Working as One Council, both through the processes we use and how we work across services
12. **Delivery through strong and sustained** Working in partnership **working** across the public, voluntary community, and private sectors to ensure that all available resources are used to deliver maximum benefits to local people
13. Ensuring we achieve value for money in the services we commission and provide
14. Maximising the funding available through bidding for funding and lobbying for the best deal for East Sussex
15. To help tackle Climate Change East Sussex County Council activities are carbon neutral as soon as possible and in any event by 2050
16. ~~Applying strategic commissioning to ensure resources are directed to meet local need~~

East Sussex County Council's Core Offer

[Proposed changes in red]

As one council

We will:

- be driven by the needs of our residents, businesses and communities and focus on our four priority outcomes;
- be democratic, open and honest about our decision making;
- work with all our partners to make sure there is a shared view of priorities and that we make the most of opportunities and resources available in East Sussex;
- work effectively with the community and voluntary sector, **including to avoid the need for statutory services**;
- work well as a single organisation **and within wider systems**;
- provide the best quality service we can within the resources we have available;
- compare our cost and performance against others to make sure we provide value for money;
- learn from others to improve outcomes for residents;
- ensure that as much money as possible is directed towards front line services;
- lobby hard to protect and promote the interests of East Sussex.
- **respond effectively and flexibly to the impact of Covid-19 on our services and communities and ensure we harness opportunities to do things differently in the longer term.**

Customer Service

We will:

- respond to formal complaints and statutory information requests;
- seek to provide information and services online wherever possible.

Protecting and supporting vulnerable people

Children at risk

We will:

- provide a statutory social care offer to safeguard children at risk of harm. This includes: protecting children; looking after children who are in care, helping care leavers become successful adults and managing efficient and effective **residential**, fostering and adoption services;
- we will provide an Early Help Service for 0-19 year olds where it helps us manage the demand for higher cost services, including an integrated service with Health Visitors for 0-5 year olds;
- we will work with partners to prevent young people from offending and to respond effectively when they do.

Special Education

We will:

- carry out statutory assessments of children with Special Education Needs (SEN), where there are significant barriers to learning;
- use our best endeavours to secure the right educational provision for those with the greatest need;

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- fulfil our statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children who meet the threshold under the Continuum of Need;
- where possible, work to build capacity in Early Years settings to ensure vulnerable pupils can attend a pre-school setting from 2 years old and can be supported to attend and succeed in mainstream schools.

Adults

We will:

- provide information and advice for all those seeking care and support;
- assess need and arrange help for individuals and their carers who are eligible for support from Adult Social Care;
- provide support that reduces the need for social care in the longer term and/or prevents the need for a more expensive service;
- continue to ensure that we safeguard vulnerable adults who are at risk of harm or abuse.

All Children

Schools

We will:

- operate a light-touch monitoring of the performance of maintained schools. We will use our best endeavours to intervene when a school is at high risk of failure;
- encourage the Regional Schools Commissioner to intervene where academies in East Sussex are under-performing;
- use our best endeavours to improve the outcomes of pupils vulnerable to under-achievement, **including the impact of Covid-19 on pupils' progress and outcomes**;
- promote post-16 participation in education and training, including provision and support for young people with learning difficulties/disabilities.

School planning and access

We will:

- plan to have enough Early Years and school places where they are needed;
- co-ordinate and administer the admission process;
- provide home to school transport where we have a statutory duty to do so **and in the context of Covid-19**.

Universal offer to all residents

Highways and Transport

We will:

- maintain roads, pavements, bridges, structures, highway drainage and verges and carry out repairs to our current standards;
- investigate road accident sites and take measures to prevent recurrence where this is possible;
- carry out safety audits of proposed highways improvement schemes;
- manage the national concessionary fares scheme and provide limited bus subsidies where they provide access to vital services, education and employment for communities which would otherwise be cut off;
- enforce civil parking restrictions where they are in place;
- carry-out strategic planning of the highways network to help to ensure the County's transport needs are met now and in the future;

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- provide footpath clearance on priority and popular rights of way routes, maintain the Definitive Map and respond to public requests for footpath diversions and searches.

Economy and Trading Standards

We will:

- provide access to high quality employment to reduce avoidable reliance on public services by acting as a strategic economic authority that intervenes, in partnership, decisively and cost effectively where it can make a difference, especially by leveraging in external funding;
- carry out food sampling and food inspection where the risk is high; carry out reactive animal health disease control and take enforcement action where necessary.

Waste Management

We will:

- dispose of waste collected by the borough and district councils and provide sufficient waste sites to meet national guidance.

Planning & Environment

We will:

- fulfil our statutory duties on planning, development control, flood risk and environmental management, including specialist environmental advice where required;
- provide emergency planning services.

Libraries

We will:

- provide a library service which meets our assessment of current and future needs.

Public Health

We will:

- Work at population level to identify the areas where risks and threats to health are greatest to create a healthier, happier and fairer East Sussex.
- Support the **NHS whole health and care system** to ensure a population health focus lies at the heart of integration and innovation within **the NHS health and care** in East Sussex
- Ensure the protection of public health through **local outbreak planning and** management; screening; immunisation and emergency planning and preparedness, working with all relevant agencies and professions to gain maximum impact from our combined efforts.
- Continue the universal offer for school nursing and health visiting and look at the specification of future contracts to see if services could add more value to early years and preventive programmes within children's health and social care.
- **Commission public health services that meet the needs of local communities**

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- ~~Continue to offer the NHS Healthcheck programme, targeting specific populations and groups with the aim of reducing the life and healthy life expectancy gaps across the County.~~
- Contribute to health improvement by making targeted interventions focused on those populations for which there is clear evidence of efficacy and by tackling the wider the causes of ill health. We will draw on the preventative nature of the NHS long-term plan locally to align and gain value from integrated commissioning, design and provision of services.
- ~~Provide Drug and Alcohol Services which concentrate on the provision of successful treatment and prevention of harm and keep pace with new threats and new treatment options.~~
- ~~Commission sexual health services which seek to increase efficiency by modernising the way services are delivered and focus on areas of highest risk, whilst maintaining quality and access.~~
- ~~Reduce management and support costs by 15% to bring in line with reductions already made across the remainder of the Council.~~

Archives and Records

We will:

- manage the records which we are required to keep by law. We will meet our basic statutory duties as a Place of Deposit for public records at The Keep including a basic level of public access to those records.

Gypsies and Travellers

We will:

- manage our current portfolio of permanent and transit sites.

Registration Service

We will:

- fulfil our duties to register births, deaths and marriages.

Community Safety

We will:

- deliver our local Community Safety priorities, commission effective substance misuse and domestic abuse support services and fulfil our statutory duties in relation to Prevent; Modern Slavery and the Crime and Disorder Act.

Support Services

We will:

- work in partnership with others to provide the best value for money, ensuring professional and modern support to front line services as efficiently as possible so maximum resource is focussed on front line delivery;
- manage our assets and central financial resources, including Treasury Management, capital and reserves prudently and effectively to support the County Council's business and sustainability.

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APPENDIX 4 – Normal and Proposed Updates to the MTFP

Normal and Proposed Updates	Ref	Estimate (£m)			
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Council 11 February 2019 DEFICIT/(SURPLUS)		1.443	7.879	0.000	9.322
NORMAL UPDATES					
Business Rates Retention	A	(0.211)	0.092	(1.844)	(1.963)
Business Rates Growth (0.7%)	A		(0.010)	0.010	0.000
Revenue Support Grant	B	(0.500)	(0.081)	1.571	0.990
Council Tax Base (growth @ 0.9%)	C	0.307	0.314	(2.849)	(2.228)
Council Tax Inflation (1.99%)	D	(0.002)		(6.417)	(6.419)
Council Tax Collection Fund	E	0.990			0.990
New Homes Bonus Reduction	F			0.114	0.114
NHB to Capital Programme	F			(0.114)	(0.114)
Savings Profiling	G	0.100		(0.100)	0.000
Treasury Management Pressure	H	0.650		1.000	1.650
General Contingency (1% of net budget less TM)	I	(0.020)	0.010	0.110	0.100
Pensions Final Revaluation	J	(1.400)	(0.400)		(1.800)
Levies Increase	K			0.012	0.012
Pay Award (impact of 0.25% additional in 2020/21; 2% in all years, reduced from 2.5%)	L	(0.315)	(0.587)	2.438	1.536
Contractual inflation (contract specific)	M			2.252	0.877
Normal inflation for contracts	N	(0.342)	(0.195)	7.435	6.898
ASC & CSD Growth and Demography	P	(0.087)	0.230	5.056	5.199
CSD: SEND High Needs Block Additional funding	Q	(1.276)	(0.814)		(2.090)
CET: Waste Housing Growth	R			0.198	0.198
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER NORMAL UPDATES TO THE MTFP		(0.663)	6.438	8.872	14.647
PROPOSED UPDATES					
Savings reprofile	S	2.316	(1.074)	(1.242)	0.000
Pressures (BAU):					
BSD: Accounts Receivable	T	0.058	0.004	0.005	0.067
CET: Ash Dieback management	U	0.137	0.014	0.015	0.166
CET: The Keep - BAU funding gap pressures	V	0.069			0.069
CET: Trading Standards - loss of income	W	0.056			0.056
Contractual / Statutory Obligations:					
BSD: St Marks House Rent Review	X	0.052			0.052
CSD: EH&SC Living Allowances	Y	0.060			0.060
CSD: EH&SC LAC Placement Costs	Z	3.429	(0.795)	(0.789)	1.845
CSD: Child Protection Plans	AA	tbc	tbc	tbc	0.000
CSD: No recourse to public funds and Intentionally Homeless	AB	tbc	tbc	tbc	0.000
Cost Pressures Covid-related:					
CSD: Home to School Transport	AC	tbc	tbc	tbc	0.000

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Normal and Proposed Updates	Ref	Estimate (£m)			
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
ASC: Future Demand Modelling	AD	2.243	(0.628)	(0.323)	1.292
ASC Mitigation: Additional Attrition due to Excess Mortality		(1.110)	0.263	0.191	(0.656)
Income Losses Covid-related:					
CSD: EH&SC Lansdowne income loss (includes payback in 2023/24)	AE	0.124	(0.124)	(0.124)	(0.124)
Business Rates: collection fund deficit (2021/22-2023/24) based on Ds' & Bs' MHCLG Covid-19 returns		0.237	(0.237)		0.000
			0.178	(0.178)	0.000
				0.119	0.119
Business Rates: growth reduction to 0.25% in 2021/22 (due to Covid-19)	AF	0.065	0.011	0.011	0.087
			0.076	0.002	0.078
				0.077	0.077
Council Tax: collection fund deficit (2021/22-2023/24) based on Ds' & Bs' MHCLG Covid-19 returns	AF	2.263	(2.263)		0.000
			1.697	(1.697)	0.000
				1.131	1.131
Council Tax: growth reduction to 0.25% in 2021/22 (due to Covid-19)	AF	1.975	0.058	0.061	2.094
			1.515	0.045	1.560
				1.033	1.033
Reductions in Budget					
ASC Mitigation: S117 Additional Income	AG	(0.500)			(0.500)
ASC Mitigation: Supporting People Contract Reduction		(0.243)			(0.243)
Subtotal PROPOSED UPDATES		11.231	(1.305)	(1.663)	8.263
Potential Investment Areas:					
CET: Additional Team East Sussex (TES) support	AH	0.030			0.030
CET: Work on the pan Sx tourism brand with WSCC	AI	0.070	0.025	(0.055)	0.040
ASC: Voluntary Sector / Community Hubs / Shielded Group	AJ	0.880			0.880
Subtotal Potential Investment Areas		0.980	0.025	(0.055)	0.950
DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) AFTER NORMAL AND PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE MTFP		11.548	5.158	7.154	23.860

A Business Rates Retention and Growth

The current planning assumptions on business rates have been updated to reflect the latest inflation estimate by the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) and to include 2023/24. Growth continues to be estimated at an average of 0.7% increase of the business rates base. Whilst unrealistic, given the impact of the pandemic it allows visibility of the full reduction as a result of Covid-19 which is then shown as a pressure, this will form part of the LGFutures review and will be subject to refinement.

Since Full Council, updated estimates on business rates income from District and Borough Councils (NNDR1 forecasts) have been received. This showed a small improvement in income. Business rates have been updated to reflect these estimates. However, much has changed since these estimates were made. Business rates will continue to be monitored and

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along with the collection fund, reviewed with the District and Borough Councils alongside their final accounts and latest collection forecasts to understand the impact for 2021/22.

As per normal practice the next inflation update to the MTFP will be made in October when the September Inflation figures are published.

B Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

At final settlement government confirmed that the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) would be increased in line with the increase to the small business rates multiplier. With the delay to Business Rate reform and the Fair Funding Review, until 2022/23 at the earliest, the plan assumes we will be no better or worse off. The calculation of RSG has been updated to reflect the latest OBR inflation estimates on the small business rates multiplier, while still assuming the Spending Funding Assessment (SFA) will not see an inflationary increase.

C Council Tax Base Growth

Growth for baseline purposes is being estimated at 0.9% for 2021/22 to 2023/24 in line with normal average annual growth. Whilst unrealistic, given the impact of the pandemic it allows visibility of the full reduction as a result of Covid-19 which is then shown as a pressure, this will form part of the LGFutures review and will be subject to refinement.

D Council Tax Inflation & Adult Social Care Precept

The assumption is a council tax increase of 1.99%; the current limit before referendum is triggered post 2020/21.

E Council Tax Collection Fund

It is expected there will be a reduction in Council Tax income in 2020/21 through lower collection levels and increased Local Council Tax Support. This is based on current estimates from Ds and Bs. The actual figure will be confirmed within Districts' and Boroughs' final accounts. Whilst unrealistic, given the impact of the pandemic it allows visibility of the full reduction as a result of Covid-19 which is then shown as a pressure, this will form part of the LGFutures review and will be subject to refinement.

F New Homes Bonus (NHB) Reduction

Government indicated at settlement that NHB will be wound down. The final legacy payment will be due in 2022/23 with no further income expected for 2023/24. The 2021/22 amount will be confirmed at Local Government Finance Settlement and is assumed now to fund capital. The bonus could be used for revenue, although with the risk that the amount could decrease further.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
New Homes Bonus	0.252	0.114	0.000

G Savings Profiling - One-off temporary mitigations

Update to the Savings Profile for the 2023/24 financial year.

H Treasury Management Pressure

Update to the MRP and interest calculation to include IT&D investment over 10 years rather than over 30 years and reduced interest rates respectively. Also, to include the additional year of 2023/24 in regard of the 10 year capital programme.

I General Contingency

This is calculated at an agreed formula of 1% of net budget less treasury management.

APPENDIX A

J Pensions Final Revaluation

The triannual pensions revaluation was finalised after the budget for 2020/21 was approved. The impact is a reduction in the secondary contribution required for all years.

K Levies Increase

The figures are reflective of the latest estimates of the Flood & Coastal Protection Levy, Sussex Inshore Fisheries Levy and New Responsibilities Funding.

L Pay Award

Service inflation model has been updated to include 2023/24 and for a 2.0% pay award in all years (previously assumed at 2.5%). This is offset by the increase in award for 2020/21 to 2.75% (approval by Governance Committee for LMG and Chief Officers pending).

M Contractual Inflation (contract specific)

The service inflation model has been updated for an additional year and a small drop in rates in 2021/22. The methodology provides inflation to services for large contracts as per the contract but does not provide for inflation on running costs or small contracts.

N Normal Inflation for Contracts

The service inflation model has been updated for an additional year using the inflation figures published by the OBR at the Budget statement in March.

Outside normal inflation provided for in approved models there is additional provision for inflationary pressures in ASC and CSD, agreed under the Pressures Protocol.

P ASC & CSD Growth and Demography

Updates to 2021/22 and 2022/23, and a forecast for 2023/24 has been added to the current plan.

Q CSD: SEND High Needs Block Additional funding

This has been updated to reflect that the additional funding is permanent and not expected to be removed.

R CET: Waste Housing Growth

The forecast pressure for 2023/24 has been added to the current plan. Further review and update will be required.

S Savings

Deliverability of existing savings targets for 2020/21 to 2023/24 has been reviewed by Services, the detail of which is shown at appendix 6. Any slippage in 2020/21 will be funded through reserves, but there will be an impact on the MTFP in future years.

T BSD: Accounts Receivable

Increased costs for address traces and the third party contract for printing/postage of invoices that are raised for the council. The third party contract is more cost effective than in-house provision, but increasing volumes mean that there is an identified pressure that cannot be mitigated.

U CET: Ash Dieback management

The number of ash requiring felling in East Sussex is expected to increase dramatically over the next few years of the spread of Ash Die Back (ADB) in the county.

APPENDIX A

V CET: The Keep - BAU funding gap pressures

There are funding gap pressures at The Keep. These are due to;

- i. Increased cost for electricity, rates, other energy costs, premises costs such as increased maintenance costs.
- ii. Reduction in income due to the current room rental agreement with University of Sussex (UoS) ending August 2021.
- iii. All three partners, ESCC, BHCC and UoS are under financial pressure to make savings and reduce contributions to the Keep budget. They will all contribute less in 2021/22 due to KSP savings.

