

Meeting of
East Sussex County Council
on Tuesday, 21 March 2023
at 10.00 am

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



EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

To the Members of the County Council

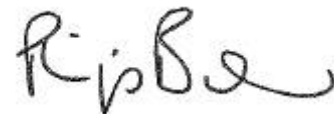
You are summoned to attend a meeting of the East Sussex County Council to be held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes, **on Tuesday, 21 March 2023 at 10.00 am** to transact the following business

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023** (Pages 5 - 24)
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Chairman's business**
4. **Questions from members of the public**
5. **Report of the Cabinet** (Pages 25 - 30)
6. **Report of the Governance Committee** (Pages 31 - 36)
7. **Questions from County Councillors**
 - (a) Oral questions to Cabinet Members
 - (b) Written Questions of which notice has been given pursuant to Standing Order 44
8. **Report of the East Sussex Fire Authority** (Pages 37 - 42)

Note: There will be a period for collective prayers and quiet reflection in the Council Chamber from 9.30 am to 9.45 am. The prayers will be led by Mr Michael Ensor. The Chairman would be delighted to be joined by any members of staff and Councillors who wish to attend.

County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
LEWES
East Sussex BN7 1UE

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive



13 March 2023

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MINUTES

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 7 FEBRUARY 2023 at 10.00 am

Present Councillors Sam Adeniji, Abul Azad, Matthew Beaver, Colin Belsey, Nick Bennett, Bob Bowdler, Charles Clark, Chris Collier, Godfrey Daniel, Johnny Denis, Penny di Cara, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Kathryn Field, Gerard Fox, Roy Galley (Vice Chairman), Nuala Geary, Keith Glazier, Alan Hay, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Stephen Holt, Johanna Howell, Eleanor Kirby-Green, Carolyn Lambert, Tom Liddiard, Philip Lunn, James MacCleary, Wendy Maples, Sorrell Marlow-Eastwood, Carl Maynard, Matthew Milligan, Steve Murphy, Sarah Osborne, Peter Pragnell (Chairman), Paul Redstone, Christine Robinson, Pat Rodohan, Daniel Shing, Stephen Shing, Alan Shuttleworth, Rupert Simmons, Bob Standley, Colin Swansborough, Barry Taylor, Georgia Taylor, David Tutt, John Ungar and Trevor Webb

43. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022

43.1 RESOLVED – to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the County Council held on 6 December 2022 as correct.

44. Apologies for absence

44.1 An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Phil Scott.

45. Chairman's business

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS

45.1 On behalf of the Council, the Chairman congratulated all those who live or work in East Sussex who were recognised in the New Year's honours.

CHAIRMAN'S ACTIVITIES

45.2 The Chairman reported that he had attended the Mayor of Eastbourne's Charity Christmas Dinner, a citizenship ceremony in Hastings, the Conservators Coffee morning in Forest Row, the opening of the All Saints Suite in Hastings and a number of carol services including those held by Seaford Town Council, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, a service at St Peter's Church, Ashburnham (Family Support Work) and hosted a Christmas Reception at Blackstock Country Estate. The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman for his ongoing support.

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PETITIONS

45.3 The following petitions were presented before the meeting by Councillors:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Councillor Ungar | - calling on the County Council to reduce the traffic, car noise, pollution and risk of car accidents with pedestrians or between cars on Ocklynge Road, Eastbourne. |
| Councillor Murphy | - calling on the County Council to convert Garfield Road, Hailsham to a one way system from Station Road to Bell Banks Road and instate a 20mph speed limit in the road. |
| Councillor Daniel | - calling on the County Council to instigate a 20mph limit for Lower Park Road between Braybrooke Road/Bethune Way and Dordrecht Way, Hastings. |
| Councillor Maples | - calling on the County Council to make 20mph the default for residential areas. |

PRAYERS

45.4 The Chairman thanked the Reverend Father John Wall for leading prayers before the meeting.

46. Questions from members of the public

46.1 Copies of the questions from members of the public and the answers from Councillor Bennett (Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change), Councillor Claire Dowling (Lead Member for Transport and Environment) and Councillor Fox (Chair of the Pension Committee) are attached to these minutes. A supplementary question was asked and responded to.

47. Declarations of Interest

47.1 There were no declarations of interest.

48. Reports

48.1 The Chairman of the County Council, having called over the reports set out in the agenda, reserved the following for discussion:

Cabinet report – paragraph 1 (Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources), paragraph 2 (Final draft Corporate Climate Emergency Plan for 2023-25), paragraph 3 (Scrutiny Review of Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health) and paragraph 6 (Annual Report of Looked After Children’s Services).

People Scrutiny Committee report – paragraph 1 (Scrutiny review – use of technology in Adult Social Care and Health).

East Sussex Fire Authority report – paragraph 1 (Medium Term Financial Plan Update – draft savings proposals).

NON-RESERVED PARAGRAPHS

48.2 On the motion of the Chairman of the County Council, the Council adopted those paragraphs in report that had not been reserved for discussion as follows:

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Cabinet report – paragraph 4 (Council Monitoring: Quarter 2 2022/23), paragraph 5 (Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2023/24) and paragraph 7 (The Conservators of Ashdown Forest 2022/23 forecast out turn, medium term financial plan and vision and management strategy).

Governance Committee report – paragraph 1 (Adoption Agency Delegation).

49. Report of the Cabinet

Paragraph 1 – Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources

49.1 Under Standing Order 23, the Council agreed that the speeches of the Leaders of the 5 Groups (or the nominees) on paragraph 1 of the Cabinet's report be extended beyond 5 minutes.