W CET: Trading Standards - loss of income

Loss of funding from the ending of our partnership with Checkatrade of £0.046m, plus a loss of business advice and Primary Authority income of £0.010m as a result of businesses opting not to pay for these services (particularly in the hospitality and restaurant business where 50% of our Primary Authorities are focused).

X BSD: St Marks House Rent Review

The St Marks House rent review has now been agreed following a consultation with the Landlord.

Y CSD: EH&SC Living Allowances

In response to COVID-19, the government increased Universal Credit payments. This requires an increase in Living Allowance for LAC and Care Leavers, to bring them in line with Statutory Sick Pay. The impact is the on-going increase in future years, further to those reported/ required in 20/21.

Z CSD: EH&SC LAC Placement Costs

As a direct consequence of the COVID-19 lockdown, further to what has been reported for 20/21 via the COVID-19 finance log, there has been an increase in the future year costs forecast for LAC. This is over and above what would normally be expected through the detailed LAC modelling and forecasting which assumes a certain level of growth and “churn” based on historic trends.

Essentially although overall LAC numbers have remained broadly stable, children that are coming into the system or who are moving around within it, are going into placements that are ‘higher tariff’ and hence more expensive. For example, children who would previously have been placed within a foster placement have had to go to a more expensive residential placement because no foster placements either in house or in agency are available. Children who were previously on the edge of care with packages to support them, have moved into the care system because of the additional pressure on families.

AA CSD: Child Protection Plans

We have seen a 23% increase in the number of child protection (CP) plans during the Covid pandemic. Our own predictive modelling (and that of the DfE) suggests we are likely to see a 20% surge in demand for children’s social care once schools return. However, as schools return and visiting families resumes, we would also hope to be able to cease a number of CP plans. At this stage it is not possible to predict with any degree of accuracy how many more plans will be started and how many plans we will be able to cease. We propose to review the data at the beginning of October, which should enable us to produce a more accurate assessment of whether a pressure is likely to arise.

APPENDIX A

AB CSD: No recourse to public funds and Intentionally Homeless

It is presently unclear in future years whether and at what value additional costs will be incurred. However, pressures do appear likely around additional financial support for:

- i) Families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF); and
- ii) Families who have been assessed as Intentionally Homeless by the D&Bs and who then present to CSD for support with rent in the private sector.

AC CSD: Home to School Transport

New Covid-Safe transport guidelines have been implemented for pupils returning to school. CET is in the process of calculating the additional costs and whether the new grant given to the County Council will cover the additional costs for the Autumn term. It is not clear whether the grant will continue for the rest of the financial year or for 2021/22 if Covid-Safe transport is still required.

AD ASC: Future Demand Modelling offset by Attrition

Additional independent sector packages of care due to volumes of hospital discharges between 19th March 2020 and 31st August 2020. As no assessments have been undertaken it is unclear how many of the existing clients will be eligible for ongoing LA funded packages of care and placements. Some will be eligible for CHC or will be self-funders. However, it is impossible to accurately predict until assessments start to ramp up.

It is estimated that this will be 60% of current clients but a more accurate figure is unlikely to be available until at least December. The figures quoted in this bid equal the ongoing cost of funding these clients less the usual budget for comparable activity in the period. Future reductions in cost are due to attrition, and further mitigation is provided by additional attrition due to excess mortality.

AE CSD: EH&SC Lansdowne income loss

Works on the building expansion of Lansdowne Secure Children's Home have been delayed due to COVID-19, resulting in a loss of income. Completion of the works and full re-opening is now likely during 2021/22. The allocation will be paid back in 2023/24.

AF Business Rates and Council Tax

LGFutures have been commissioned to carry out work to refine these figures for consistency and reasonableness. The £7.499m currently estimated by District and Boroughs to be the collection fund deficit is shown as spread over 3 years per the Government announcement that was made on 2 July, that fund deficits arising in 2020/21, could be spread over the next 3 years rather than the usual one year. More detail on how this will work and the authority to do this will be announced at the Spending Review in the Autumn.

AG ASC Mitigations

ASC have found budget reductions through S117 Additional Income and a Supporting People contract reduction which is re-commissioned from April 2021.

Potential Investment Areas: The following items are new areas of investment within the Council's Core Offer. Members are asked to consider whether to support them going forwards:

AH CET: Additional Team East Sussex (TES) support

An Economy Recovery Plan has been developed in response to the devastating effects of the pandemic on the local economy. In order for the department to be able deliver the plan to meet its key objectives, the EDSCI Service will require additional (part-time) resource.

APPENDIX A

AI Work on the pan Sussex tourism brand with WSCC

Identified with West Sussex County Council is the need to collaborate together to jointly create a pan Sussex tourism brand. This will require a defined and resourced programme of work to enable the Tourism Sector ecosystem to continue to be a major economic driver for Sussex, whilst supporting a quality of life that residents and businesses expect from living and working in Sussex.

AJ ASC: Voluntary Sector / Community Hubs / Shielded Group

A multi-agency partnership worked to ensure no one in East Sussex was left on their own to cope with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic from March to August 2020, through a range of services and interventions to vulnerable and extremely vulnerable people.

It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted pre-existing pressures and vulnerabilities and that recent events have further exposed or exacerbated those difficulties. There is a general acceptance of a need to develop a longer-term approach to collectively address these problems, and that building on the ethos and model of Community Hubs provides a mechanism to achieve this.

APPENDIX A

Appendix 5 – Normal Updates to the MTFP

Medium Term Financial Plan	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Approved Budget	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£million	£million	£million	£million
TAXATION & GOVERNMENT FUNDING		(403.437)	(405.678)	(419.715)
Business Rates (Inclusive of BR Pooling in 20/21)	(82.023)	0.639	(1.645)	(1.823)
Revenue Support Grant	(3.548)	0.903	1.437	1.601
Council Tax	(296.698)	(4.298)	(7.967)	(8.673)
Adult Social Care Precept	(5.771)			
New Homes Bonus	(0.767)	0.515	0.138	0.114
Social Care Grant	(14.630)			
TOTAL TAXATION & GOVERNMENT FUNDING	(403.437)	(405.678)	(413.715)	(422.496)
SERVICE PLAN				
Service Expenditure	359.787	365.210	383.785	396.215
Investment of unallocated funding – Revenue	2.453	(0.746)	(1.707)	
Inflation				
Pay Award	3.415	2.754	2.548	2.438
Contractual inflation (contract specific)	0.658	0.841	0.839	2.252
Normal inflation for contracts	9.182	8.143	8.703	7.435
Adult Social Care				
Growth & Demography	3.840	3.413	3.917	4.063
Future demand modelling net of attrition (Covid-related) Appendix 4 (AD)		1.133	(0.365)	(0.132)
Proposed updates Appendix 4 (AG)		(0.743)		
Winter Pressures	2.586	(2.586)		
Improved Better Care Fund	(21.137)			
Children's Services				
Dedicated Schools Grant	1.778	0.422		
Growth & Demography	1.555	1.070	2.635	0.993
Looked After Children	5.015	1.909		
Disabled Access Regulations for Buses/Coaches	0.012	0.043	0.098	
Residential Homes - staffing	0.549			
Looked After Children Placements (Covid-related) Appendix 4 (Z)		3.429	(0.795)	(0.789)
Proposed updates Appendix 4 (Y & AA – AC & AE)		0.184	(0.124)	(0.124)
SEND High Needs Block Additional funding	(1.276)	(0.814)	(2.138)	
Communities, Environment & Transport				
Waste Housing Growth	0.108	0.236	0.238	0.198
Street lighting Electricity/Re-payment of Investment	(0.195)	(0.655)		
Climate Change Officer	0.055			
Proposed updates Appendix 4 (U – W)		0.262	0.014	0.015
Business Services				
IT & Digital Licences	0.123	0.025		
IT & Digital Data Centre	0.093			
Apprenticeship Team	0.117			
Proposed updates Appendix 4 (T & X)		0.110	0.004	0.005

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Medium Term Financial Plan	2020/21 Approved Budget £million	2021/22 Estimate £million	2022/23 Estimate £million	2023/24 Estimate £million
Governance Services				
Coroners - post mortems / pathology	0.033			
Potential Investments Areas				
Potential Investment Areas Appendix 4 (AH – AJ)		0.980	0.025	(0.055)
Savings				
Savings 2020/21 - 2021/22	(4.227)	(2.953)		
Temporary mitigations to savings	0.686	(0.198)	(0.388)	(0.100)
Savings Slippage Appendix 4 (S)		2.316	(1.074)	(1.242)
NET SERVICE EXPENDITURE	365.210	383.785	396.215	411.172
Corporate Expenditure		38.227	33.441	34.206
Treasury Management	18.238	0.471	0.221	
Treasury Management Capital Programme			1.000	1.000
Funding Capital Programme - base contribution				
Funding Capital Programme - New Homes Bonus	0.767	(0.515)	(0.138)	(0.114)
Investment of unallocated funding – Capital	1.242	(1.242)		
General Contingency	3.850	0.020	0.070	0.080
Contribution to balances and reserves	2.786	(2.138)		
Pensions	9.823	(1.400)	(0.400)	
Apprenticeship Levy	0.600			
Levies & Grants	0.921	0.018	0.012	0.012
TOTAL CORPORATE EXPENDITURE	38.227	33.441	34.206	35.184
TOTAL PLANNED EXPENDITURE	403.437	417.226	430.421	446.356
CUMULATIVE DEFICIT/(SURPLUS)	0.000	11.548	16.706	23.860
ANNUAL DEFICIT/(SURPLUS)	0.000	11.548	5.158	7.154

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East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24

APPENDIX 6

Department	Targets					Deliverability					Movement				
	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000
Communities, Economy & Transport	1,362	629	388	100	2,479	323	594	1,462	100	2,479	(1,039)	(35)	1,074	0	0
Children's Services	770	1,835	0	0	2,605	536	2,069	0	0	2,605	(234)	234	0	0	0
Adult Social Care	248	0	0	0	248	248	0	0	0	248	0	0	0	0	0
Business Services / Orbis	1,161	787	0	0	1,948	570	136	0	1,242	1,948	(591)	(651)	0	1,242	0
Total Departments	3,541	3,251	388	100	7,280	1,677	2,799	1,462	1,342	7,280	(1,864)	(452)	1,074	1,242	0
<i>Impact on MTFP</i>											-	(2,316)	1,074	1,242	0

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Communities, Economy & Transport

East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24		Savings Targets					Update: deliverability of savings					Movt				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Activity	Savings Proposal and impact Assessment	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community Services																
Archives and Records Service	The Keep Sustainability Plan has been agreed and is a three-part savings and income plan to ensure the financial sustainability of The Keep. It would ensure that the partners still deliver our statutory and legal duties, and maintain a good degree of public access.. [2nd year of savings]	74	104			178	60	104	14		178	(14)	0	14	0	0
Road Safety Services	Reduced road safety education and no engagement with Community Safety Partnerships or Joint Action Groups. [2nd year of savings]	33				33	33			33	0	0	0	0	0	0
Library Services	We will keep our Needs Assessment and Accessibility Analysis under review, and as a result we may in future provide a reduced library service.		240	288		528		240	288	528	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trading Standards	Carry out food sampling and food inspection only where the risk is high; carry out reactive animal health disease control and take enforcement action where necessary. There will be a reduction in our preventative and support work, to business, to people vulnerable to scams and the reduction in routine inspection may increase public health risks. NB: there is also a target of £100k for 2023/24			100	100	200			100	100	200	0	0	0	0	0
Transport																
Parking: Civil Parking Enforcement	Increase on-street parking charges where possible. Surpluses to be used for transport related funding. [2nd year of savings]	1,000				1,000			1,000	1,000	(1,000)	0	1,000	0	0	0
Transport Hub Services	Reduced staffing capacity may result in a reduction in the overall level of service in the Transport Hub. This may mean answering public queries and our ability to resolve problems with bus operators and transport providers will be slower. This could increase public dissatisfaction and complaints to the Council.	30				30	30			30	0	0	0	0	0	0
Concessionary Fares	Generated from negotiations with Stagecoach on our fixed reimbursement contract arrangement.	70				70	70			70	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX A

Communities, Economy & Transport

East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24		Savings Targets					Update: deliverability of savings					Movt				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Activity	Savings Proposal and impact Assessment	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Rights of Way Services	We will provide a reduced footpath clearance focused on those priority / popular routes resulting in a deterioration in the condition of other paths. Staff reductions may also lead to delays and longer timescales for dealing with requests for Definitive Map modifications and requests for footpath diversions which may result in an increase in public dissatisfaction and complaints to the Council.	100					100				100	0	0	0	0	0
Waste Disposal																
Household Waste Disposal	Ongoing review of commercial saving opportunities, with possible reductions in the number of HWRSs		250					250			250	0	0	0	0	0
Planning and Environment																
Environmental Advice Services	Income generation through traded services. [2nd year of savings]	25	35						60	60	(25)	(35)	60	0	0	0
Ashdown Forest	Reduce financial support to conservators where possible. [2nd year of savings]	30					30			30	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Communities, Economy & Transport		1,362	629	388	100	2,479	323	594	1,462	100	2,479	(1,039)	(35)	1,074	0	0

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Children's Services

East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24		Savings Targets					Update: deliverability of savings					Movt				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Activity	Savings Proposal and impact Assessment	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Support to schools and pupils																
SLES: Performance monitoring	Reduce staffing and management capacity for performance monitoring across maintained and academy schools, only light touch monitoring where risk of serious failure has been brought to attention of LA. This could reduce the proportion of good or outstanding schools. [2nd year of savings]	410					410					0	0	0	0	0
I-Send: EHCP Assessment Services	Reduced staffing capacity may mean the process for completing statutory assessments will be slower. This could increase parental dissatisfaction and complaints to the Council and LGO and reduce the proportion of annual reviews we attend.	188					0	188				(188)	188	0	0	0
I-Send: Inclusion Services	From 2020/21 statutory duties in relation to attendance will be met wholly through DSG. This will reduce the number of families we work with to improve attendance and may lead to an increase in pupil absence from schools.	19					19					0	0	0	0	0
Early Years: Inclusion Services	No support to schools and early years providers to promote inclusion and share best practice. This may increase the proportion of pupils who are referred for statutory assessment, it may increase the proportion of pupils with EHCPs. We will need to continue to monitor the long term spend in SEN budget as the decisions made could have an impact throughout pupils' education.	85					85					0	0	0	0	0
Children's Social Care																
Safeguarding Services	The ACT service, an assertive outreach service for young people aged 16-24 who are at risk of or being exploited criminally; the problem solving team which supports the Family Drug and Alcohol Court; and Video Interactive Guidance which helps parents who are already in difficulty learn how to respond better to their children will continue alongside existing activity levels for families who are going through court proceedings and the Foundations Project which works with families who have already had children removed from their care. The deferment of savings in 2020/21 means the Family Group Conferences/family meetings when children are subject to child protection plans will continue and be expanded, subject to the budget being agreed. These services will be reduced if savings are made in later years.		854					854				0	0	0	0	0

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Children's Services

East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24		Savings Targets					Update: deliverability of savings					Movt				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Activity	Savings Proposal and impact Assessment	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Help	Following Lead Member decisions and remodelling the Early Help Service, there will be a reduction in the family key work service, which has been deferred until 2021/22. Savings will be generated in 2020/21 as a result of ceasing to run services from 10 children's centres.	68	981			1,049	22	1,027			1,049	(46)	46	0	0	0
TOTAL Children's Services		770	1,835	0	0	2,605	536	2,069	0	0	2,605	(234)	234	0	0	0

APPENDIX A

Adult Social Care

East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24		Savings Targets					Update: deliverability of savings					Movt				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Activity	Savings Proposal and impact Assessment	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Working Age Adults: Nursing, Residential and Community Based services	Review care packages to ensure these are focused on those with Care Act eligible needs and deliver support in the most cost effective way. The average spend on Working Age Adults is significantly higher in East Sussex than in other south east councils. The intention is to deliver an overall level of support which is fair, reflects need and achieves a level of spend comparable to other councils. Any decisions to change care arrangements will be dependent on reviews that take account of a clients individual circumstances. Some clients may however have their support reduced or removed. [2nd year of savings]	248					248									
TOTAL Adult Social Care		248	0	0	0	0	248	0								

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Business Services / Orbis

East Sussex County Council - Savings 2020/21 to 2023/24		Savings Targets					Update: deliverability of savings					Movt				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Activity	Savings Proposal and impact Assessment	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Business Services: Orbis and Managed on Behalf of (MOBO) services: Finance, IT&D, Procurement, Property Services, HR and OD and Business Operations	The Advisory and Change areas of support are being analysed and presented to the 3 partner Councils to determine which elements need to form part of the Core Offer as they are essential in supporting the partners deliver their priorities, and which elements will no longer be provided. The aim would be to reduce spending as set out in this table although the details of how this might be achieved is still being developed.	1,161	787			1,948	570	136		1,242	1,948	(591)	(651)		1,242	0
TOTAL Business Services / Orbis		1,161	787	0	0	1,948	570	136	0	1,242	1,948	(591)	(651)	0	1,242	0

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX 7 – Capital Programme Update

1.1 Table 1 below summarises the movements to the approved capital programme since State of the County in July 2020. Noting that the first 3 years of the programme, to 2022/23, are approved, this years' RPPR process will add 2023/24. Whilst the remaining years to 2029/30 are indicative to represent the longer term planning for capital investment. The impact of COVID-19 on the programme will be reported as slippage and/or under/overspend as part of the capital monitoring process until its reset at Q2 as part of the normal RPPR process.

Table 1 – Capital Programme (gross) movements

Capital Programme (gross) movements (£m)	MTFP Programme + 1				Future Years	Total
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/30	
Approved programme at July 2020	96.889	69.391	59.285	51.688	293.076	570.329
Approved Variations	0.535	1.850				2.385
Strategic Investment		0.132				0.132
Total Programme	97.424	71.373	59.285	51.688	293.076	572.846

1.2 The **approved variations** to the programme relate to fully funded schemes totalling £2.385m (the profiling of which is currently under review) as follows:

- **Emergency Active Travel Fund:** The council has been awarded £0.535m Tranche 1 funding in 2020/21 from the DfT Emergency Active Travel Fund to support the installation of cycling and walking facilities following the Covid-19 pandemic. Further funding allocations have been announced as part of Tranche 2 of the fund, approval of which to include in the capital programme will be through the variation process.
- **Schools Capital Allocation Grant:** The council has been awarded an additional £1.850m Schools Capital Allocation grant, in addition to funding already allocated, towards building condition improvements. This has been profiled to reflect the projected programme of works.

1.3 Additionally, it has been agreed that **strategic investment** of £0.132m be made in utilising automation to support the Core Offer. The RPPR process in 2022/23 (next year) will look to confirm the impact of the investment and any savings that will be embedded.

1.4 This increases the gross programme to £572.846m The detailed approved capital programme is attached at Annex 1

1.5 At Q1 there were a number of overspends relating to the pandemic reported amounting to £1.762m. Should mitigations within programmes not be forthcoming or other funding be made available from Government, then there are two options for funding. They could either be absorbed within the current programme, at the risk of not meeting the basic need targets set. Or, as reported at February 2020, a capital risk provision of £7.5m is held. This is a permission to borrow for emerging risks and is managed through ensuring Treasury Management capacity rather than representing funds that are within the council's accounts. If utilised to fund Covid overspend it would, therefore, require additional borrowing.

APPENDIX A

1.6 Ahead of further announcements and decisions there is no material updates to the overall funding position. Work will continue as part of the RPPR process to review and update estimates of CIL/Section 106 income, capital receipts and updates to formula grants following government announcements, as well to reflect the capital programme refresh as part of the Quarter 2/2.5 monitoring process and normal reset.

APPENDIX A

Annex 1

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 to 2029/30 (£'000)	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/30	Total
Adult Social Care						
Older People's/LD Service Improvements	50	50	50			150
Greenacres	264					264
Adult Social Care Gross	314	50	50			414
Business Services						
SALIX Contract	440	350	350	350	2,100	3,590
Property Agile Works	374					374
Lansdowne Secure Unit - Phase 2	1,457	96				1,553
Special Educational Needs		800	1,600	800		3,200
Special Provision in Secondary Schools	2,379	60				2,439
Disability Children's Homes	242					242
Westfield Lane (delivered on behalf of CSD)	1,200					1,200
Core Programme - Schools Basic Need	13,308	19,688	12,002	6,650	37,225	88,873
Core Programme - Capital Building Improvements	9,214	9,833	7,982	7,982	47,891	82,902
Core Programme - IT & Digital Strategy Implementation	4,634	4,251	11,580	8,978	33,998	63,441
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation (utilising automation)		132				132
Business Services Gross	33,248	35,210	33,514	24,760	121,214	247,946
Children's Services						
House Adaptations for Disabled Children's Carers Homes	104	50	50			204
Diploma Exemplar Programme						
Schools Delegated Capital	791	760	729			2,280
Conquest Centre redevelopment	83					83
Children's Services Gross	978	810	779			2,567
Communities, Economy & Transport						
Registration Ceremonies Website						
Hastings Library						
Southover Grange						
Broadband	4,279	3,276	3,277			10,832
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road	1,652	643	252			2,547
BHLR Complementary Measures	219					219
Economic Growth & Strategic Infrastructure Programme						
Economic Intervention Fund - Grants	542	460	599	407	492	2,500
Economic Intervention Fund - Loans	500	500	500	500	1,000	3,000
Stalled Sites	152	150	47			349
EDS Upgrading Empty Commercial Properties	7					7
EDS Incubation Units						

APPENDIX A

LGF Business Case Development						
Integrated Transport						
Community Match Fund	769	307	250			1,326
Terminus Road Improvements						
Newhaven Port Access Road	4,054	170	20	20	21	4,285
Real Time Passenger Information	284		44	60	61	449
Parking Ticket Machine Renewal	291					291
Queensway Depot Development (Formerly Eastern)	1,153					1,153
Hailsham HWRS	97					97
The Keep	24	73	49	96	849	1,091
Other Integrated Transport Schemes	3,235	3,152	2,969	3,069	18,114	30,539
Emergency Active Travel Fund - Tranche 1	535					535
Core Programme - Libraries Basic Need	670	262	619	449	2,694	4,694
Core Programme - Highways Structural Maintenance	18,404	17,850	12,946	18,644	124,215	192,059
Dropped Kerbs	1,000					1,000
Core Programme - Bridge Assessment Strengthening	1,267	1,285	1,260	1,626	10,834	16,272
Core Programme - Street Lighting and Traffic Signals - life expired equipment	1,331	1,712	1,545	1,592	10,587	16,767
Street Lighting and Traffic Signals - SALIX scheme	935	1,869				2,804
Core Programme - Rights of Way Surface Repairs and Bridge Replacement Programme	596	565	565	465	2,995	5,186
LEP/SELEP schemes - delivery not controlled by ESCC						0
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2	3,014					3,014
Bexhill Enterprise Park North	1,940					1,940
Exceat Bridge Replacement (Formerly Maintenance)	1,500	1,651				3,151
East Sussex Strategic Growth Package						0
Eastbourne/South Wealden Walking & Cycling Package	2,988	363				3,351
Hailsham/Polegate/Eastbourne Movement & Access Corridor	1,203	206				1,409
Hastings and Bexhill Movement & Access Package	6,169	309				6,478
Queensway Gateway Road	504					504
Sidney Little Road Business Incubator Hub	435					435
Skills for Rural Businesses Post-Brexit	2,189	500				2,689
Bexhill Creative Workspace	946					946
LEP/SELEP schemes sub total	20,888	3,029				23,917
Communities, Economy & Transport Gross	62,884	35,303	24,942	26,928	171,862	321,919
Total Gross	97,424	71,373	59,285	51,688	293,076	572,846

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Report to: Place Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 25 November 2020
By: Chief Operating Officer
Title: Utilising Automation to Support the Core Offer
Purpose: Introducing Robotics and Virtual Assistants to support the Core Offer, ease demand and help embed new ways of working

RECOMMENDATIONS

Place Scrutiny is recommended to:

- 1) note the update on the Council's work to utilise automation to ease demand and increase efficiencies to support the Core Offer.
-

1 Background

- 1.1 With ongoing pressure on Council funding, as well as the increased demand due to the COVID-19 response and recovery, there is added demand on stretched services at an accelerated and unsustainable pace. Further, consumers' expectation of digital channels and modern ways of living require the Council to provide services outside of the traditional nine-to-five.
- 1.2 Robotic Process Automation (RPA) software can replicate front and back-office routine processes automatically. This means that daily tasks previously performed by employees can now be conducted without human effort, reducing cost and increasing efficiency, as well as freeing up time for employees to focus on skilled and complex work. Virtual Assistants, otherwise known as Chatbots, can also help services extend their hours of operation, augment capacity, help our partners to work with us and our residents to access our services.
- 1.3 Automation technology has the potential to be a core enabler for the Council, and when RPA and Virtual Assistants are used together, they can bring many benefits to the workplace:
 - i. Inclusion – Virtual Assistants, via their ability to personalise, can help to make interaction more human and can aid navigation through or across multiple websites. Virtual Assistants allow users to chat using natural language, possible in other languages and with almost any device. They help our residents to talk to us.
 - ii. Customer empowerment – Empowering people to do more for themselves through online services, in real time, at their convenience. Opening channels that enhance citizen perception of our services. This can lead to reduced wait times, better quality of service and increased satisfaction.
 - iii. Productivity – Virtual Assistants and automated processes can potentially work 24/7 enabling services to be accessible beyond core hours without adversely impacting on staff or resourcing requirements.
 - iv. Efficiency – Automation can decrease the repetitive workload, reducing pressure placed on staff, saving time and enabling colleagues to focus on more complex and motivating tasks where human contact or intervention is needed.
 - v. Improved accuracy – Robots are programmable machines; they carry out a defined set of instructions repeatedly and consistently without making mistakes for as long as instructed. Accuracy and quality are improved, throughput is increased and the need for rework is reduced.

- vi. Augmented Capacity – Robotic process automation and virtual assistants can potentially help to support staffing levels at times of reduced capacity (for example if COVID adversely impacts resources.)

- 1.4 The successful use of automation can be seen at other local authorities – some examples are included in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 In 2019 the Corporate Management Team (CMT) agreed to the development of a proof of concept Chatbot to support the Blue Badge process. The idea was to exemplify the technology and demonstrate how the use of automation could help to reduce transactional cost, improve outcomes and increase value for money. Feedback on the resulting product has been positive, with the team welcoming the conversion of the proof of concept into a live product, recognising the benefits it would bring.
- 1.6 On 9 September 2020, CMT approved the business case for wider investment in automation services across the organisation, including the development of the Blue Badge Chatbot into a live product. It was agreed to take a programme approach to identify and prioritise proposals and help support the capturing of benefits and return on investment.

2 Supporting Information

Citizen Services Virtual Assistant

- 2.1 The East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Blue Badge proof of concept currently exists in a development environment. Work has now begun on a production version that residents will be able to use - the product is described as a *Citizen Services Virtual Assistant*. The Assistant is outward facing and possesses other functional capabilities (known as 'skills'), meaning it will be able to multi-task and do other things once the Blue Badge assistant has been implemented. For example, the Virtual Assistant could use a Covid-19 skill to connect our website to other trusted information sources such as Gov.uk and NHS.uk, to help people navigate across multiple sources in a seamless way.
- 2.2 The remaining skills in the native Citizen Assistant could be further used to reduce inbound contacts via phone and email and to enhance the searchability of the website, empowering more self-service. These could be used to automate forms, for example, to ease the demand on the Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC) service. It has been agreed to utilise a structured programme approach to identify and develop the other skills.
- 2.3 As a subsequent phase, and at additional cost, it may also be desirable to deploy an inward facing *Employee Virtual Assistant* to work alongside the outward facing Citizen Services Assistant. The Employee Virtual Assistant is a different 'personality' and comes with five further skills. It is suggested that once the outward facing skills of the Citizen bot are operational, skills to support employees with remote working are further explored - this will require CMT approval at such a time.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Accelerator

- 2.4 In parallel with the virtual assistant development, we are also working to implement a number of exemplar automations to provide a practical demonstration of the potential value of RPA. This will establish a repeatable model from which to scale. Services have been engaged from our automation partner UiPath, to work alongside our own resources to initiate and accelerate automation across ESCC. A four-stage model is being adopted:
- i. Identify – suitable candidate processes, establish the core technology capability and grow the skillsets needed. (See Appendix 2 for first exemplar)
 - ii. Orchestrate – through sprints enable rapid deployment of identified exemplars
 - iii. Evaluate – review, check benefits are realised and recalibrate approach as needed
 - iv. Scale – establish a formal pipeline, prioritisation mechanism and create an ongoing roadmap to exploit investment in the platform technology

2.5 Through a Programme approach, a process will be established by which ideas can be collected, their return on investment assessed and prioritisation agreed across the organisation. This will be the method through which benefits will be captured.

Financial Case

2.6 By drawing on existing resource and exploiting the learning from across the Orbis partnership, IT & Digital are providing the technical expertise to deliver these projects. However, strategic investment has been approved to purchase the automation software and associated IT infrastructure and specialist resources on an invest to save basis. This investment provides the foundation technology capability and functionality that will be used to scale across ESCC in support of sustainable service-led efficiency and transformation initiatives.

2.7 The investment to implement the proposals is detailed in the table below:

Proposal	Year 1 (£000)	Year 2 (£000)	Year 3 (£000)	Year 4 (£000)	Year 5 (£000)	Funded by
<u>Implementation cost</u>						
Proposal 1 - Citizen Services Virtual Assistant	50					Strategic Capital Funding
Proposal 2 - RPA Accelerator	81.5					
	131.5	0	0	0	0	
<u>Ongoing revenue cost</u>						
Proposal 1 - Citizen Services Virtual Assistant	45	45	45	45	45	RPPR
Proposal 2 - RPA Accelerator	75	75	75	75	75	
	120	120	120	120	120	
<u>Total costs</u>	<u>215.5</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>120</u>	

2.8 The one-off implementation investment costs are being funded from the Strategic Capital Reserve. This work forms part of the Core Efficiency Enablers proposed in the 2030 IT Capital Strategy, but as a strategic item a business case is required to access funding.

2.9 The business case is predicated on the basis that the ongoing revenue costs, and the implementation costs, would be offset by efficiency savings that would be enabled and identified through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process as Departments develop their proposals for delivering to the priority outcomes for the Council within the available budget.

2.10 At this stage the specific areas where these capabilities would be focussed, and the efficiencies deliverable, have not been identified and quantified. Experience has shown us that having a central / corporate savings target in the RPPR to reflect this creates the wrong dynamics and a barrier for effective engagement with Departments.

2.11 The ongoing revenue costs do ultimately however need to be reflected in the RPPR and captured through the pressures protocol.

2.12 In addition to the investment costs, the ongoing revenue costs will be funded from reserves in 2020/21 and 2021/22 and from then on will be incorporated into the RPPR as a pressure. The incorporation as a pressure is supported by the monitoring of benefits that have been enabled by this investment.

2.13 The revenue costs for each proposal include software, licences and support from the supplier. This includes one off support for implementation, as well as up to 6 hours support per month.

2.14 Additionally, the RPA Accelerator costs include £11,000 for premium support (including a dedicated named person for support and code review) as well as £6,500 licensing and hardware costs for the operating environment.

3 Conclusion and recommendations

- 3.1 Automation technology has the potential to be a core enabler for the Council and depends on central investment to establish as a Council-wide technological capability. The technology can provide greater efficiency, improved accuracy and customer empowerment, and will provide the Council with the tools to respond to increased demand and modern ways of living.
- 3.2 It has therefore been agreed by CMT to the invest in Robotic Process Automation and Virtual Assistant capability as detailed in the report.
- 3.3 A programme approach will be taken to identify and prioritise needs throughout the organisation and a reporting mechanism will be implemented to report on the return on investment.

Kevin Foster

Chief Operating Officer

Contact Officers:

Matt Scott, Chief Digital Information Officer and Nicky Wilkins, Head of Strategy & Engagement

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ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION

IT & Digital

WHAT IS RPA ?

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) can help to reduce cost & enable us to become more efficient by automating repetitive tasks like data entry & releasing time for more complex activity.

Robots don't do things that humans do well. We need to use robots as virtual assistants to do the things that humans find difficult & free our staff up for more skilled and greater value activity.



THE BENEFITS

- Efficiency
- Improved Accuracy
- Productivity



REAL LIFE BENEFITS

1.

Applications Support Technical Testing

Proactive monitoring of frontline systems to ensure they are functioning correctly following updates.
Saving £23k.

2.

A leading London Council

Automated the Direct Debit exceptions processing.
Reduced effort by 76% in just a few weeks.

3.

Department for Work & Pensions

Cleared 30,000 pension claims in 2 weeks. 15:1 ROI.



REAL LIFE BENEFITS

- 4.** A London Council
Automated rent charges, a 4 minute manual process reduced to less than 40 seconds.
Saving £32,000 p.a.
- 5.** A UK government department
Saved £2 million on a data cleansing exercise.
- 6.** A UK Police force
Reduced the time to process firearms certifications. So the number of applications processed increased from 8 per day to 62 per day. Plus the error rate reduced from 7% to zero.

REAL LIFE BENEFITS

- 7.** A UK government department
One robot **saved 3 FTE** on the email classification and prioritisation process.
- 8.** A UK government department
Saved equivalent of 5.4 FTEs by automating the compilation & distribution of reminder letters.
- 9.** A UK Health Trust
Saved 560 minutes per week on HR onboarding and **716 minutes per week** on incident processing in ServiceNow.

REAL LIFE BENEFITS



Discharge
Planning



Case Study ...