49.2 Councillor Bennett moved the adoption of paragraph 1 of the Cabinet's report.

49.3 The following amendment (from the Liberal Democrat, Labour, Green and Independent Democrat Groups) was moved by Councillor Tutt and seconded:

Delete paragraph 1.71 of the Cabinet's report and replace with:-

(1) approve, in principle, the draft Council Plan 2023/24 at Appendix 1 and authorise the Chief Executive to finalise the Plan in consultation with the relevant Lead Members;

(2) approve the net Revenue Budget estimates totalling £501.4m for 2023/24 as set out on Appendix 2 (Medium Term Financial Plan) and Appendix 3 (Budget Summary) and authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, Leader and Deputy the Leader, to make adjustments to the presentation of the Budget Summary to reflect the final settlement and budget decisions with the following one year only amendments:

(i) £615,000 to reduce the cost of transport, to service users, to and from Day Services. Directly provided by ESCC and commissioned from the private sector. This should reduce charges to users of this transport by 100%.

(ii) £628,500 to increase by 5% the provision of Mental Health non-residential services for working age mental health, older people's mental health and section 117 service users.

(iii) £300,000 to provide Carers' support. This sum to be allocated for bids from the Voluntary Sector to provide direct support for carers on a one-off basis that will help improve the quality of life for carers. This sum to be used to provide small sums to a number of Voluntary Organisations to achieve the aforementioned.

(iv) Additional School Streets - £300,000.

(v) Additional Resource for additional pavement repairs, dropped kerbs, rights of way and pothole repairs - £1,000,000.

(vi) Carbon mitigation and adaptation for One Council/One Planet – Recruit a Climate Adaptation and Mitigation officer to work on the systemic adaptation issues across the Council – looking at the big picture. Issues to include including flood management linking with natural environment, road response to extreme weather, extreme heat,

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feeding into retrofit strategies, care homes adaptation etc. There is a commitment to an adaptation plan in the new climate emergency plan but no obvious budget line, targets or timescale. This work is urgent and essential. £125,000 – 2023/24 and £125,000 – 2024/25.

(vii) Supporting Mission 2 and Mission 5 of the Council's Recovery Plan to work with partners to identify skills and support needs in the county to deliver on climate adaptation and mitigation and meet the county's business and domestic retrofit needs in order to reduce the climate impact and user costs related to energy use. Also, to have the capacity to respond to government funding opportunities. £125,000 – 2023/24 and £125,000 – 2024/25.

(viii) CAMHS: To provide urgently needed services for young people left on the waiting list for undue periods of time by the NHS - £700,000

(ix) SEND: Further to provide help and assistance to children with special educational needs - £800,000

(x) Reversal of increase to travellers' site service charges and rentals, to be reviewed the year after - £6,500

(xi) Recruit a Food Policy Officer to develop a food strategy for East Sussex and deliver on the key recommendation from the Food Matters "Good Food for East Sussex report commissioned for ESCC to address barriers to sustainable growth within the local food economy as well as public health goals of increasing access to a healthy diet - £80,000

Total of proposed revenue amendments - £4,930,000

To be funded by:

(xii) Use of Revenue Service Grant 2022/23 unallocated of £4,905,000

(xiii) Further Savings/Additional income from use of County Hall - £25,000

Total of proposed revenue funding amendments - £4,930,000

(3) in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to agree that:

- (i) the net budget requirement is £501.4m and the amount calculated by East Sussex County Council as its council tax requirement (see Appendix 5) for the year 2022/23 is £348.8m*
- (ii) the amount calculated by East Sussex County Council as the basic amount of its council tax (i.e. for a band D property) for the year 2023/24 is £1,693.80 and represents a 4.99% (2% of which relates to the Adult Social Care precept) increase on the previous year;*

(4) advise the District and Borough Councils of the relevant amounts payable and council tax in other bands in line with the regulations and to issue precepts accordingly in accordance with an agreed schedule of instalments as set out at Appendix 5;

(5) agree the Reserves Policy set out in Appendix 6;

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- (6) approve the Capital Strategy and Programme as set out at Appendix 8;*
- (7) note the progress with the Council Plan and Budget 2022/23 since quarter 2 set out in paragraphs 1.40 to 1.43 of the report;*
- (8) note the Medium Term Financial Plan forecast for 2023/24 to 2025/26, as set out in Appendix 2 and amended by the proposals in paragraph 1.71 above;*
- (9) note the comments of the Chief Finance Officer on budget risks and robustness as set out in Appendix 6;*
- (10) note the comments from the engagement exercises as set out in Appendix 7 and*
- (11) note the schedule of fees and charges that have increased above 4% at Appendix 9.*

49.4 A recorded vote on Opposition Groups amendment proposed by Councillor Tutt was taken. The amendment was LOST, the votes being cast as follows:

FOR THE AMENDMENT

Councillors Collier, Daniel, Denis, Field, Hilton, Holt, Lambert, MacCleary, Maples, Murphy, Osborne, Robinson, Rodohan, Daniel Shing, Stephen Shing, Shuttleworth, Swansborough, Georgia Taylor, Tutt, Ungar and Webb.

AGAINST THE AMENDMENT

Councillors Adeniji, Azad, Beaver, Belsey, Bennett, Bowdler, Clark, di Cara, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Fox, Galley, Geary, Glazier, Hay, Hollidge, Howell, Kirby-Green, Liddiard, Lunn, Marlow-Eastwood, Maynard, Milligan, Pragnell, Redstone, Simmons, Standley and Barry Taylor.

ABSTENTIONS

None

49.5 The following motion was moved by Councillor Bennet to adopt paragraph 1 of the Cabinet report:

- (1) approve, in principle, the draft Council Plan 2023/24 at Appendix 1 and authorise the Chief Executive to finalise the Plan in consultation with the relevant Lead Members;
- (2) approve the net Revenue Budget estimate of £501.4m for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 2 (Medium Term Financial Plan) and Appendix 3 (Budget Summary) and authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, Leader and Deputy Leader, to make adjustments to the presentation of the Budget Summary to reflect the final settlement and budget decisions;
- (3) in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to agree that:
 - (i) the net budget requirement is £501.4m and the amount calculated by East Sussex County Council as its council tax requirement (see Appendix 5) for the year 2023/24 is £348.8m;

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(ii) the amount calculated by East Sussex County Council as the basic amount of its council tax (i.e. for a band D property) for the year 2023/24 is £1,693.80 and represents a 4.99% (2% of which relates to the Adult Social Care precept) increase on the previous year;

(4) advise the District and Borough Councils of the relevant amounts payable and council tax in other bands in line with the regulations and to issue precepts accordingly in accordance with an agreed schedule of instalments as set out at Appendix 5;

(5) agree the Reserves Policy set out in Appendix 6;

(6) approve the Capital Strategy and Programme at Appendix 8;

(7) note progress with the Council Plan and Budget 2022/23 since quarter 2 set out in paragraphs 1.40 to 1.43 of the report;

(8) note the Medium Term Financial Plan forecast for 2023/24 to 2025/26, set out in Appendix 2;

(9) note the comments of the Chief Finance Officer on budget risks and robustness, as set out in Appendix 6:

(10) note the comments from engagement exercises set out in Appendix 7; and

(11) note the schedule of fees and charges that have increased above 4% at Appendix 9.

49.6 A recorded vote was taken on the motion moved by Councillor Bennett. The motion was CARRIED with the votes being cast as follows: as follows:

FOR THE MOTION

Councillors Adeniji, Azad, Beaver, Belsey, Bennett, Bowdler, Clark, Collier, Daniel, Denis, di Cara, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Field, Fox, Galley, Geary, Glazier, Hay, Hilton, Hollidge, Holt, Howell, Kirby-Green, Lambert, Liddiard, Lunn, MacCleary, Marlow-Eastwood, Maynard, Milligan, Murphy, Osborne, Pragnell, Redstone, Robinson, Rodohan, Daniel Shing, Shuttleworth, Simmons, Standley, Swansborough, Barry Taylor, Georgia Taylor, Tutt, Ungar and Webb.

AGAINST THE MOTION

None

ABSTENTIONS

Councillors Maples and Stephen Shing.

Paragraphs 2 (Final draft Corporate Climate Emergency Plan for 2023-25) and Paragraph 6 (Annual Report of Looked After Children's Services).

49.7 Councillor Glazier moved the reserved paragraphs in the Cabinet's report.

49.8 The motions were CARRIED after debate.

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49.9 The Chairman reminded the Council that he was taking paragraph 3 of the Cabinet report with the report of the People Scrutiny Committee.

50. Report of the People Scrutiny Committee

Paragraph 1 – Scrutiny Review – Use of Technology In Adult Social Care And Health

50.1 The Chairman reminded the Council that he was taking paragraph 1 of this report with paragraph 3 of the Cabinet's report.

50.2 Councillor Howell moved the adoption of paragraph 1 of the Scrutiny Committee report.

50.3 Councillor Glazier moved the adoption of paragraph 3 of the Cabinet's report. The motion, including the recommendations, was CARRIED after debate.

50.4 The motion to adopt paragraph 1 of the Scrutiny Committee's report, including the recommendations, was CARRIED after debate on the basis that implementation would be in accordance with the recommendations of the Cabinet.

51. Questions from County Councillors

51.1 The following members asked questions of the Lead Cabinet Members indicated and they responded:

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
Councillor Swansborough	Councillor Claire Dowling	The work of the Pesticide Action Network
Councillor Lambert	Councillor Claire Dowling	The end of a mentoring scheme aiming to improve adult literacy
Councillor Ungar	Councillor Maynard	Effects of NHS industrial action
Councillor Daniel	Councillor Claire Dowling	Flooding in the centre of Hastings
Councillor Daniel	Councillor Glazier	Industrial action by teachers in East Sussex
Councillor Daniel Shing	Councillor Claire Dowling	Impact of the coronation of King Charles III on highways in East Sussex
Councillor Stephen Shing	Councillor Glazier	Increases to Council Tax

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Councillor Stephen Shing Councillor Claire Dowling Road surface standards

Councillor Maples Councillor Claire Dowling Environmental considerations for bus service contracts

51.2 Two written questions were received from Councillors Lambert and Hilton for the Lead Member for Transport and Environment. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes. The Lead Member responded to supplementary questions.

52. Report of the East Sussex Fire Authority

52.1 Members commented on paragraph 1 of the East Sussex Fire Authority's report.

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.45 pm

The reports referred to are included in the minute book

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Question from Gregory-George Collins, Heathfield, East Sussex

Background

With effect from 17 October 2022 the former Leisure Centre at Heathfield Community College passed back to the school for curriculum use only following the end of the WDS/ESCC agreement. With effect from Monday 17 October the Leisure Centre became part of the Heathfield Community College campus. The college governors had no objection in principle to facilities at the Leisure Centre being rented out to local sports/leisure clubs in the same way that other facilities at the College are made available. However, the wording of the decision of ESCC stated SPECIFICALLY that the centre was to be closed for all non-College use.