Discharge
planning -
Section 2



50 circa per week

9 minutes
manual process

2 minutes Digital
Worker **78%** time saving

A Section 2 Notice to Assess requires an NHS body to notify social services of a patients likely need for community care services after discharge

Discharge
planning
Section 5



100 circa per week **15** minutes
manual process

2 minutes Digital
Worker **87%** time saving

A Section 5 Notice to Discharge notifies social services of the proposed date of the patients discharge

Notification
of death by
registrar



Next process to to work with project team to automate



St George's University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Epsom and St Helier
University Hospitals
NHS Trust

HOW DO WE START ?

ESCC RPA ACCELERATE PLAN



IDENTIFY

Identify candidate processes, establish a core offer of technology and staff with the skillsets needed

ORCHESTRATE

Utilise Starter Pack resources alongside our own staff to educate and enable rapid deployment.

EVALUATE

Review implementation & benefit. Recalibrate approach as needed. Repeat.

SCALE

Establish a pipeline, prioritisation mechanism and create a roadmap for ongoing use of RPA.

FURTHER PIPELINE IDEAS

- Blocked Invoices (AP)
- Controcc Billing (AR)
- Client Monitoring Reporting (ASC Finance)
- Uploading actuals into Controcc for DPS Services (Controcc Payments)
- Authorising Nursing & Residential Schedules (Controcc Payments)
- Retrospective changes to CPLIs (Controcc Payments)
- Receiving & paying Provider invoices (Controcc Payments)
- Hours claims processing (Employee Services)
- Travel claims (Employee Services)
- Schools & Academy personnel reports (Employee Services)
- Query handling (Employee Services)
- LAS Client commitment (Finance)
- Client movements (Finance)
- LAC Reconciliation (Finance)
- UASC Reconciliation (Finance)
- Direct Debit payment method (IA)



- Clearing general ledger codes (IA)
- Non POs parked (P2P)
- Statements received from customers (P2P)
- Property invoices (P2P)
- Invoices received in Team Inbox (P2P)
- Invoice Plans (P2P)
- Integration with Fire Watch (Payroll)
- Academy costing reports (Payroll)
- DBS Mailbox (Bus Ops)
- Starter forms for schools (Bus Ops)
- Schools Monthly Finance Reports (Schools Finance)
- Library Banking Journals (Service Finance)
- BMT Processes (Service Finance)
- GR/IR Report (Service Finance)

ACTIONS



- Establish foundation technology
- Implement exemplar automations
- Review & produce case studies to socialise potential
- Reflect on needs emerging from department Recovery Plans
- Use Programme to establish a formal Pipeline of potential automations and prioritisation mechanism

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Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Exemplar

The first process that has been agreed to automate is the Manual Adjustments for billing in ContrOCC Adult Social Care (ASC).

These adjustments occur for Nursing and Residential clients, where the client contribution has been assessed and agreed after the client has been placed, known as a *backdated client contribution change*. If the client has been in placement for more than four weeks, the Provider will not be expected to collect the increased client contribution. However, due to the constraints of the current system, a manual adjustment has to be actioned within ContrOCC to adjust the system and to invoice the client directly for this additional client contribution.

Upon receipt of an instruction to make a manual adjustment from ASC, the team complete various system checks within the system. Up to 70 of these requests are received and actioned every four weeks. The current process generates a lot of “hand-offs” and queries between the team and ASC Finance & Benefits Assessment.

The RPA solution will automate these system checks, reduce errors, raise the invoice within ContrOCC and save time spent on queries for the team and the ASC Finance & Benefits Assessment Team. The RPA solution will enable the team to raise invoices for amended client contributions faster, giving a better chance of recovery. The resource saving will enable the team to focus on chasing outstanding debt, improving prompt payment of providers, and providing a better service to clients.

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Report to:	Place Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	25 November 2020
By:	Chair of the Review Board
Title:	Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council
Purpose:	To present the outcomes of the scrutiny review and make recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee considers and endorses the report of the Review Board, and makes recommendations to Cabinet for comment, and County Council for approval.

1. Background

1.1 The Place Scrutiny Committee agreed at the meeting held on 20 November 2019 to proceed with a Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council, which focuses on the actions the Council is taking to reduce its carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions. This was in response to increasing public concern linked to the publication of the 2018 report by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which highlighted that urgent action is needed to address climate change. The scope of the review includes:

- Energy use in the Council's corporate buildings, maintained schools and street lighting;
- Staff business travel, staff commuting, electric charging points at council offices and the Council's fleet vehicles;
- The scope for using renewable energy sources (solar, wind, etc.) and carbon off-setting;
- Use of emerging and alternative technologies; and
- Communications and leadership, including co-ordination of the work on the climate emergency.

1.2 The scope of the review also included acting as a reference group working with officers to comment on the development of a Climate Emergency Plan for the Council. The Council's [Climate Emergency Plan](#) was agreed by Cabinet on 2 June 2020 which sets the context for the work of the scrutiny review.

1.3 The aims of the Review Board in undertaking the review were to:

- To gain a better understanding of the actions, costs, benefits and timescales for achieving carbon neutrality, as well as the choices that may be involved.
- To contribute to the development of a plan of actions to reduce the Council's carbon emissions.
- To identify 'easy wins' and priorities for investment in carbon reduction in the next 5 years.

1.4 This is the first scrutiny review to be held entirely via remote meetings and the review process has been adapted to take this into account. The Review Board has examined evidence from key officers, external expert witnesses and published documents on this topic. The challenge for the Board has been to develop recommendations that will support the Council's ambitions in this area, whilst taking into account the Council's financial position. The Council's Climate Emergency Plan represents an important starting point in the Council's work to become carbon neutral and this review makes a number of recommendations in support of the actions contained in the Plan.

2. Summary

2.1 The members of the Review Board are Councillors Martin Clarke (Chair), John Barnes, Bob Bowdler, Pat Rodohan and Stephen Shing.

2.2 The intention of the review report is to set a direction of travel for the Council in its ambition to become carbon neutral and to maintain the momentum created when the Council declared a Climate Emergency. It has not been possible within the time available for the review to carry out some of the detailed technical and costing work that will be required when appraising the various carbon reduction measures. The review presents a critical view of a possible way forward in what is a constantly evolving and moving situation. Therefore, it will be important to regularly review the Council's Climate Emergency Plan, a task which the Scrutiny Committee can assist with.

2.3 The Review Board is aware that in order to implement some of the recommendations in the report, the Council will need to address funding through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) budget setting process. Through this process it will be important to balance the short and long term social, economic and environmental implications of funding these proposals, including the impact on the Council's carbon footprint.

2.4 The attached report (appendix 1) contains the findings and recommendations of the Review Board. Copies of evidence papers listed in the report and other support documentation are available on request from the contact officer.

2.5 The Committee is recommended to receive the Review Board's report for submission to Cabinet and County Council on 26 January 2021 and 9 February 2021 respectively.

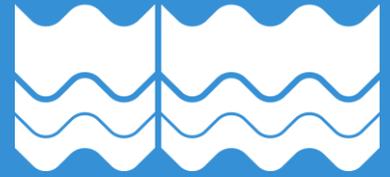
3. Recommendations and conclusion

3.1 The Committee is requested to consider and endorse the report of the Review Board for submission to Cabinet and Full Council.

COUNCILLOR MARTIN CLARKE
Chair of the Review Board

Contact Officer: Martin Jenks
Tel No. 01273 481327
Email: martin.jenks@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS: All.



Appendix 1

Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council

Report by the Review Board:

Councillor John Barnes
Councillor Bob Bowdler
Councillor Martin Clarke (Chair)
Councillor Pat Rodohan
Councillor Stephen Shing

November 2020

Place Scrutiny Committee – 25 November 2020

Cabinet – 26 January 2021

Full Council – 9 February 2021

The report of the Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council

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Recommendations

Recommendation		Page
	<i>Building Energy Use</i>	
1	Priority consideration should be given to the implementation of low carbon heating systems, e.g. the use of ground source and air source heat pumps, in all newly commissioned buildings and when renewing systems in existing buildings. The most energy efficient type of heat pump currently available should be used where possible (e.g. ground source, then air source heat pumps).	12
2	The Council should keep the use of hydrogen gas heating technology under review and ensure all new or replacement boilers are capable of being 'hydrogen ready'.	13
3	<p>a) The Council consider through the RPPR process opportunities for capital funding within the core capital programme to carry out carbon reduction projects in its corporate buildings, notably building fabric improvements, and lobbies Government for additional funding in this area.</p> <p>b) In developing energy efficiency projects, the Council should take a whole building approach, which is based on whole life costings.</p> <p>c) The Council should explore installing solar panels on its buildings and energy storage where this is possible. In particular, the Council should explore the feasibility of installing solar panel canopies over the car parks at County Hall and use the resultant energy in the building and to power Electric Vehicle/electric bike charge points in the car parks.</p>	14
4	<p>a) The Council, in conjunction with maintained schools, publishes comparative data on energy efficiency (e.g. league tables and energy performance), sets a carbon reduction target and encourages engagement with pupils in learning projects and activities to reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>b) The Council consider through the RPPR process providing capital funding for a pilot project to install heat pump technology in one of the County's maintained schools as a best practice case study.</p>	15
5	The Council lobbies the Department for Education to provide sufficient funding for new schools to be built to a carbon neutral standard and provide funding for major improvements to retrofit energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures to all school buildings.	15
6	The Council reviews the payback periods used for major building refurbishment projects and adjusts the provision of capital funding for carbon reduction projects to enable more work in this area to be carried out based on whole life costings.	16
	<i>Street Lighting Energy Use</i>	
7	<p>The Council:</p> <p>a) Explore the scope for further energy savings by reducing the amount of time street lights are on through ongoing maintenance and replacement programmes.</p> <p>b) Explore the use of alternative technologies such as solar and wind turbines for less essential lit signs and other street furniture.</p> <p>c) Keep the use of intelligent lighting systems for street lighting under review and install intelligent lighting in the car parks and campus at the County Hall campus as an example of best practice.</p>	17

	<i>Staff Travel & Commuting (including councillors) and Fleet Vehicles</i>	
8	<p>a) The Council explore more varied patterns of working to determine what is the best level of remote working from a staff perspective and for the Council to meet its business needs and reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>b) Work is undertaken to support cultural change to embed changes in working practices that reduce the need to travel, or encourages less travel, such as the use of technology to hold meetings remotely and provide training using remote meeting technology.</p> <p>c) The Council explores the provision of more capacity for drop-in centres / hot desking and collaboration space in regional offices so staff do not always need to travel into the main office buildings, including County Hall, as part of the future workplace planning arrangements.</p> <p>d) The Council investigate the introduction of hybrid committee meetings where councillors can either attend remotely or in person.</p>	18
9	<p>a) The Staff Travel Plan is revised to encourage, and where appropriate consideration is given to the potential for incentivising, the use of other travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport) and the uptake of Electric Vehicles to reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>b) The Council considers lobbying the Department for Transport to make changes to season tickets for train and bus travel so they can be used flexibly by staff commuting to work.</p>	19
10	Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points are installed at the main office buildings, or at least County Hall, with a plan agreed by the end of March 2021.	19
11	<p>a) Smaller own fleet vehicles should be replaced by EV's in the short term when the leases expire.</p> <p>b) Review the car lease scheme to encourage staff to select low emission or zero emission vehicles.</p> <p>c) The Council considers specifying the early use of low emission vehicles in the procurement of major contracts (e.g. the Highways maintenance contract), where feasible.</p>	20
12	The Council should keep the market for larger hydrogen powered vehicles under review, with a view to undertaking early pilot schemes and eventually phasing out the diesel-powered larger vehicles in its fleet in line with Government policy.	21
	<i>Carbon Off-Setting and Renewables</i>	
13	The Council keeps opportunities for investing in natural habitats under review for inclusion in a carbon off-setting plan at the appropriate time when the science has been developed.	22
14	<p>a) The Council develops a carbon off-setting plan which includes investment in woodland creation, natural habitats and renewable energy generation.</p> <p>b) The Property Asset Disposal and Investment Strategy is reviewed to identify land availability and opportunities for carbon off-setting habitats and investment in the development of solar farms.</p>	23

	<i>Communications and Leadership</i>	
15	<p>a) The Council develops an interactive communication/information platform, which includes details on what the Council itself is doing on climate change and to discuss opportunities where residents may take an active role in lowering community carbon emissions.</p> <p>b) The Council uses its convening power to co-ordinate the actions it is taking on climate change with its partners, and in particular with the District and Borough Councils in East Sussex.</p>	24
	<i>Other Issues</i>	
16	<p>Corporate systems</p> <p>a) Business case evaluation and procurement decisions should include an assessment of the carbon impact of the proposal.</p> <p>b) Reports that go to the Executive and Council should include an assessment or statement of the carbon emissions impact of the proposals/decision in the report where relevant and material.</p>	24
17	<p>Planning</p> <p>The Council lobbies Government at a national level via ADEPT and the South East 7 partnership, to amend the planning system and building regulations so that the carbon performance of new buildings, including school buildings, can be taken into account in planning decisions.</p>	25
18	<p>Protecting trees</p> <p>a) ESCC build on the existing Dutch Elm Disease Strategy to develop a Strategic Tree Policy and action plan to manage Ash Dieback, Dutch Elm Disease and other tree diseases/pests which includes a programme to replace lost trees where possible (subject to safety issues) to mitigate the impact on carbon absorption.</p> <p>b) Both County and District/Borough Planning teams should be encouraged to attend the master class training provided by the Forestry Commission on the retention and protection of woodlands and trees.</p>	25

Introduction

1. The Place Scrutiny Committee established a Scoping Board in June 2019 to explore undertaking a scrutiny review of climate change, and in particular the actions the Council is taking to reduce its carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions. This was in response to increasing public concern linked to the publication of the 2018 report by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which highlighted that urgent action is needed to address climate change.

2. On the 15 October 2019 East Sussex County Council unanimously agreed a Motion on climate change. In agreeing the Motion, the Council declared a climate emergency and agreed to:

- *set a target of achieving carbon neutrality from its activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050, in line with the new target for the UK agreed by Parliament in 2019.*
- *build upon the work we have undertaken to date, will commit resources where possible and will align our policies to address the Climate Emergency.*
- *set out a clear plan of action to reduce our carbon emissions.*
- *report annually at the May County Council Meeting on its progress towards the target.*
- *investigate all possible sources of external funding and match funding to support this commitment, as well as writing to central government with respect to the emergency to request funding to implement swift appropriate actions”.*
- *use our Environment Strategy to provide a strong unified voice in lobbying for support to address this emergency, sharing best practice across East Sussex and more widely through other partners”.*

3. Climate change is a very wide topic and it was important for scrutiny to focus initially on areas where it could have the most impact. The Place Scrutiny Committee considered that it would be difficult for the Council to show leadership and to advise or influence others without addressing work to reduce its own carbon emissions. Therefore, the review focusses on how the Council is going to achieve carbon neutrality in its own operations.

4. At the meeting held on 20 November 2019, the Place Scrutiny Committee agreed to proceed with a Scrutiny Review of Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council. The scope of the review includes:

- Energy use in the Council's corporate buildings, maintained schools and street lighting;
- Staff business travel, staff commuting, electric charging points at council offices and the Council's fleet vehicles;
- The scope for using renewable energy sources (solar, wind, etc.) and carbon off-setting;
- Use of emerging and alternative technologies; and
- Communications and leadership, including co-ordination of the work on the climate emergency.

5. The scope of the review also includes acting as a reference group working with officers to comment on the development of a Climate Emergency Plan for the Council. The Council's [Climate Emergency Plan](#) was agreed by Cabinet on 2 June 2020 which sets the context for the work of the scrutiny review.

6. The aims of the Review Board in undertaking the review were to:

- To gain a better understanding of the actions, costs, benefits and timescales for achieving carbon neutrality, as well as the choices that may be involved.
- To contribute to the development of a plan of actions to reduce the Council's carbon emissions.

- To identify 'easy wins' and priorities for investment in carbon reduction in the next 5 years.

7. The emissions from the Councils supply chain have been excluded from the review because there is not enough information available at present on this category of emissions. This may be subject to a separate piece of work in the future. The Review Board supports the actions contained in the Climate Emergency Action Plan such as a requirement for the supplier to provide a carbon emissions footprint of their service or products in all new major contracts, and to include low carbon outcomes in new specifications and when scoring tenders.

Recommendations and funding considerations

8. The recommendations contained in this report aim to set a direction of travel for the Council in its ambition to become carbon neutral. The Review Board is aware that the Council faces considerable budget pressures and that consideration of the costs of implementing the recommendations will need to be undertaken through the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) budget setting process. This will mean balancing the short and long term social, economic and environmental implications of all the proposals contained in this report, including the impact on carbon emissions they will have. In addition, these recommendations serve to augment and give momentum to the Action Plan agreed in the Climate Emergency Plan (February 2020).

Background

9. In common with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) all the District and Borough councils within East Sussex have declared a climate emergency and are taking action on climate change. Nationally almost all councils are working on this issue and those that have a scrutiny function are engaged in this work. Overall, ESCC has a target of reducing carbon emissions by 13% per annum.