It is understood that the Governors at HCC have challenged this decision, and that, furthermore, they had expressed a hope, before Christmas, that HCC might be able to reach a position to bring facilities at the old Leisure Centre site into line with the arrangements for the rest of the campus, and make these facilities available for community groups and sport teams to hire.

Question

Why, on what basis, was the decision made to specifically close the former Leisure Centre facilities at Heathfield Community College to all non-College use even though other facilities on the campus are available to hire?

Response by the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change

Thank you very much for your enquiry regarding Heathfield Leisure Centre.

The County Council had a lease agreement with Wealden District Council for the community operation of the Leisure Centre which expired in October 2022. In summer 2022, there was therefore a full public consultation survey to inform options for the leisure centre site following Wealden's decision not to renew the lease.

An analysis of the public consultation was provided to the Lead Member meeting on 20 September 2022. In that meeting a decision was made to cease offering a full range of community use at the Leisure Centre and the Leisure Centre site was therefore handed back to the college as forming part of their college curriculum facilities.

It is worth noting that Heathfield Leisure Centre is located on a separate site adjacent to the main Heathfield College campus. At the main Heathfield College campus there is currently ad hoc hiring of internal/external sports spaces outside of college hours to community groups. The college continues to use the Leisure Centre site for its curriculum use. The college, like most schools, operates an extended school curriculum across the whole school campus outside college hours. At a future date, the College

may approach the Council if it wished to consider dedicated community use within the Leisure Centre. The Council would take into account all the necessary considerations.

2. Question from Emily O'Brien, Lewes, East Sussex

Background

After my son was run over in 2018, crossing at the bus stop, I presented this council with a petition on the A259 speed limits between Seaford and Newhaven. As well as the multiple accidents and around Bishopstone junction and its endlessly delayed 'improvements', the petition pointed out the high and escalating level of accidents on the 'bends' and the fact that a 60mph speed limit is inappropriate for a road which has bus stops on either side, footpaths crossing over, and multiple bends, and in fact clearly against national guidance on speed limits.

East Sussex chose to ignore the petition. Then last year, as the level of accidents continued to escalate, chose to take the opposite approach – i.e. to introduce reflective bollards on the A259 bends, which have, as would be expected, increased the speed on this road.

Since then there has been a notable increase in serious accidents on the bends, which have included a fatality and which have also caused traffic chaos for miles around, as the road is regularly closed for lengthy stretches.

Question

My question to the lead member is firstly how much money was spent on the bollards, secondly by what amount has the rate of serious road accidents increased since their introduction, and thirdly whether you think their introduction was good value for money?

Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

I refer to your written question of 30th January 2023, in which I understand that you would like to know the cost of the reflective verge marker posts that were installed on the A259 between Seaford and Newhaven, by how much the Personal Injury Crash (PIC) rate has increased since their introduction and whether their introduction represented good value for money.

The bend in the road by Foxhole Farm was identified as a priority for a Local Safety Scheme (LSS) in 2020. The cost of the scheme was £9,205 and it was completed in December 2021.

A detailed analysis of the PIC's on this part of the A259 indicated that there had been 11 PIC's during the three-year review period (01/01/2017 and 31/12/2019) on the bends between Stud Farm and Denton roundabout. A full review of the crashes and their causation factors indicated that it would be appropriate to introduce reflective verge marker posts on the bends in the road to help highlight the alignment of the road to drivers.

Since the scheme was completed the crash data, provided to us by the Police, indicates that there has been one fatal crash on the treated part of the A259 between 01/01/2022 and 30/09/2022. Early indications are that the new measures are effective in addressing the identified crashes. Until we have three years of after data, it is too soon to make a comparable assessment of the resulting difference in crash rates, but we will continue to monitor the site on an annual basis.

3. Question from Charlotte Keenan, Newick, East Sussex

Background

On the A272, between North Chailey, Newick and Piltdown, there are signs to motorists that the speed limit is 30, 50 or the national speed limit, there are warning signs that there are junctions, or traffic lights, and 'horses crossing' signs. But there are no signs indicating that motorists should slow down for people who might be crossing the road and no safety islands for pedestrians.

In fact, there is only one crossing for pedestrians (at Newick) in the middle of the whole four-mile stretch, despite there being residences, businesses and bus stops on both sides of what is a busy road, with almost non-stop traffic during the rush hours.

In this area it is mostly children and older people who use busses and who by necessity cross the road, whether the speed limit is 30 or 50. Those who are considered to be the most vulnerable and most at risk from incautious drivers.

I'm Newick resident, and I was disappointed to read that a petition brought by our neighbouring village along the A272, Piltdown, to reduce the speed limit through the village to 30, supported by the local Cllr Roy Galley, was rejected on the grounds that reducing the speed would make it more likely motorists would overtake, thereby making accidents more likely.

This is very fuzzy logic.

Where there is a rule, there is generally a convention. Where there is a convention, there is generally compliance.

Question

Please could I ask the Lead Member for Transport and Environment to reconsider her decision for Piltdown, and take into account that not everyone drives; that we need roads, and road signs that encourage motorists to respect not just horses, but also pedestrians, and that where we have likely vulnerable members of our rural communities crossing the road – to get to bus stops, businesses or their homes -- we have as an agreed rule and sensible convention, regular safety islands and lower speed limits.

Response by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

I refer to your written question of 30/01/2023. I understand that you would like me to reconsider my decision for the Piltown report that was considered at my meeting on 16 January 2023 and introduce lower speed limits and traffic islands on this part of the A272.

The predominant factors that are considered when determining an appropriate speed limit for a road are the level of frontage development that is visible to drivers, and the average speed of traffic. Reducing the speed limit with traffic signs and road markings alone only reduces the average speed by about 1 or 2mph and only when it is obvious to a driver why the speed limit has been imposed. It is important that drivers are provided with a consistent message, so they understand what is expected of them as they enter different road environments.

The speed limits on this part of the A272 are the most appropriate for the road environments. Drivers may not automatically comply with a speed limit if they cannot see any obvious reason for it. If we were to introduce lower speed limits on the more rural parts of the road, it can lead to a wide discrepancy (or spread) of speeds, as some drivers will try to drive at the posted speed limit and others, not seeing the need for the speed limit, will continue to drive at higher speeds, resulting in inappropriate overtaking and a greater potential for collisions.

In respect to your request for traffic islands to be installed on this part of the A272, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has a limited amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and we need to ensure that resources are targeted to those schemes of greatest benefit to local communities. To help us prioritise requests, ESCC has developed a process to determine which schemes should be funded through the Integrated Transport Programme. The request for new walk and cycle ways and safe crossing solutions on this part of the A272 was assessed but it did not meet the benchmark score required to enable them to be considered as part of the Capital Programme.

Although new walk and cycle ways with safer crossing solutions are not an identified priority for the County Council, I understand that Fletching Parish Council are going to commission East Sussex Highways to carry out a Feasibility Study to assess potential measures that could be introduced prior to a possible Community Match application.

The use of road signs is controlled by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD). The guidance limits the types of traffic signs that can be placed on the public highway. It also states that warning signs should only be used to alert drivers to a potential danger that is not readily apparent. To be effective, warning signs should be used sparingly, as if we introduce too many, the effectiveness of the message provided by the signs becomes diluted.

The personal injury crash record on this part of the A272 will continue to be monitored to determine whether it is a priority for a future road safety intervention.

Note: Questions 4 and 5 relate to a similar issue. The answers to these questions are set out after questions 5 below.

4. The same or similar questions were asked by:

Nick Tigg, Lewes, East Sussex

Ralph Hobbs, Hastings, East Sussex

Charlie Whale, Brighton

Nicola Gover, Hastings, East Sussex

Jason Evans, Brighton

Nicola Harries, Brighton

Charmian Kenner, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex

Adrienne Hunter, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex

Nicky Blackwell, Lewes, East Sussex

Chris Saunders, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex

Clare Shaw, Lewes, East Sussex

Mike Morrison, Brighton

John Hopkinson, Eastbourne, East Sussex

Carolyn Beckingham, Lewes, East Sussex

Kate Christie, Forest Row, East Sussex

Michael Coyne, Crowborough, East Sussex

Adam Rose, Eastbourne, East Sussex

Penny Steel, Brighton

Sue Fasquelle, Lewes, East Sussex

Susan Murray, Lewes, East Sussex

Jan Woodling, Newhaven, East Sussex

Christopher Garland, Lewes, East Sussex

Jan Tramunto, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex

Richard Boyle, Eastbourne, East Sussex

Malcolm Telfer, Brighton

Jane Wilde, Brighton

Sonya Baksi, Lewes, East Sussex

Amanda McIntyre, Robertsbridge, East Sussex

Andy Ward, Brighton

Sarah Hazlehurst, Brighton

Annette Unsworth, Brighton

Les Gunbie, Brighton

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Ron Kemeny, Forest Row, East Sussex
Carla Gerlack, Eastbourne, East Sussex
Iain Sheard, Battle, East Sussex
Hugh Dunkerley, Brighton
Paula Williams, Etchingam, East Sussex
Brian Parkinson, Hove
Claire Duc, Lewes, East Sussex
Sylvia Matthews, Brighton
Ayesha Mayhew, Brighton
Claire Bessel, Brighton
Daisy MacDonald, Hastings, East Sussex
Lyle B. Zimmerman, Hastings, East Sussex
Caroline Gorton, Brighton
Dave Allen, Brighton
Gary French, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Mike Cope, Bexhill, East Sussex
Jane Plunkett, Eastbourne, East Sussex
Jane Clare, Crowborough, East Sussex
Max Hewitt, St Leonards-On-Sea, Sussex
Saskia Müller, Eastbourne, East Sussex
Danny McEvoy, Newhaven, East Sussex
Brigitta Zuglói, Eastbourne, East Sussex
Ian O'Halloran, Hailsham, East Sussex
Sallie Sullivan, Lewes, East Sussex
Jane Carpenter, Lewes, East Sussex
Lesley Healey, Lewes, East Sussex
Anne Fletcher, Seaford, East Sussex
Deidre Shalloe, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Ann Kramer, Hastings, East Sussex
Paul Bazely, Brighton
Fiona MacGregor, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Joanne Rigby, Seaford, East Sussex
Alison Cooper, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Sarah Kirk-Browne, Brighton
Csaba Jordan, Eastbourne, East Sussex

Lorraine Langham, Bexhill, East Sussex
Yasmin Hassan, Brighton
Jessica Loudon, Hove
Sarah Hutchings, Lewes, East Sussex
Clare Halstead, Brighton
Anne Massey, Hove
Anthony Bradnum, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Eveline Tijjs, Hastings, East Sussex
Guy Edwards, Hove
Viv Mudie, Brighton
Dolmen Domikles, Lewes, East Sussex
Erica Smith, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Amanda Jobson, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Alison R Noyes, Hastings, East Sussex
Parascevou Sier, Eastbourne, East Sussex
Duncan Armstrong, Lewes, East Sussex
Carol Turner, Eastbourne, East Sussex
Emily Price, Hastings, East Sussex
Grace Lally, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
John Enefer, Hastings, East Sussex
Jennifer Howells, Wealden, East Sussex
Gabriel Carlyle, St Leonards-On-Sea, East Sussex
Hilary Turner, Hastings, East Sussex
Leon Panitzke, Cooden, East Sussex

Background

In 2021 the International Energy Agency clearly stated that if the world is going to limit global warming to 1.5°C 'there can be no new investments in oil, gas and coal, from now – from this year' ('No new oil, gas or coal development if world is to reach net zero by 2050, says world energy body', Guardian, 18 May 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/nonewoilcoalgas>).