10. ESCC's Climate Emergency Plan provides a framework for reducing its carbon emissions. The review and this report use the same terminology as that used within the Plan. In this context carbon emissions refers to the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases expressed in carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) or tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (tCO₂e). The approach for measuring the Council's existing carbon emissions uses a widely accepted methodology, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, which divides emissions into three categories referred to as Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions.

11. Together, these categories represent the total greenhouse gas emissions related to an organisation and its activities. Each scope includes the following emissions:

- Scope 1 – emissions from the combustion of gas, oil, petrol, diesel, coal, or wood. For the Council this covers buildings and vehicles where the Council is responsible for paying for the fuel.
- Scope 2 – emissions from the electricity purchased by the Council.
- Scope 3 – emissions that result from all other activities of the Council.

12. The Scope 3 categories that apply to the Council include emissions from business travel, water usage, waste, procurement, staff commuting and investments. The table below, taken from Climate Emergency Plan, provides an indication of the scale of current emissions.

Scope	What's covered	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)
Scope 1	Gas consumption for heating and hot water in buildings	4,664
	Oil & propane for heating & hot water in buildings	897
	ESCC owned transport	139
Scope 2	Electricity usage in buildings	5,115
	Electricity usage in street lighting	2,645
Scope 3	Transmission & distribution	661
	Business travel	1,628
	Employee and elected Members commuting	3,120
	Waste disposal	115
	Water usage	68
	Supply chain	54,888
	Total emissions:	73,940

13. With the exception of emissions from the Council's supply chain (procurement), the review concentrates on the main sources of emissions in these categories and the actions agreed in the Climate Emergency Plan action plan for these areas. It also looks at how alternative and emerging technologies might be able to help the Council reduce its emissions and the use carbon off-setting to balance the unavoidable emissions, once all the carbon reduction measures have been taken into account.

14. This is a high level, cross-cutting review as carbon emissions are present in all the Council's activities. A thematic approach has been taken to examining evidence for the review, which has involved discussions with, and taking evidence from, a wide range of officers and external expert witnesses.

Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

15. Since the review started, the Coronavirus pandemic has had a major impact on the way the Council operates and delivers services. It has meant staff working from home to a much larger extent than would otherwise have been the case. As a consequence, carbon emissions from staff business travel and staff commuting have been reduced, and the amount of office space being used has declined. Overall, this has had a positive effect on carbon emissions although it is recognised this is not a 'business as usual' pattern of working. The Review Board is interested to see whether it might be possible to retain some of these benefits in the way the Council operates in future, and this issue is explored further in the sections of the report covering staff travel and staff commuting.

Review Board Findings

Building Energy Use

16. A lot of work has been undertaken to date on projects to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy use and carbon emissions. Such projects have been integrated with maintenance programmes in corporate buildings and schools which have included improving the building insulation; replacing boilers and boiler controls; lighting replacements and core energy loading improvements (cabling and distribution systems). The Council has also signed up to a green energy tariff which means the electricity supply to all corporate buildings (e.g. libraries, register offices and office buildings) is provided from renewable sources, and is thereby having a lower carbon impact.

17. Currently the standard heating solution in most buildings is gas. Reducing emissions means moving away from gas and oil-fired heating and using alternative systems. However, not all of the alternative heating options, such as using hydrogen gas, are available at present. Using electricity is currently more expensive than gas based on unit cost so there will be a cost implication in moving away from gas heating.

18. In the longer term the de-carbonisation of the electricity supply for heating systems will be important as the technologies develop. In the shorter term the main areas for further carbon savings are:

- Awareness raising to reduce energy use (e.g. energy saving campaigns)
- Improvements in building fabric – insulation (loft & cavity wall), windows (longer payback) etc.¹
- Changes to lighting systems (e.g. through the use of LED lighting and intelligent controls)

19. In order to make the step change needed to achieve the Council's target of reducing carbon emissions by 13% per annum, more of these sorts of projects will need to be undertaken in the future. It is important to emphasise the importance of building fabric as a constraint on many carbon reduction options. For example, many of ESCC's buildings and notably some schools, have relatively poor building fabric, which means that it would not be possible to use technologies such as heat pumps because they do not currently provide enough heat for poorly insulated buildings. Some of the main measures to improve building fabric are costly (e.g. solid wall insulation) and have long payback periods, which has made them difficult to fund. Bearing in mind these constraints, the Board assessed the potential options for further reducing carbon emissions from buildings.

20. The Review Board acknowledges that in order to establish detailed costings and the carbon benefits of energy efficiency projects, an approach will need to be taken which examines each corporate building individually. An appraisal can then be made of whether energy efficiency projects, or a different set of measures would be the best way of achieving the Council's carbon reduction target. The costs and benefits will need to be considered through the Council's RPPR process, in order to balance the social, economic and environmental implications of carbon reduction initiatives.

¹ traditional building fabric insulation like loft and cavity wall insulation or flat roof when being replaced or refurbished has a shorter payback compared to solid wall or underfloor insulation, or glazing projects which have longer paybacks

21. The review has been unable to carry out this detailed technical and costing work within the timescales available but wishes to establish some principles in the way the Council evaluates the future options for building energy use. In some cases, it may not be possible or the best time to use alternative technologies due to the cost and complexity of using them in existing buildings for the reasons outlined above, but the Council should keep their use under active consideration.

Alternative Technologies for Heating

Heat Pumps

22. Heat pumps (ground source and air source) are commercially available now and they are best used in new build projects and where buildings are well insulated. Air source heat pumps are particularly suited to being retrofitted into existing and older buildings. The Board heard that although the capital cost of heat pumps is higher than conventional boilers, they are at least 2.5 to 3 times more efficient. However, they may need supplementing with other heating sources during periods of peak demand, particularly if retrofitted in older, less well insulated buildings.

23. Heat pumps use electricity but have a lower carbon footprint due to their efficiency and will have lower carbon emissions as the national electricity grid de-carbonises and switches to more renewable energy generation. The Board sees the use of heat pumps as the next step for the Council to take in the near future when opportunities arise. This should be on a building by building basis, with more energy efficient ground source heat pumps used in newly commissioned buildings where the capital costs and civil engineering works can be accommodated. For existing buildings, the review Board heard air source heat pumps are more suitable but may need supplementing with other sources of heating if building insulation is poor. It is likely that the cost of heat pumps will become more affordable as they are more widely implemented in buildings and the market and technology develops.

Recommendation 1

Priority consideration should be given to the implementation of low carbon heating systems, e.g. the use of ground source and air source heat pumps, in all newly commissioned buildings and when renewing systems in existing buildings. The most energy efficient type of heat pump currently available should be used where possible (e.g. ground source, then air source heat pumps).

Infrared Radiant Heating

24. Infrared radiant heating is another alternative heating technology which is commercially available which uses electricity. It has benefits in certain applications but requires careful design which is different from conventional heating systems. It is best used to heat people rather than spaces and parts or larger spaces (e.g. workstations in large warehouses, reception areas etc.) or where heating is required intermittently. It is certainly something that could be considered in conjunction with other technologies.

Hydrogen Gas

25. Hydrogen gas can be used as a heating system fuel just like natural gas. If hydrogen is produced using electricity from renewable sources ('green' hydrogen) it can reduce carbon emissions. There are two possible ways hydrogen gas can be used in heating systems, either as a mixture with natural gas (e.g. 20% hydrogen, 80% natural gas) or as 100% hydrogen gas. The gas distribution network would need upgrading and regulations would need to be amended in order to use hydrogen in the gas network.

26. Modern conventional boilers can be adapted to run on a mixture of natural gas and hydrogen, and most manufacturers have developed prototype hydrogen boilers that use a mix of natural gas and hydrogen. The technology is not yet commercially available, but is not far away. It would be worth the Council ensuring any new or replacement boilers are 'hydrogen ready' to run on a mixture of natural gas and hydrogen if this becomes available.

27. The use of 100% hydrogen is some way off, but there are technical trials taking place. There are also challenges around converting other appliances that run on natural gas if the whole gas network is converted to use hydrogen (e.g. cookers, gas fires etc.) and the logistics of a change over from one fuel to another.

28. One of the main issues about hydrogen is the process used to generate it and where the electricity comes from. Currently most of the hydrogen gas is 'grey hydrogen' produced either from fossil fuels or other energy intensive processes which have higher carbon emissions. For this to change, more hydrogen needs to be generated using electricity from renewable sources. The other main issue is driving down the cost of hydrogen which will be key. The cost of natural gas is one tenth of the cost of hydrogen. Consequently, the economics of hydrogen do not currently make it attractive as hydrogen boilers are more expensive and the fuel is more expensive.

Recommendation 2

The Council should keep the use of hydrogen gas heating technology under review and ensure all new or replacement boilers are capable of being 'hydrogen ready'.

Renewable Energy and Energy Storage

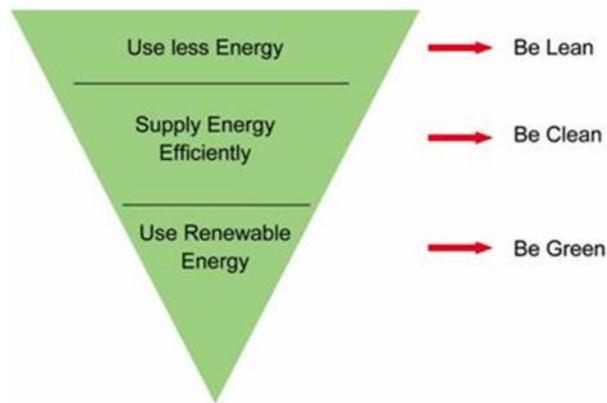
29. Another way to reduce carbon emissions from building energy use is to use on-site renewable energy generation. The two main forms of this are solar panels (photovoltaic - PV) and wind turbines, although the latter is less widely used. The Board heard that when considering renewable energy solutions, it is advisable always to use them in conjunction with energy storage (e.g. battery storage). They can also be used to power other on-site services such as Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.

30. The Review Board understands that work is underway to look at installing solar panels (PV) and battery storage at 12 sites. The Board heard expert evidence that installing solar panels is an effective way of lowering emissions and that many councils are also taking this approach. The Board supports the investment in on-site renewable energy sources and storage for use in schools and corporate buildings.

Corporate Buildings

31. The Council has four main corporate office buildings which are County Hall in Lewes, St. Mary's House and St Mark's House in Eastbourne and Ocean House in Hastings. It also has a number of smaller offices and operational buildings used for providing particular services across the County (e.g. Libraries, Register Offices, Children's Homes etc.). Many of the buildings are of older construction types and were not built to be carbon neutral. In many cases they may require improvements in the building fabric insulation, heating and energy systems to lower carbon emissions. Options for reducing emissions will also need to take into account the leasehold arrangements, where the Council does not own buildings.

32. In considering which emission reduction measures to use, the Council should use the energy hierarchy in the figure below, with the most effective option being to use less energy in the first place and then working down the hierarchy.



33. Previously individual projects have been carried out to make improvements such as window replacements, boiler and heating controls and changes to lighting. In order to make a step change, the Review Board heard that a different ‘whole building’ approach may be needed where a package of measures that looks at all aspects of the building is undertaken rather than an approach based on separate energy efficiency projects. A whole building approach should include whole life costings which will range from shorter to longer term pay back periods (see below), and it may be possible to use short term savings to subsidise longer term improvements.

Recommendation 3

a) The Council consider through the RPPR process opportunities for capital funding within the core capital programme to carry out carbon reduction projects in its corporate buildings, notably building fabric improvements, and lobbies Government for additional funding in this area.

b) In developing energy efficiency projects, the Council should take a whole building approach, which is based on whole life costings.

c) The Council should explore installing solar panels on its buildings and energy storage where this is possible. In particular, the Council should explore the feasibility of installing solar panel canopies over the car parks at County Hall and use the resultant energy in the building and to power Electric Vehicle/electric bike charge points in the car parks.

Maintained Schools

34. Maintained schools (i.e. those that are not Academies) are included in the Council’s carbon footprint and represent over half of the Council’s scope 1 and 2 emissions for heating and use of electricity. Working with schools and school leaders is therefore important in reducing the Council’s carbon emissions. The review heard that a lot of good work has already been undertaken by Schools with the help of the Orbis Energy Team to reduce energy use and costs (e.g. through the Salix programme), thereby reducing carbon emissions. However, there is more that needs to be done.

35. Schools are managed independently from the Council and are currently under a great deal of financial pressure. A range of measures needs to be developed to encourage schools to reduce their carbon emissions further and to support them in achieving this. The Review Board considers that schools need to be aware of the role they can play in achieving carbon neutrality and contributing to the new Council target of reducing carbon emissions by 13% per annum.

36. Many schools have taken up the offer of using the renewable energy tariff negotiated by the Council and have smart meters that produce detailed information about energy use. The Review Board heard evidence that it would be beneficial to make more use of this information, for example, by publishing comparative data with other schools and establishing carbon reduction targets. It is also important to provide case studies of what can be achieved and to share information, building on the existing energy efficiency guide produced by the Orbis Energy Team, to encourage the uptake of carbon reduction measures. In many cases energy saving measures can also lead to cost savings for the schools involved.

37. Introducing energy efficiency measures and reducing carbon emissions provide great opportunities for learning and the teaching of the curriculum. Pupils, school councils and the Youth Cabinet should be encouraged to take part in carbon reduction projects and initiatives in schools.

38. Like corporate buildings, the main alternative to natural gas and oil-fired heating systems in schools is the use of heat pumps. At present there are very few examples of their use in schools and the Board believes it would be helpful to have a pilot scheme to establish best practice and share learning.

Recommendation 4

a) The Council, in conjunction with maintained schools, publishes comparative data on energy efficiency (e.g. league tables and energy performance), sets a carbon reduction target and encourages engagement with pupils in learning projects and activities to reduce carbon emissions.

b) The Council consider through the RPPR process providing capital funding for a pilot project to install heat pump technology in one of the County's maintained schools as a best practice case study.

School Building Programme

39. New school buildings and major improvements are generally funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The Council uses value engineering to incorporate as many energy efficiency and carbon saving measures in new school buildings as possible, but what is affordable via DfE funding is limited. The Board believes the Council needs to find a solution so that the best options are included in new buildings, so they are built to be carbon neutral in future given their anticipated long life. For example, timber frame construction buildings using locally sourced timber could be used in the construction of new school buildings and the extension of existing buildings or school campuses.

40. Additional funding and carbon neutral building standards for new schools and major improvement programmes could be part of the 'ask' from central Government on what is needed to achieve the target of becoming carbon neutral.

Recommendation 5

The Council lobbies the Department for Education to provide sufficient funding for new schools to be built to a carbon neutral standard and provide funding for major improvements to retrofit energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures to all school buildings.

Building Lifecycles and Payback Periods

41. The lifecycle of a building includes a number of phases which start with acquiring a site, through to construction of the building, maintenance and then disposing of the building (selling or demolition) at the end of its life. Each stage will have its own carbon footprint. In terms of maintenance activity, each element of a building (e.g. the heating system, windows, electrics, cladding etc.) has a different lifespan.

42. The evidence suggests that sometimes shorter pay back criteria are used on what appear to be longer lifespan improvements, particularly where this is needed to meet external funding criteria. It would be appropriate to use longer payback criteria depending on the lifecycle element of a building (e.g. the payback period could match the anticipated life of that element of the building). This issue can represent a barrier to the Council making the necessary improvements to its buildings, but taking a different approach may be a challenge for the Council in terms of funding.

43. For example, heat pumps due to the initial capital cost have a payback period which is typically over 10 years, whereas the Salix scheme requires a payback period of 10 years or less. This has led the Council to focus on improvements with a shorter payback period (e.g. LED lighting schemes) which can achieve this shorter payback period, when there may be other improvements that could be used to lower carbon emissions.

44. It is important to use whole life costings (also see paragraph 30 above) when developing and assessing projects, including the improvement and refurbishment of school buildings. Some technologies may cost more but have a lower overall cost, especially when carbon emissions are taken into account.

Recommendation 6

The Council reviews the payback periods used for major building refurbishment projects and adjusts the provision of capital funding for carbon reduction projects to enable more work in this area to be carried out based on whole life costings.

Street Lighting

45. The emissions from the electricity used for street lighting are around 2,645 tonnes of CO_{2e} per year. The Council has already completed phase one of a programme to replace street lights with more energy efficient LED (light emitting diode) lights. The second phase of the LED street light replacement programme will convert the remaining 14,019 lanterns to LEDs and will start shortly (this represents around a third of all the street lights in the County). The replacement programme is funded by the Salix scheme, which is a loan paid back with the energy cost savings that are made.

46. The Board reviewed further options for reducing emissions from street lighting and other highways infrastructure such as lit street signs. The main potential area for further savings in emissions is by reducing the amount of time street lights are on where it is safe to do so. For example, using part night settings where lights are switched off for a period of time (e.g. between midnight and 5.00am). At present the use of solar panels and mini wind turbines to power street lights is not feasible due to the limited reliability of these systems and the cost of the technology.