Yet, in 2023 oil and gas companies are on a massive expansion course. Indeed, a recent analysis of the 685 upstream companies on the GOGEL (a database of 901 oil and gas companies, collectively responsible for 95% of global oil and gas production) found that 96% have expansion plans ('NGOs Release the 2022 Global Oil & Gas Exit List: An Industry Willing to Sacrifice a Livable Planet', Urgewald, 10 November 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/gogel2022>).

Moreover, European and North American companies like Shell and Exxon are leading the way eg. Shell spent almost \$7bn during 2020 – 22 exploring for new oil and gas.

Question

Given these stark realities, does the East Sussex Pension Committee accept that asset owners seeking 1.5°C-aligned portfolios cannot credibly own financial interests in companies that continue to invest in new oil and gas projects?

Response to Question 4 and Question 5 is detailed below.

5. Question from Brian Parkinson, Hove

I have divested from oil and gas companies. The family foundation has also managed to do this as well. I do understand that this is problematic and presents challenges but I believe that East Sussex can also manage to do this, not only that but it is essential that it does so.

Really we all know that such investment has to stop, so drop the excuse, when will you get on with it and what is the time scale, (one year should be long enough)?

Response by the Chair of the Pension Committee

The East Sussex Pension Fund (the Fund) is administering a statutory defined benefit pension scheme where the pension an individual receives is defined in statute and not linked to investment performance. The Scheme's obligations and investment requirements are more complex and differ markedly from an endowment fund. To pay statutory defined pensions as they fall due, and which are affordable to contributors, the Fund has to invest in a diversified investment portfolio which will act in different ways in different economic environments thereby mitigating the risk of failing to have sufficient income to pay the pension of beneficiaries. This means the Fund has investments in equities, bonds, property, infrastructure (such as ports, communication networks, renewable energy), private equity, other forms of debt, commodities and other suitable assets. Some of these asset types require investment for many years (in some cases more than 15 years) and cannot be exited before they reach maturity, or only at significant cost.

Investment decisions must be directed towards achieving a wide variety of suitable investments that are best for the financial position of the Fund. The Fund has a duty to consider a wide range of factors that are financially material to the performance of the investments, including social, environmental and corporate governance factors. As such, the Fund's Investment Strategy Statement explains that the Fund believes climate change poses material risks; and its position on climate change and the energy transition is set out in its Statement of Responsible Investment Principles. The Fund recognises that a prolonged energy transition is under way and acknowledges that a

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number of energy incumbents through their size, capacity to mobilise capital and engineering expertise offer the potential to play a substantial role in that transition. The Fund also recognises that there are a range of possible transition scenarios, evolving physical climate-related risks, potential opportunities and a requirement for a just transition.

The Fund does not hold any investments in fossil fuel companies through its index or active equity manager allocations, reflecting a number of decisions by the Committee through its Responsible Investment strategy. In addition, the Fund has made significant reductions in the carbon emissions of the companies held in the investment portfolio, with a 55% reduction in scope 1 and 2 emissions from 2020 to 2022. The Fund has also focused on investing in climate solutions and green investments and as such has 10% of investments whose core products and services address some of the world's major social and environmental challenges, 20% in investments aiming for Paris alignment, investment in infrastructure which includes renewable energy projects and clean technology private equity investments. Following this drive for positive holdings from climate opportunities, the value of green investments in liquid holdings of the Fund have doubled in the past 2 years.

The Pension Committee, at the Committee Chair's initiative, has commissioned a project to assess the fiduciary and legal consequences of fossil fuel divestment for the Fund; examine how such a move aligns with relevant guidance and advice; Explore how practical an act it would be within the context of the ACCESS* Pool, where government is directing LGPS investment to be made through the LGPS Pools; and review evidence on the efficacy of such an approach in promoting the energy transition. The outcomes of this project and research will help the Committee assess its approach to climate change and its investment decision making.

** ACCESS (A Collaboration of Central, Eastern and Southern Shires) is made up of 11 LGPS Administering Authorities, set up following statutory guidance published in 2016. The ACCESS members are committed to working together to optimise benefits and efficiencies on behalf of their individual and collective stakeholders, operating with a clear set of objectives and principles that drives the decision-making process to enable LGPS funds to execute their locally decided investment strategies.*

WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44

1. Question from Councillor Lambert to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

The situation with the A259 is now critical. Seaford, in particular is suffering. In recent weeks, the A259 through Peacehaven, Newhaven and Seaford has been regularly gridlocked and there has been a further serious accident at Denton.

There are only three entrances and exits to Seaford and two of these are the A259. Recent floods also made the road into and out of Seaford through Alfriston impassable, cutting off the town completely.

Despite repeated promises of action, there are no dates for workshops to feed back on the study the County Council is carrying out. The Lead Member has refused a request to carry out a safety audit of all the entrances onto the A259 throughout Seaford and there is not even a temporary plan to help residents in Bishopstone to safely use the A259.

Will the Lead Member now expedite both the study and any proposals to improve the A259 from Peacehaven through to Exceat?

Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

As per the previous updates provided to all key stakeholders involved in the A259 MRN South Coast Corridor Study, (the last being in November 2022) the delivery programme for the study has had to be adjusted as a result of the announcement of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding award in 2022 - which has a number of schemes on the A259 in the study area. Firstly, any BSIP proposals had to be decoupled from the A259 scheme list to ensure no duplication of funding takes place; and secondly, the BSIP proposed capital schemes had to be incorporated into the transport modelling for the study to ensure any schemes taken forward under the MRN are compatible with the BSIP schemes. This requirement has resulted in lengthening of the time between the second stakeholder workshops – where a long list of scheme options was reviewed and fed back on; and the third stakeholder workshops – where stakeholders will be presented with a package of schemes and be able to provide feedback once it has been able to be tested, modelled and appraised sufficiently.

Since the last update in November 2022, the team have been progressing the study including conducting further scheme appraisal, modelling development, testing and engagement with the Department for Transport on the project. In Q4 2022/23 further testing in the transport model, economic appraisal and business case development will take place. The third stakeholder workshop is anticipated in June 2023 to allow enough time for the scheme short list to be fully tested in the transport model ahead of presenting back to stakeholders.

Following this, the package will be put forward for Major Road Network funding to Government through the Strategic Outline Business Case; with the aim of providing funding for further detailed design and business case development for the improvements to the study area of the A259. As I have outlined above you can certainly see that ESCC is committed to this work and as you say we are expediting both the study and proposals to improve the A259 and we must work within the requirements set out by Government to provide robust business cases that seek to secure major external funds for this county.

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Finally, all stakeholders will be receiving an update this week on the study and we will be in touch in due course to invite key stakeholders to the third key stakeholder workshops and will provide any necessary information prior to the workshops for reference.

2. Question from Councillor Hilton to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

With the increasing number of road works across Hastings in the last few months, I am getting emails from residents distressed by the fumes from idling cars waiting at traffic controls. Given that rule 123 of the Highway Code states that it is illegal to leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily when stationary for more than a couple of minutes, will you consider asking the new Highways contractors Balfour Beattie and all utilities working on the highways to support an anti – idling campaign by committing to adding ‘Turn your engines off’ signs at their traffic controls? This would be an inexpensive way to reduce pollution from vehicle exhausts. It also reduces carbon emissions.

Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

We recognise the problem described by Councillor Hilton. Where temporary traffic lights are utilised for more than three days duration we will explore the use of such signage where it is appropriate to do so. We will also encourage utility companies to similarly support this approach. It is important to note any signage asking drivers to turn off their engines is only advisory and cannot be enforced.

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REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 7 March 2023. Attendances:-

Councillor Glazier (Chair)

Councillors Bennett, Bowdler, Claire Dowling, Maynard, Simmons and Standley

1. Council Monitoring - Quarter 3 2022/2023

1.1 The Cabinet has considered a report on performance against the Council Plan targets, Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, and Savings Plan, together with Risks at the end of December 2022.

1.2 Broad progress against the Council's four strategic priority outcomes is summarised below and an overview of finance and performance data is provided in the Corporate Summary at Appendix 1 of the report. Strategic risks are reported at Appendix 7 of the report.

Council Plan 2022/23 amendments and variations

1.3 The Council Plan 2022/23 and the Portfolio Plans 2022/23 – 2024/25 have been updated with available 2021/22 outturns and final performance measure targets. All plans are published on the Council's website. The Corporate Summary (Appendix 1) contains a forecast of performance against targets.

1.4 The Strategic Risk Register, Appendix 7, was reviewed and updated to reflect the Council's risk profile. Risk 12 (Cyber Attack) has an updated risk definition. Risk 8 (Capital Programme) has an updated risk definition and risk controls. Risk 1 (Roads) has an updated risk definition and risk controls, together with an updated risk rating.

Risk 4 (Health), Risk 5 (Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources), Risk 6 (Local Economic Growth), Risk 9 (Workforce), Risk 15 (Climate) and Risk 17 (Safeguarding of Children and Young People) have updated risk controls.

Risk 14 (Post European Union (EU) Transition) related to potential border control issues immediately following the transition and has been removed from the register.

Budget Outturn

1.5 The details of revenue over and underspends in each department are set out in the relevant appendices, and show a total forecast overspend of £10.8m (£8.2m at quarter 2). The main headlines are:

- Children's Services (CSD) has a forecast overspend of £11.6m, an increase of £3.1m since quarter 2. The main movements relate to Early Help and Social Care where the forecast overspend has increased by £3.5m, comprising £4.4m increase in Looked After Children (LAC) Agency Placements, £1.2m reduction for Lansdowne and £0.3m increase to Children's Homes and Locality.

The forecast increase in LAC of £4.4m arises from the continued increase in the number of Looked After Children (an additional 15 at the end of Q3) together with increased costs of care. The projection has been supported by the review and alignment of actual spend, data recorded within the care management system "Controcc" and the LAC model. In common with many other local authorities, the needs of children in care are increasing in complexity and the price of care is rising on a weekly basis.

Actions to mitigate these costs include: further engagement with regional local authority commissioning groups to drive down costs and increase purchasing power for commissioned placements, Head of Service and Assistant Director sign off required for all external placements, continuing to seek contributions from health partners wherever possible and

monthly Head of Service and Assistant Director review of top 20 high-cost placements including scrutiny of move on / exit plans.

The forecast reduction of £1.2m for Lansdowne has resulted from the decision to temporarily close Lansdowne, plus further application of COVID-19 funding and other small changes which has improved the forecast overspend position since quarter 2, reducing the forecast overspend for Lansdowne to £1.3m.

Other movements across the department can be found in Appendix 4.