47. The Review Board examined the evidence on the impact of reduced street lighting and it is possible to do this without it having an impact on road safety and community safety if carefully designed. There is good evidence to suggest that it is possible to reduce street lighting levels without compromising community safety. There are locations such as lower speed residential streets where part night lighting could be safely introduced.

48. There are benefits from reducing street lighting levels such as the impact on climate change, better resource use and a reduction in light pollution which benefits people and wildlife. The Board considered that it is important to engage with stakeholders before any changes are made and a feasibility study should be undertaken to assess where changes may be possible.

49. The Board also discussed the use of dimming and intelligent lighting systems to make energy savings. These systems use lighting controls to adjust lighting levels and switch lights on when they are needed. Intelligent lighting systems could be examined in the future once the LED replacement programme has been completed and if the potential for savings warrant it. The Board observed that intelligent lighting could be installed in public sector car parks and should be installed in the car parks at County Hall as an example of what can be done.

Recommendation 7

The Council:

- a) Explore the scope for further energy savings by reducing the amount of time street lights are on through ongoing maintenance and replacement programmes.**
- b) Explore the use of alternative technologies such as solar and wind turbines for less essential lit signs and other street furniture.**
- c) Keep the use of intelligent lighting systems for street lighting under review and install intelligent lighting in the car parks and campus at the County Hall campus as an example of best practice.**

Staff Business Travel, Staff Commuting and Fleet Vehicles

Staff Travel and Commuting (including Elected Members)

50. The emissions from staff business travel and employee commuting (including Elected Members) contribute significantly to the Council's Scope 3 carbon emissions. Therefore, any measures or changes in working practices that reduce the need to travel will have an impact on carbon emissions. In this context it is useful to consider the concept of a Travel Hierarchy when considering measures to reduce emissions from transport.

1. Travel less
2. Travel using a lower emitting mode of transport (e.g. walking, cycling, bus or train)
3. Travel using Electric Vehicles (EV's)

51. The Council does not have direct control over the way in which staff travel to work. However, it has sought to introduce flexible and remote working through the Agile programme to enable employees to work from home and provide incentives through a Staff Travel Plan to use lower emitting modes of transport such as public transport and cycling. Policies regarding staff travel and travel expenses can also be used to reduce emissions. Increased working from home reduces the need for staff to commute and reduces the amount of office space needed by the organisation.

52. The Member ICT and Development Reference Group has also been looking at the use of remote meeting technology for councillors. The Council has recently passed a Motion to request Government to keep the flexibility in place to allow council meetings to be held remotely or in person (or a combination of both) in the future, which reduces the need to travel and makes best use of time and resources. The Review Board considers that the Council should investigate the introduction of hybrid committee meetings where councillors can either attend remotely or in person.

Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic

53. The Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020 stopped most travel almost immediately, with the majority of staff working remotely from home. Staff travel claims for the first quarter from April – June 2020 showed a 77% decrease compared with the same quarter last year. Although this is an artificial situation, as normally there is a need for some staff travel, it has provided an opportunity to look at the business needs for travel in the future.

54. A Workplace Reset Programme is underway to move from the initial emergency response to a longer-term solution that balances the business needs of the Council with the needs of staff. There is an ambition to build a modern, flexible workplace where corporate spaces are used to better support residents, provide greater flexibility for employees and facilitate new ways of working across the Council's staff teams, its partners and the community. The Programme includes engagement with staff on new workstyles which builds on the 'Time to Talk' survey, and the cultural changes that will be needed to embed new ways of working such as the use of remote meeting technology.

55. The Review Board considers the Council should pursue a compromise position that meets these needs and enables a reduction in carbon emissions from reduced travelling and increased remote working to be retained. This will also have the benefit of reducing the amount of office space needed, which in turn may reduce building energy use and carbon emissions further. Work in this area should include a review of the costs and benefits of increased working from home for staff and councillors. The Board also believes it would be helpful if drop-in hot desk working facilities and collaboration spaces are expanded so staff can use the nearest corporate office to where they live when they do need to go into their normal office base.

Recommendation 8

a) The Council explore more varied patterns of working to determine what is the best level of remote working from a staff perspective and for the Council to meet its business needs and reduce carbon emissions.

b) Work is undertaken to support cultural change to embed changes in working practices that reduce the need to travel, or encourages less travel, such as the use of technology to hold meetings remotely and provide training using remote meeting technology.

c) The Council explores the provision of more capacity for drop-in centres / hot desking and collaboration space in regional offices so staff do not always need to travel into the main office buildings, including County Hall, as part of the future workplace planning arrangements.

d) The Council investigate the introduction of hybrid committee meetings where councillors can either attend remotely or in person.

Staff Travel Plan

56. The Board heard that work is being undertaken to revise the Staff Travel Plan which is an overarching approach to the Human Resources policies that relate to staff business travel and commuting. The staff travel policies which have the potential to make a difference in terms of climate change fall into three broad categories:

- Travel expenses - The travel expenses scheme could be amended to encourage the use of Electric Vehicles (EVs) through the use of the higher mileage rate for EV's and encourage other forms of transport.
- Loan schemes - The limits on loans for staff to purchase bikes could be increased to enable this scheme to cover the purchase of electric bikes, and season ticket loans for train and bus travel could be more widely promoted to encourage the use of public transport.

- Salary sacrifice schemes - Salary sacrifice schemes could be amended to enable the purchase of electric bikes and EV's, which are generally more expensive than conventional models.

57. The Review Board supports the work being undertaken on the Staff Travel Plan to encourage the use of other travel modes and the uptake of EV's. In particular, the Board supports the use of the higher mileage rate to encourage the use of EV's but acknowledges that for lower paid staff purchasing an EV may not be possible due to the higher costs involved. Providing encouragement and incentives in other ways should also be considered.

58. The Board noted that current arrangements for season tickets are not flexible and do not support the use of public transport for fewer journeys per week/per month. Therefore, staff are more likely to use other modes of transport if they are working from home more often. The Board suggests the Council lobbies Government for a more flexible season ticketing system.

Recommendation 9

a) The Staff Travel Plan is revised to encourage, and where appropriate consideration is given to the potential for incentivising, the use of other travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport) and the uptake of Electric Vehicles to reduce carbon emissions.

b) The Council considers lobbying the Department for Transport to make changes to season tickets for train and bus travel so they can be used flexibly by staff commuting to work.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points

59. The Board understands, based on the evidence, that providing Electric Vehicle charging points at the main offices or at least County Hall is essential to encouraging the uptake of Electric Vehicles by staff and should be actioned as soon as possible. This could be done in a number of ways depending on the providers and the way in which the charging facilities are paid for (there are a number of different ownership models).

Recommendation 10

Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points are installed at the main office buildings, or at least County Hall, with a plan agreed by the end of March 2021.

Council Fleet Vehicles

60. The Board looked at the work that is being done on fleet vehicle emissions which has been split into two parts:

- Grey Vehicle Fleet. These are individual cars that are used for staff business travel which are purchased by staff either privately or through ESCC's lease car scheme. The emissions from them represents 2% of the Council's scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon footprint. As such, emissions from grey fleet vehicles count for a small part of total emissions. Pre Covid19 the annual cost for vehicle mileage claims was around £2 million.
- Own Fleet (around 90 vehicles, both small and large specialised vehicles such as accessible buses). These are vehicles either owned or leased directly by the Council for use by various services e.g. Adult Social Care, Children's Services, and Communities, Economy & Transport. They represent less than 1% of total scope 1,2 and 3 emissions.

61. Two separate reports have been commissioned from the Energy Saving Trust on the options and ideas for reducing emissions from these two groups of vehicles. The Council usually leases vehicles rather than outright purchasing them. It would be possible to convert the smaller vehicles to Electric Vehicles (EVs) as this can be done with off the shelf models that are available now. The market for low emission alternatives for the larger vehicles such as Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) and buses is less developed. The lease cost of larger custom-built vehicles is much higher and low emission versions can be as much as double the capital cost.

62. Depending on the outcome of the Energy Saving Trust reports, the Board considers it would be appropriate to convert all the smaller Own Fleet vehicles to EVs as soon as the current leases expire, prioritising any that use diesel fuel. The main challenge is finding low emission alternatives for larger vehicles and HGV's. This is likely to be where it would be best to use emerging hydrogen technology (see below). In the short-term action could be taken to replace small vehicles with EV's and look to replace or experiment with hydrogen powered larger vehicles when the technology is better developed.

63. Grey Fleet vehicles, which includes around 90 vehicles that are leased by staff under the current car lease scheme, are used for staff business travel. Members of staff pay the lease cost and can choose any type of vehicle they wish (subject to replacement costs). It may be desirable to review the scheme to encourage the selection of low emission or zero emission vehicles, especially as most mileage will be within the County.

64. In addition to its fleet vehicles, the Council could request the use of EVs and low emission vehicles in the Highways Maintenance Contract and other large contracts (e.g. Home to School Transport), although the Council would need to understand the potential effects on service delivery and costs.

Recommendation 11

a) Smaller own fleet vehicles should be replaced by EV's in the short term when the leases expire.

b) Review the car lease scheme to encourage staff to select low emission or zero emission vehicles.

c) The Council considers specifying the early use of low emission vehicles in the procurement of major contracts (e.g. the Highways maintenance contract), where feasible.

Alternative Technologies for Vehicles - Hydrogen

65. The use of hydrogen is the main direction for replacing the use of diesel for large vehicles such as buses and trucks. This is in part due to its energy density and the advantages it has in the time it takes to refuel vehicles that may be making longer journeys. There are two ways hydrogen can be used: direct combustion and producing electricity in fuel cells. It is commercially available now and there are a few examples locally (e.g. Brighton & Hove buses have 20 hydrogen powered buses). There are safety issues with using hydrogen, but these can be managed. The cost of hydrogen fuel cell powered trucks is more expensive compared with diesel (and electric). The solution is already there but the market needs to develop further in terms of costs and refuelling infrastructure.

66. Hydrogen vehicle technology for larger vehicles is becoming commercially available now and could be used as part of a phased replacement of the Councils Own Fleet vehicles. The development of the hydrogen powered vehicles market and the availability of 'green' hydrogen fuel should be monitored so the Council can judge the best time to convert the larger vehicles through the use of hydrogen technology.

Recommendation 12

The Council should keep the market for larger hydrogen powered vehicles under review, with a view to undertaking early pilot schemes and eventually phasing out the diesel-powered larger vehicles in its fleet in line with Government policy.

Carbon Off-Setting and Renewables**Carbon Off-Setting**

67. The Review Board heard evidence that the use of carbon off-setting should be the very last option used, once all other carbon emission reduction measures have been taken. However, it is clear from the ESCC Climate Emergency Plan that there is a very strong likelihood that there will be a gap between all the measures the Council can take to reduce carbon emissions (taking into account the de-carbonisation of electricity grid) and the target the Council needs to reach to become carbon neutral. Therefore, some carbon off-setting measures will be needed for the Council to become carbon neutral.

68. The exact amount of carbon off-setting that will be required is difficult to calculate due to changing technology and other factors such as changes in policy. However, there will be a need for investment in some carbon off-setting. There are a number of options that the Council can take which include:

- tree planting and new woodland creation in suitable locations;
- the creation and management of other natural habitats by investing in natural capital; and
- the development of large-scale renewable energy generation schemes (e.g. solar farms or on-shore wind farms).

Tree Planting and Woodland Creation

69. The Forestry Commission has developed the Woodland Carbon Code and the science behind it to assess the carbon sequestration of different types of woodland (e.g. 1 hectare of mixed broadleaved woodland can absorb 310 tCO₂e after 30 years). This is well established way of off-setting carbon emissions and one of the cheapest ways of capturing carbon at around £10 per tonne CO₂e. The impact on carbon can be negative depending on how the resulting timber is used. The main issues with this technique are land acquisition for tree planting and the ongoing maintenance costs of the woodland.

70. When considering tree planting it is important to consider the multiple benefits of having woodlands and trees and how they function in the landscape. As well as delivering wood products such as wood for carbon lean building materials and fuel, woodlands and trees can be used to alleviate flooding, improve water quality, alleviate air pollution, provide green infrastructure in urban areas and links to the wider countryside. They are also seen as important for experiencing nature, recreation and wellbeing.

71. The Review Board heard there are opportunities for new woodlands in the Low Weald where the land is challenging to farm, and in areas of the High Weald that were cleared for farming some 20-30 years ago which may also join up areas of existing woodland.

72. The National Tree Strategy, which the Government has been consulting on, could mean 10,000 hectares of new woodland per year are planted in England and this could equate to around 200 hectares (roughly 500 acres) per year in East Sussex. It is estimated based on planting broadleaved woodland, which captures about 310 tonnes of CO₂ after 30 years, ESCC would have to plant and maintain about 545 hectares between now and 2050 to off-set all the estimated 169,000 tonnes of unavoidable CO₂ emissions that ESCC may not be able to cut over that period.

73. There are existing grant schemes such as the Woodland Carbon Guarantee Scheme which provides landowners with a guaranteed indication of what they will earn in grant dependent upon the amount of carbon the woodland saves. Work is also underway to review grants and regulations for new woodland creation, and the grants for planting new woodland will be attractive as part of the national targets for woodland creation.

Natural Habitats

74. As well as woodland there are four or five habitats that are important for carbon storage. Nationally peatland is an important habitat, but there is very little of this type of habitat in Sussex. The habitats that are present in addition to woodland are:

- Grassland/Downland.
- Heathland,
- Hedgerows
- Wetland; and
- Coastal

75. The soil is an important carbon store and is mainly where the carbon is stored in all of the terrestrial habits. In woodlands carbon is also stored in the trunks and branches of the trees, as well as the leaf litter on the woodland floor. Many of these habitats and plant communities have been there for a long time and longevity is important. Disturbing soil releases carbon into the atmosphere. So the more undisturbed the soil, the more carbon will remain locked into it.

76. Although the science base is not available yet, other habitats should be considered as part of a long-term carbon off-setting plan. There are many opportunities to build carbon storage into projects such a flood management and sediment capture. Improvement in the management of habitats, as with parks and open spaces, has multiple benefits for wildlife and people.

77. The Board heard that the Nature Recovery Network is a new national Government policy initiative. The idea is to create a network of habitats on the ground which will lead to an overall increase in nature across England. Where habitats will be created will be guided by a local map of habitats identifying where and how habitats can be created to provide benefits for people and wildlife. The Environment Bill will identify 'responsible authorities' to develop a Nature Recovery Strategy for their area.

78. The Sussex Local Nature Partnership has developed a Natural Capital Investment Strategy which has a series of maps to show where investment is needed in habitats in Sussex. The Council (and its partners) could use the Strategy to target investment in habitats as part of a carbon off-setting plan. This is a shared theme contained in the East Sussex Environment Strategy.

79. The Review Board noted that the loss of natural habitats and the impact on carbon is not factored into planning considerations at present, which will be important to councils as they strive to become carbon neutral.

Recommendation 13

The Council keeps opportunities for investing in natural habitats under review for inclusion in a carbon off-setting plan at the appropriate time when the science has been developed.

Renewable Energy Generation

80. The Board considers there is a case for the Council to invest in renewable energy generation. This will enable the Council to use renewable energy generation to off-set emissions and secure a number of other benefits. It may provide the opportunity to generate income by selling renewable electricity locally, support other local carbon reduction objectives and in the process contribute to the de-carbonisation of the electricity supply. Although onshore wind farms are the cheapest way of generating renewable energy there are a number of planning constraints which may prevent their development in East Sussex where there are large areas of protected landscapes (e.g. South Downs National Park and High Weald AONB).

81. The Review Board supports the principle of investment in renewables and in particular the Council should look for opportunities to invest in solar farms for electricity generation as part of the Council's suite of measures to offset carbon emissions.

Summary

82. The Review Board has examined the options for off-setting carbon emissions and believes that the Council should develop a carbon off-setting plan that includes a mix of all three techniques. Although new woodland creation is the most established of the carbon sequestration techniques, the Board considers investment in other natural habitats should be given equal weight. This reflects the fact that it might not be the right approach to add to tree cover significantly in the protected landscapes in East Sussex such as the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (where the historic nature of the landscape is also important) by balancing tree planting with the use of other natural habitats.

83. Both tree planting/woodland creation and investment in natural habitats can deliver a range of other benefits (e.g. flood alleviation, improvement in air quality, protection and enhancement of biodiversity, and areas that can be used for recreation and the promotion of well-being). It will be important to take into account the views of stakeholders on tree planting and the other measures when developing the carbon off-setting plan.

Recommendation 14

a) The Council develops a carbon off-setting plan which includes investment in woodland creation, natural habitats and renewable energy generation.

b) The Property Asset Disposal and Investment Strategy is reviewed to identify land availability and opportunities for carbon off-setting habitats and investment in the development of solar farms.

Communications and Leadership

84. The climate emergency and climate change are a difficult area for communications as there are a vast range of opinions about it, from unbelievers through to campaigners. The ways in which people react to this issue can be very different. Expert advice from the Council's Communications Team suggests that it is probably best to adopt an approach that takes small steps which provides tailored messages for the various groups of people. There is a huge potential to involve staff and partners, who can also act as advocates.

85. The Council is the lead authority for many issues within East Sussex and is able to use its convening power to bring groups and organisations together on this issue. There are many examples of previous work where this has taken place in the past. All the Borough and District Council's in East Sussex have declared a climate emergency and are developing or implementing action plans. There is, in the Board's view, an important role for ESCC to co-ordinate action on some aspects of climate change work, particularly in areas such as transport where the Council has a key role. One option may be to produce a common set of tools and resources that can be used by all partners. In this respect ESCC does have a leadership role on this issue.

86. There is also a leadership role for ESCC as a fair and neutral arbiter in the provision of information on the action needed to tackle climate change. The public need information they can trust and understand, which is educative and informative. The message needs to be that yes there is a challenge, yes there is something we can do and here are the solutions. It is also important that the Council leads by example.

Recommendation 15

a) The Council develops an interactive communication/information platform, which includes details on what the Council itself is doing on climate change and to discuss opportunities where residents may take an active role in lowering community carbon emissions.

b) The Council uses its convening power to co-ordinate the actions it is taking on climate change with its partners, and in particular with the District and Borough Councils in East Sussex.

Other Issues

87. During the course of examining evidence for the review a number of other issues outside of the scope of the review came to light. The Review Board wishes to address some of them here as they link to topics discussed by the Review Board.

Corporate Systems

88. The Board considers that some changes may be needed to corporate systems in order to take into account the carbon impact of the provision of services. Business cases have ordinarily focussed on cost and benefits to the Council and a way needs to be found to incorporate the impact on carbon emissions in project and procurement decisions (e.g. what may be the most cost effective option, may not have the smallest carbon footprint). Similarly, it would be helpful for reports to include reference to the carbon impact of the proposal or decision where relevant when being presented to Lead Members, Cabinet and Full Council.

Recommendation 16

a) Business case evaluation and procurement decisions should include an assessment of the carbon impact of the proposal.

b) Reports that go to the Executive and Council should include an assessment or statement of the carbon emissions impact of the proposals/decision in the report where relevant and material.

Planning

89. During discussion of a recent planning application for a new school building at Planning Committee, the Committee was advised that it was not possible to add a planning condition that the building be carbon neutral or have measures to improve the carbon performance of the building due to the current planning framework. The Review Board considers that strategic new school projects should be carbon neutral going forward given the anticipated life of these buildings and their inclusion in the Council's carbon footprint.

90. The Board understands that it is not clear what will be included in the new National Planning Policy Framework on this issue. Building regulations could represent a real constraint on what might be possible in the future. The Review Board considers that the Council should lobby Government on this issue so that the carbon footprint or performance of new buildings can be taken into consideration in determining Planning applications.

Recommendation 17

The Council lobbies Government at a national level via ADEPT and the South East 7 partnership, to amend the planning system and building regulations so that the carbon performance of new buildings, including school buildings, can be taken into account in planning decisions.

Protecting Trees

91. The Board heard evidence that managing existing woodland sustainably is as important for climate benefits as planting new woodlands. Linked to this the Review Board considers that policies to protect trees and woodlands and replace lost trees such as those lost due to tree diseases (e.g. Ash dieback and Dutch Elm Disease), is also important. Wherever possible trees should be replaced in situ, but other tree species (e.g. smaller ones) and alternative locations should be considered where there are safety concerns. The Forestry Commission also provides master classes for Planning teams on how to design developments to fit in within existing woodland to avoid the loss of trees, especially ancient woodland.

Recommendation 18

a) ESCC build on the existing Dutch Elm Disease Strategy to develop a Strategic Tree Policy and action plan to manage Ash Dieback, Dutch Elm Disease and other tree diseases/pests which includes a programme to replace lost trees where possible (subject to safety issues) to mitigate the impact on carbon absorption.

b) Both County and District/Borough Planning teams should be encouraged to attend the master class training provided by the Forestry Commission on the retention and protection of woodlands and trees.

Conclusions

92. The Review Board recognises that the scope of this review focuses on the Council's own carbon emissions and to tackle climate change there are many other areas where the Council can use its influence to bring about change to reduce carbon emissions. However, it considered that it was important for the Council to start here before addressing wider issues.

93. The Council's Climate Emergency Plan represents an important starting point in the Council's work to become carbon neutral. This review makes a number of recommendations in support of the actions contained in the Plan, and the Place Scrutiny Committee will remain involved in this area of work as the action plan progresses (e.g. through an annual review of the action plan at Committee).

Appendix:

Scope and terms of reference of the review

The Review was established to consider and make recommendations on the actions that are needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve carbon neutrality for all the Council's activities. The scope includes the following topics:

- Corporate Estate building energy use;
- Local authority-maintained schools energy use (as they make up over half of scope 2 emissions from electricity);
- Communications and leadership, including co-ordination of the work of the East Sussex local authorities on the Climate Emergency;
- Street lighting reduction in energy use;
- Staff commuting, staff business travel, electric charging points at council offices and own transport fleet vehicles;
- Use of emerging and alternative technologies, which can be applied throughout the review; and
- Use and scope for using renewables (solar, wind, etc.) and off-setting.

Board Membership and project support

Review Board Members: Councillors Martin Clarke (Chair), John Barnes, Bob Bowdler, Pat Rodohan and Stephen Shing.

The Project Manager was Martin Jenks, Senior democratic Services Officer with additional support provided by Simon Bailey, Democratic Services Officer.

Andy Arnold, Environment Team Manager and Jannette Ackroyd, Climate Change Officer provided ongoing support to the Board throughout the review.

Review Board meeting dates

Scoping meeting: 04 November 2019

Review Board meetings:

24 February 2020

14 September 2020

28 September 2020

7 October 2020

15 October 2020

4 November 2020

Witnesses providing evidence

The Board would like to thank all the witnesses who provided evidence in person:

ESCC officers

Andy Arnold, Environment Team Manager

Jannette Ackroyd, Climate Change Officer

Dion D'Silva, Principal Energy Efficiency Officer

Graham Glenn, Acquisitions and Disposals Manager, Property Services
 Sarah Mainwaring, Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development
 Brian Banks, Team Manager Road Safety
 Brian Bottomley, Senior Transport Officer
 Mathew Jasper, Team Manager Asset Management
 Warwick Smith, Head of Communications and Marketing

External expert witnesses

Matthew Woodcock, Partnership & Enterprise Manager SE, Forestry Commission
 Julie Middleton, Sussex Wildlife Trust
 Dr Marco Picco, Innovation Lead for Clean Growth UK, University of Brighton

East Sussex County Council Officers who submitted written evidence:

Paul Hasley, Orbis Energy Manager
 Louise Carter, Assistant Director (Communication, Planning and Performance), Children’s Services
 Helen Bowman, Project Manager Funding and Partnerships, Children’s Services
 Nick Early, Human Resources Consultant

Evidence papers

Item	Date considered
The Potential for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Local Government Association. January 2016.	14 September 2020
Energising Procurement. Local Government Association. Sept 2017.	14 September 2020
Energy Saving Guide: A guide to good energy housekeeping for schools in East Sussex. Orbis Energy Team.	14 September 2020
Clean, connected and in control – what tomorrow’s transport technology could mean for councils. Local Government Association. May 2018	28 September 2020
Councils in Charge – making the case for electric charging investment. Local Government Association. Aug 2019.	28 September 2020
Steinbach et al (2015) ‘The Effect of Reduced Street Lighting on Road Casualties and Crime in England and Wales: A Controlled Interrupted Time Series Analysis’, <i>Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health</i> , 2015:1-7.	28 September 2020
Green et al (2015) Reduced street lighting at night and health: A rapid appraisal of public views in England and Wales.	28 September 2020
Road Safety Information: Street Lighting and Road Safety. ROPSA. March 2020.	28 September 2020
ESCC Street Lighting Policy PS 10/1. October 2017	28 September 2020
Responding to the Climate Emergency with New Trees and Woodlands: A guide to help local authorities and landowning businesses achieve net zero. Forestry Commission. 2020.	7 October 2020

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) – Draft Tree Plan. September 2020.	7 October 2020
Land use: Policies for a Net Zero UK. Committee on Climate Change. January 2020.	7 October 2020
Cleaning Up Transport - Driving Change: How Hydrogen Can Fuel A Transport Revolution. Centre for Policy Studies. 2020.	15 October 2020
Climate Action Plan for Councils – Friends of the Earth.	15 October 2020
Top Climate Actions for Councils. Ashden / Friends of the Earth.	15 October 2020
Clean Growth Policy Position. ADEPT. June 2020.	2 November 2020

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Report to: **Place Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **25 November 2020**

By: **Director of Communities, Economy and Transport**

Title: **Scrutiny Review of Road Repairs**

Purpose: **To provide an update on the action plan from the Scrutiny Review of Road Repairs report dated March 2019**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To note the updates to the recommendations and action plan set out in Appendix 1 of this report

1. Background

1.1 The Place Scrutiny Committee established a Scrutiny Review Board in June 2018 to examine road maintenance practices and concerns reported to the Committee. The scope of the review included:

- Road repairs, both reactive pothole repairs and planned resurfacing work;
- The quality of repairs;
- How the Council tackles highway drainage problems; and
- The repair of pavements (added following initial scoping work).

1.2 The Review examined several lines of enquiry which reflected the issues raised by residents and councillors, namely:

- How the Council communicates its approach to highway maintenance;
- Whether the current approach to pothole repairs is the right one and represents value for money;
- The quality of the repair and resurfacing work;
- The time it takes to repair blocked drainage infrastructure once it is reported and initial work carried out; and
- The repair of pavements and the factors that affect their condition.

1.3 The recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Board were presented and accepted at [Full Council in 14 May 2019](#).

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Scrutiny Review of Road Repairs was welcomed by the Department and the opportunity afforded by the review to explain to Members how the service is delivered. This included site visits to look at real examples of issues and repairs.

2.2 The Department's response to the Review Board's recommendations and an update to the action plan are set out in appendix 1.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Scrutiny Review highlighted several concerns of Members and areas of focus for the department regarding the delivery of road repairs. Progress has been made against each of the recommendations as highlighted in Appendix 1.

3.2 Over the past 18 months the service has responded to and benefited from these actions and continues to explore further ways to improve the service.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Dale Poore

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LOCAL MEMBERS

ALL

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Scrutiny Report Review of Road Repairs

Appendix 1

PLACE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ROAD REPAIRS – ACTION PLAN				
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION		DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN	Update Notes	TIMESCALE
R1.	The Council examines how it could better communicate with residents on highways maintenance policies and practices, and the Committee would welcome the opportunity to work with Officers to achieve this (e.g. how the Council achieves value for money).	<p>The Department has recently produced a Members' Guide to Highway Maintenance which the Review Board reported as being very useful. The Department would welcome the further opportunity to work with a sub-group of the Place Scrutiny Committee to advise on improving communications with those Members, parish and town councils.</p> <p>The Department would particularly welcome working with Members to expand the feedback from residents to help broaden our benchmarking data as the Service.</p>	<p>A Members Guide to Highways was successfully launched and shared with all Councillors. Following this a public version was produced and has been published on the East Sussex Highways (EHS) website. Feedback from Members suggests they found this useful</p> <p>A Scrutiny Reference Group was set up and met to discuss improvements around communications in particular –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to Highway Website • Social Media • Improvement to the information shared with residents about upcoming works • Feedback Surveys <p>Our planned works are published on the website and through our social media channels. A greater level of detail is now also provided to residents about our works including what and why we are doing the work. Feedback surveys continue to be used to gather satisfaction information to improve what we do. These conversations will continue with the Scrutiny Reference Group tasked with focusing on the Highways Re-Procurement Project. We continue to sign-post Members, residents and parishes to the wealth of information on the EHS website</p>	On-going
R2.	Officers conduct a pilot into the feasibility of introducing a new approach to repair all neighbouring potholes at the same time, within a given distance of a category 2 or 3 intervention standard pothole	Moving away from the current approach to the repair of potholes risks undermining the Council's Asset Management Strategy. It would also increase the overall cost of the highways service. Moving from an asset management approach would	Recognising Members concerns to repair adjacent potholes, but that don't meet our maintenance intervention criteria, our Stewards have continued to flag these as "advisory repairs" and we continue to repair larger areas around intervention level potholes where necessary and funding permits. Since the review we have undertaken nearly 400 larger advisory road repairs.	Complete

	<p>using the funding allocated from the Department for Transport (DfT) pothole fund for the pilot.</p>	<p>impact outcomes and risk losing the Council's Department for Transport Band 3 status and associated incentive element of its funding.</p> <p>While we recognise the concerns of the board the Department works within a finite budget, at a time when financial resources are constrained, and it is more cost effective and best practice to invest in the planned resurfacing of roads to prevent potholes forming, rather than to repair potholes on a reactive basis.</p> <p>The Department already addresses those neighbouring potholes that do not meet the Council's intervention criteria. When identifying a pothole(s) at intervention level the Highway Stewards also make recommendations for larger-scale patch repairs of adjacent potholes, where it is appropriate. Whilst not in the same timescale, these Steward recommendations are added to the Council's patching programme and repairs are carried out on a prioritised, planned basis.</p> <p>The approach to the repair of potholes accords with industry best practice and Department for Transport (DfT) guidance. It also supports the Councils statutory defence of claims under S58 of the Highways Act as well as Council Policy that sets out very clear intervention criteria and repair timescales.</p>	<p>In addition, we have introduced an improved patching repair service (Proprietary name: Velocity Patching) as part of our preventative maintenance programme. Since the review we have addressed over 6000 repairs.</p>	
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		The Department recommends continuing with the current approach to repairing those safety defects that trigger the current intervention criteria and within the Council's prescribed timescales.		
R3.	Scrutiny should be consulted on the use of any future one-off highways funding from Government, before work has been programmed via a Review Board of the Committee.	<p>Scrutiny Committee has oversight of all highways expenditure as all investment in highways, both base and one-off funding, is spent in accordance with the Asset Management Plan, which is available for review by Place Scrutiny.</p> <p>The timing of DfT announcements of pothole and other one-off funding does not always allow for consultation with Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The most recent funding of £4.7m was announced by the DfT shortly before Christmas, to spend before the end of the 2018/19 financial year. The timescales for spending this money is extremely short, but the Council was able to allocate funding to those highest priority schemes across the county from its Asset Plan.</p>		Ongoing
R4.	That the existing level of capital investment in roads through planned maintenance and the Asset Management approach is maintained and if possible increased, as this is the most cost effective way of repairing potholes.	The Department welcomes this recommendation to support the Council's Asset Management approach to highway maintenance.	We continue to invest in planned maintenance to reduce the potential for potholes to appear and we have continued to meet our road condition targets set by the Council.	Completed

			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Performance measure</th> <th>Target 2019/20</th> <th>Outturn 2019/20</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance</td> <td>8%</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of Non Principal roads requiring maintenance</td> <td>9%</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance</td> <td>15%</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Performance measure	Target 2019/20	Outturn 2019/20	Percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance	8%	5%	Percentage of Non Principal roads requiring maintenance	9%	5%	Percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance	15%	14%	
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R5.	The Council explores the possibility of identifying additional funding to improve the condition of pavements, via existing sources of funding and partnership working.	The Council invests £1.4m pa in pavement maintenance. Any additional funding would need to be provided within the current funding envelope and therefore an increase over and above the £1.4m would reduce funding available for other highway related improvements. Any additional funding for improving the condition of pavements would be explored within the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) context.	In 2019 the Council allocated an additional £300k for pavements. Since then we have improved a total of 47.4km (29.5 miles) of footways around the county.													
R6.	The condition of the remaining 50% of pavements is surveyed, and a measure of the condition of pavements is developed within the next 2 years, so that their condition can be monitored and the impact of any additional investment can be assessed.	Whilst there is no statutory requirement to do this and report to the DfT as there is with carriageways, the Department agrees with this recommendation and will put in place a condition survey regime to report on the overall condition of pavements across the county within the timescales suggested by the Board.	A full survey has been completed this year of all footways in the County. A three year programme of footway works is now being developed for commencement next year, depending on budget availability.	36 months												

R7.	The Council considers using its powers to ban parking on pavements and verges in problem areas, as part of regular parking reviews.	The Council already has the ability to introduce, and does introduce pavement and verge parking restrictions and corresponding enforcement. Such restrictions can be requested and considered through the annual parking reviews that are carried out in Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings where the County Council has civil parking enforcement powers.	The Government is currently consulting on a wider UK restriction on pavement parking. This is due to close 22 November 2020. https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking/pavement-parking-options-for-change Civil Parking Enforcement commenced across Rother District on 29 th September and the Council's enforcement contractor is now enforcing parking restrictions across the district.	Ongoing
R8.	Safety defect intervention criteria are defined for the different types of pavement surfacing, and insurance claims for pavements are separately recorded.	The Department considers the existing intervention criteria are appropriate for pavements, irrespective of their makeup. The Department advocates a continuation of its Asset Management Strategy and to tackle defects in pavements through targeted planned maintenance programmes.	We have continued our investment in footways through our planned maintenance programmes. See R5. Our targeted planned maintenance programmes to replace slabbed footways with tarmac surfacing reduces hazards, levels of claims and maintenance costs however, this approach is not universally popular.	Ongoing
R9.	Increase the amount of sampling and inspections to 20% to monitor and assure the quality of road repairs or reinstatements, and the work carried out prior to resurfacing, particularly those carried out by utility companies.	The Department considers it meets its legal responsibilities under the Traffic Management Act and ensures adequate quality of workmanship from its current level of sampling and inspections. The management of utility workings through the Council's Permitting scheme and the inspection of those works are carried out by the Council's Highway Maintenance contractor. The highway maintenance contract is outcome based and is governed by the requirements of the Traffic Management Act which stipulates levels of sampling and inspection.	We continue to coordinate utility company works and carry out inspections to ensure the quality of repairs. We continue to closely monitor the performance of the Council's highway maintenance contractor. This includes East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Supervisors who inspect a proportion of completed works for quality and compliance with the specified works requirements. Where defects are found they are rectified at the contractors cost. However, we have also been working with the contractor to eliminate defects during the works which reduces their costs, further disruption and improves public satisfaction and the Council's reputation.	Completed

		<p>The existing sampling and inspection regime comprises a number of different inspections at different timescales following a utility company repair, as well as taking core samples from finished reinstatements. The Traffic Management Act also enables financial penalties to be applied for compliance failures. The DfT is currently consulting on extending the period utility companies are responsible for their repairs after undertaking works.</p> <p>The Compliance and Performance Team and Contract Supervisors carry out regular audits of the council's contractor. They collect performance data and evidence of compliance and non-compliance with the contract requirements. They develop specific actions and plans to correct and improve performance. This information is shared with Members annually and the Place Scrutiny Committee will be updated on the year 3 performance later this year.</p>		
R10.	Officers develop a work programme to complete the Council's knowledge of the highway drainage network, including determining the cost and timeframe for this work, focussing initially on utilising the remaining additional capital investment to gain knowledge of parts of the network that require repair and replacement as a priority. The work programme is to be reported to	<p>The Department recognises the importance of completing its knowledge of the highway drainage infrastructure which is undertaken in parallel with its aims to resolve flooding hot-spots.</p> <p>The recent increase in funding for highway drainage is welcomed and drainage engineers are using the increased level of resource to complete a far greater number of</p>	We have undertaken over 2500 drainage investigations all of which been recorded and mapped on our Map 16 system. These have focussed on both historical and more recent flooding issues, resulting in the completion of over 500 drainage improvement schemes. We continue to investigate and repair drainage issues to achieve our corporate target of ensuring 98% of our 100,000 gullies free flowing.	Completed

	the Scrutiny Committee in September 2019.	<p>investigations and resolve flooding problems at the same time.</p> <p>The Department will report progress to Scrutiny Committee in September 2019.</p>		
R11.	<p>Joint work is undertaken with District and Borough Councils to improve street sweeping, particularly in autumn, to prevent highway gullies and other drainage becoming blocked with leaves and other debris.</p>	<p>The Board heard that there is already a good level of partnership working with Borough and District Councils.</p> <p>Litter picking and street cleansing is a Borough and District Council responsibility and in Wealden, Rother, Hastings and Eastbourne the service is currently carried out by their waste collection contractor. That contract ends in June when a new contractor will take over waste collection and street cleansing in Wealden, Rother and Hastings, whilst in Lewes and Eastbourne the service is being brought back in-house. The Department has been working closely with all five borough and district councils in the lead up to the new arrangements to ensure the outcomes are reflected in these new arrangements.</p>	<p>We continue to work with the District and Borough councils to co-ordinate street cleansing and gully cleansing where it is practical to do so. As an example, we recently completed the annual grass cutting of the A22 Hailsham by-pass which included gully cleansing, channel sweeping, litter picking and sign cleaning/repair all coordinated to take place at the same time. We have also recently commenced discussions with Lewes District Council to potentially co-ordinate street sweeping with weed control.</p>	On-going

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Report to:	Place Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	25 November 2020
By:	Assistant Chief Executive
Title:	Place Scrutiny Committee future work programme
Purpose:	To review and agree items for the Place Scrutiny Committee's future work programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Place Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1) Review and agree agenda items for the future Committee meetings, including items listed in the work programme in appendix 1;

2) Agree topics for Scrutiny Reviews to be included in the Committee's future work programme; and

3) Review upcoming items on East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) Forward Plan in appendix 2 to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny.

1 Background

1.1 The work programme is an important tool in ensuring the correct focus and best use of the Committee's time in scrutinising topics that are of importance to the residents of East Sussex, and the efficient and effective working of the Council. It also provides clarity for those who may be requested to give evidence to the Committee on the issues under review, and the questions the Committee requires answers to.

1.2 Discussion of the work programme provides the Committee with the opportunity to examine topics that it may be of value to scrutinise, and to decide whether further scoping work is required. This provides a basis for deciding the best way of scrutinising a topic, the timescale, and who from the Committee will be involved in carrying out the review work. If there are a number of topics for review, the Committee can determine the priority of the work within the resources available to the Committee.

2 Work programme and future scrutiny reviews

2.1 The Committee is asked to review the items in the work programme contained in appendix 1 of the report and agree the future agenda items and other scrutiny work of the Committee.

2.2 The Committee is asked to consider whether there are any potential topics for future scrutiny reviews, or agenda items for future meetings, that should be included in the work programme. This can include any topics or issues identified through the Committee's work on the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process.

Highways Contract Re-Procurement Reference Group

2.3 The Highways Contract Re-Procurement Reference Group has met on five occasions and continues its work commenting on and contributing to the development of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the new Highway Services contract. The Reference Group will comment on the proposed OBC in January 2021 when it is considered by Cabinet and will produce an interim report outlining the work undertaken by the Reference Group.

3 Forward Plan

3.1 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 November 2020 to 28 February 2021 is included in appendix 2. The Committee is requested to review the forthcoming items on the Forward Plan to identify any issues that may require scrutiny work. The Forward Plan is revised and published on a monthly basis, and Committee members should regularly review the Forward Plan.

4 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

4.1 The Place Scrutiny Committee is recommended to agree the agenda items and topics for scrutiny reviews to be included in the future work programme. The Committee is also recommended to review the Council's Forward Plan of decisions to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny.

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Martin Jenks, Senior Democratic Service Adviser
Tel. No. 01273 481327
Email: martin.jenks@eastsussex.gov.uk

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

Appendix 1

Place Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

Current Scrutiny Reviews		
Title of Review	Detail	Proposed Completion Date
To be agreed.		
Initial Scoping Reviews		
Subject area for initial scoping	Detail	Proposed Dates
To be agreed.		
List of Suggested Potential Future Scrutiny Review Topics		
Suggested Topic	Detail	
To be agreed.		
Scrutiny Reference Groups		
Reference Group Title	Subject Area	Meetings Dates
Highways Contract Re-procurement	<p>A reference group has been established by the Committee to work alongside Officers who are delivering the project to re-procure the Highways Maintenance contract.</p> <p>The reference group will examine and contribute to the development of the service delivery model and comment on the outline and detailed business case.</p>	May 2020 onwards

Archives and Records Service	The Committee has established a reference group to examine the work being undertaken to make savings to the service, including services provided at The Keep, and to provide digital access to archival material.	To be re-scheduled
Reports for Information		
Subject	Detail	Proposed Date
To be agreed.		
Training and Development		
Title of Training/Briefing	Detail	Proposed Date
To be agreed.		
Future Committee Agenda Items		Author
17 March 2021		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	The Committee will review its input into the RPPR budget setting process, and the impact of any recommendations or comments made by the Committee	Chief Executive / Senior Democratic Services Adviser
Scrutiny Review of the Effectiveness of School Travel Plans	To receive the second update monitoring report on the implementation of the recommendations of the scrutiny review.	Assistant Director, Economy
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan • Reports for information 	Senior Democratic Services Adviser

23 June 2021		
East Sussex Road Safety Programme	To receive progress report on the East Sussex Road Safety Programme including an update on the outcomes of Behavioural Change and Speed Management projects.	Assistant Director, Communities
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan • Reports for information 	Senior Democratic Services Adviser
22 September 2021		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	To start the Committee's work on the RPPR process for 2022/23, by reviewing Portfolio Plans and service based information.	Chief Executive / Senior Democratic Services Adviser
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan • Reports for information 	Senior Democratic Services Adviser
24 November 2021		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)	The Committee will examine any additional information requested at the September meeting and consider any updated RPPR information for 2022/23.	Chief Executive / Senior Democratic Services Adviser
Work Programme	To consider items for inclusion in the Committee's work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports for future meetings • Scrutiny reviews and potential scrutiny reviews • Items from the Forward Plan • Reports for information 	Senior Democratic Services Adviser

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EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN

The Leader of the County Council is required to publish a forward plan setting out matters which the Leader believes will be the subject of a key decision by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet member in the period covered by the Plan (the subsequent four months). The Council's Constitution states that a key decision is one that involves

- (a) expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the expenditure of the County Council's budget, namely above £500,000 per annum; or
- (b) is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions.

As a matter of good practice, the Council's Forward Plan includes other items in addition to key decisions that are to be considered by the Cabinet/individual members. This additional information is provided to inform local residents of all matters to be considered, with the exception of issues which are dealt with under the urgency provisions.

For each decision included on the Plan the following information is provided:

- the name of the individual or body that is to make the decision and the date of the meeting
- the title of the report and decision to be considered
- groups that will be consulted prior to the decision being taken
- a list of other appropriate documents
- the name and telephone number of the contact officer for each item.

The Plan is updated and published every month on the Council's website two weeks before the start of the period to be covered.

Meetings of the Cabinet/individual members are open to the public (with the exception of discussion regarding reports which contain exempt/confidential information). Copies of agenda and reports for meetings are available on the website in advance of meetings. For further details on the time of meetings and general information about the Plan please contact Andy Cottell at County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE, or telephone 01273 481955 or send an e-mail to andy.cottell@eastsussex.gov.uk.

For further detailed information regarding specific issues to be considered by the Cabinet/individual member please contact the named contact officer for the item concerned.

For copies of reports or other documents please contact the officer listed on the Plan or phone 01273 335274.

FORWARD PLAN – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (including Key Decisions) –1 November 2020 TO 28 February 2021

Additional notices in relation to Key Decisions and/or private decisions are available on the [Council's website](#).

Cabinet membership:

Councillor Keith Glazier - Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development

Councillor Nick Bennett – Lead Member for Resources

Councillor Bill Bentley – Lead Member for Communities and Safety

Councillor Rupert Simmons – Lead Member for Economy

Councillor Claire Dowling – Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Councillor Carl Maynard – Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Councillor Sylvia Tidy – Lead Member for Children and Families

Councillor Bob Standley – Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability

Date for Decision	Decision Taker	Decision/Key Issue	Decision to be taken wholly or partly in private (P) or Key Decision (KD)	Consultation	List of Documents to be submitted to decision maker	Contact Officer
2 Nov 2020	Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health	Newington Court Agreement is being sought from the Lead Member to commence a consultation on the way care is delivered at Newington Court Extra Care scheme in Ticehurst		Local Members	Report, other documents may also be submitted	Angela Yphantides 01273 336599
2 Nov 2020	Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice of Motion calling on Her Majesty's Government to publish its White Paper on the reform and future of Adult Social Care. 			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Keith Hinkley 01273 481288

		To consider a response to a Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor John Ungar and seconded by Councillor David Tutt in relation to the Adult Social Care White Paper.				
10 Nov 2020	Cabinet	Coronavirus Update To update on the measures the Council has taken in response to the coronavirus pandemic and the next steps			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Claire Lee 01273 335517
10 Nov 2020	Cabinet	Scrutiny Review of Road Markings To consider the report on the Scrutiny Review of Road Markings undertaken by the Place Scrutiny Committee.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Martin Jenks 01273 481327
16 Nov 2020	Lead Member for Economy	Growth Hub Services To assess the progress and effectiveness of Growth Hub services delivered by East Sussex County Council and to determine future delivery			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ioni Sullivan 01273 482701
17 Nov 2020	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	Well Managed Highway Code of Practice update: Highway Maintenance and Consideration of Character To consider a proposal for a new policy regarding the approach to the choice of materials used in the management of highway assets including those of particular conservation and historical interest			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Stephanie Everest 01273 482644
23 Nov 2020	Lead Member for Education and	East Sussex Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020	KD		Report, other documents may	Jane Spice

	Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	To seek Lead Member approval to publish the East Sussex Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020.			also be submitted	01323 747425
23 Nov 2020	Lead Member for Children and Families	<p>Notice of Motion: Free School Meals</p> <p>For the Lead Member to consider a notice of motion submitted by Councillor Godfrey Daniel and Councillor Trevor Webb.</p> <p>The Notice of Motion reads:</p> <p>East Sussex County Council calls on the Government to make urgent provision for eligible pupils to receive free school meals, or the means to ensure that they do not go hungry, over this Christmas holiday period.</p>			Report, other documents may	<p>Stuart Gallimore</p> <p>01273 481315</p>
24 Nov 2020	Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development	<p>Getting Building Fund - updated Service Level Agreement with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)</p> <p>To approve East Sussex County Council (ESCC) entering into an updated Service Level Agreement with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP Ltd) and Essex County Council as the accountable body to SELEP in order to deliver the government's Getting Building Fund (GBF).</p>			Report, other documents may also be submitted	<p>Dave Evans</p> <p>01273 335706</p>
8 Dec 2020	Cabinet	<p>Council Monitoring: Quarter 2 2020/21</p> <p>To consider the Council Monitoring report for the second quarter of the financial year 2020/21 as part of the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources</p>			Report, other documents may also be submitted	<p>Stuart Russell</p> <p>01273 336361</p>

		(RPPR) budget monitoring process.				
8 Dec 2020	Cabinet	East Sussex Economy Recovery Plan (ERP) Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse the plan that the County Council and partners will implement to help the East Sussex economy recover from the COVID-19 impacts.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Richard Dawson 01273 482305
8 Dec 2020	Cabinet	Looked After Children Annual Report 2019-20 To consider the annual progress report of Looked After Children's Services 2019-20		Corporate Parenting Panel	Report, other documents may also be submitted	Liz Rugg 01273 481274
8 Dec 2020	Cabinet	Treasury Management Annual Report 2019/20 and mid-year report 2020/21 To consider a report on the review of Treasury Management performance for 2019/20 and the outturn for the first six months of 2020/21, including the economic factors affecting performance, the Prudential Indicators and compliance with the limits set within the Treasury Management Strategy.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell 01273 481399
15 Dec 2020	Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development	Local Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund allocations To agree and approve the Local Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund spend for 2019/20 and forecast for 2020/21			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Marwa Al-Qadi 01273 336439

17 Dec 2020	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	To Approve the ESCC Funding Formula for 2021/22 After consulting with ESCC Schools and Academies, approval is now being sought from Lead Member to change the ESCC Funding Formula factors for 2021/22.	KD	All ESCC Primary and Secondary Schools / Academies	Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ed Beale 01273 337984
18 Jan 2021	Lead Member for Transport and Environment	Delegation of powers to declare a Local Nature Reserve - Ninfield To seek agreement to the delegation of power to Ninfield Parish Council to designate a Local Nature Reserve in their area			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Kate Cole 01273 481621
18 Jan 2021	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	To approve the DSG Budget for 2021/22. The DSG allocations are notified to the Local Authority in December and the DSG budget requires approval.			Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ed Beale 01273 337984
26 Jan 2021	Cabinet	Conservators of Ashdown Forest Budget 2021/22 To approve the draft Conservators of Ashdown Forest budget for the financial year 2021/22 and to consider the contribution from the Trust Fund.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell 01273 481399
26 Jan 2021	Cabinet	Highways Contract Re-Procurement Project To present the outcomes and recommendations from the Outline Business Case for the Highways Contract Re-procurement Project (HCRP) for review and approval by Cabinet.	P KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Phil McCorry 01273 335993

26 Jan 2021	Cabinet	Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) 2021/22: Draft Council Plan To consider the revenue budget, savings proposals, capital programme and draft Council Plan for 2021/22 (including Equality Impact Assessment, Engagement and Scrutiny feedback).	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Claire Lee 01273 335517
26 Jan 2021	Cabinet	Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 To approve the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2020/21. This includes setting the Prudential Indicators as set out in the Prudential Code and approving the Minimum Revenue Provision policy statement and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2021/22.	KD		Report, other documents may also be submitted	Ian Gutsell 01273 481399
22 Feb 2021	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	Admission arrangements for Community and Controlled schools in East Sussex 2022-23- determination The Lead Member will be asked to approve the final admission arrangements for Community and Controlled schools in East Sussex for 2022-23 academic year at the meeting in February 2021 as required by law.	KD	Consultees: Parents/carers and schools in East Sussex, neighbouring local authorities, diocese of Chichester, diocese of Arundel and Brighton.	Report, other documents may also be submitted	Jo Miles 01273 481911

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