- The Adult Social Care (ASC) projected outturn is an overspend of £0.2m (£0.4m at quarter 2); just over 0.1% of the net budget. This comprises an overspend of £1.7m in the Independent Sector, offset by an underspend of £1.5m in Directly Provided Services, the latter due mainly to staffing vacancies.
- Communities, Economy & Transport (CET) is projecting an underspend of £0.7m (£1.0m at quarter 2). The main underspend arising primarily within Waste Services, due to increased income from recycling, electricity sales, and third parties. £2.5m of this windfall Waste income has been transferred to the Waste Reserve to cover future budget pressures. There is a net overspend of £0.9m on the Highways budget due to extraordinary high inflation-based compensation claim and additional tree work due to Ash Die Back. There are small underspends across other services due to, staff vacancies, project slippage and additional income from developer contributions.
- The Business Services (BSD) forecast underspend of £0.3m (£0.3m overspend at quarter 2). The movement is mainly the result of a rigorous review of the Property reactive maintenance programme, allocating appropriate costs to the relevant capital projects and capturing works attributed to managing the COVID-19 requirements.

1.6 Within Treasury Management (TM), Corporate Funding and other centrally held budgets there is an underspend of £11.0m (including the general contingency):

- Corporate Funding budgets are overspending by £0.9m, because of a £0.6m error by Rother District Council in their precept returns to the Council at budget setting, and a £0.3m reduction in the income from Business Rate Pooling arrangements compared with the district and borough forecasting used for budget setting.
- The General Contingency of £4.3m will be required in full to offset part of the Service and Corporate Funding overspend.
- There is currently an estimated £6.7m underspend on TM as a result of improved returns on market investment. The slippage on the capital programme, and an increase in our cash balances, has also removed the need to borrow externally in 2022/23. All of £6.7m will be required to offset part of the Service and Corporate Funding Overspend.
- The remaining £0.743m of the Service and Corporate Funding overspend can be met from reserves.

1.7 The Council is still experiencing residual COVID-19 related costs and income losses which are being fully mitigated from general and specific funding. The following table shows the current forecast for use of this funding in 2022/23:

COVID-19 Grants 2022/23 (£m)	Carried forward	Estimated use in-year (including payback*)	Specific set-aside for LAC in future yrs	Estimated balance remaining
COVID-19 General Funding	14.1	(5.5)	(3.1)	5.5
COVID-19 Specific Funding	9.0	(9.0)	-	-
Total funding	23.1	(14.5)	(3.1)	5.5

* to date the Council has repaid £2.0m of unused grant

1.8 Capital Programme expenditure for the year is projected to be £78.7m against a budget of £82.2m, a net variation of £3.5m. Of the net variation, £1.3m relates to Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funded projects being delivered by or in partnership with others.

Main variations include:

- Westfield Lane – Underspend of £0.6m due to budget provisionally held for potential land charge not being required.
- Bus Service Improvement Programme – Slippage of £0.6m as awaiting outcome of consultants reports before commencement of bus priority infrastructure work.
- Street Lighting and Traffic Signals Replacement Programme – Slippage of £1.0m due to combination of long lead of times of stock and availability of contractor resources to install new street lighting columns.
- Hastings Bexhill Movement and Access Programme (LEP funded project) – slippage of £1.1m mainly due to elements of the project being delayed until commencement of new highways contract in May 2023.
- Managing Back Office System (MBOS) Programme – Slippage of £1.0m due to system testing taking longer than anticipated.
- Bexhill and Hastings Link Road – Overspend of £1.4m due to Part 1 claims settled this year, the balance of claims should be settled and paid in 2023/24, with an estimated further £1.0m needed to close the project.

Driving sustainable economic growth

1.9 The Council has spent £295m with 908 local suppliers over the past 12 months, which equates to 67% of our total spend. The Procurement team continues to promote our contract opportunities to local suppliers, as well as building local supply chain opportunities into our tenders where possible (Appendix 3).

1.10 Trading Standards provided training and bespoke advice to 31 businesses and individuals in quarter 3, which was fewer than expected. This is partly due to capacity issues within the team, which are expected to improve in quarter 4, and partly due to fewer requests for advice from businesses than expected (Appendix 5).

1.11 13 contracts were awarded in quarter 3, of which seven were in-scope of the Social Value Measurement Charter, which quantifies the economic, social and environmental benefits of Council procurement. The seven applicable contracts had a total value of £318m and secured £185m in social value commitments, which equates to an outturn of 58%. The social value secured included apprenticeships, employability support, providing jobs for the long-term unemployed and support for the voluntary sector. The Council's Social Value Marketplace featured at the Eastbourne Big Sparks Event in quarter 3. The event celebrates, inspires and showcases the amazing things communities are doing in East Sussex. The Marketplace was demonstrated at the event, with attendees being given a walkthrough of the site, to understand how it benefits residents and communities. Engagements were also made with local charities and projects, including All Sorts Youth Project, Black Butterfly and Wayfinder Woman (Appendix 3).

1.12 Highways works, utilising the one-off investment agreed by Cabinet in November 2021, have continued in quarter 3. Over 752 road improvement schemes have been completed at the end of quarter 3 at 398 sites, with a further 100 sites expected to be completed by the end of 2022/23. 328 small footway patching schemes have been completed at the end of quarter 3. £0.1m worth of new signs were installed in quarter 3, with a further £0.1m of road marking works also completed. Further sign and road marking improvements are scheduled for quarter 4 (Appendix 5).

1.13 The statutory process to agree the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme as part of the £41m Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for East Sussex is now complete. The final plan and

scheme were approved by the Lead Member in quarter 3, and the new Bus Team have started work to deliver the BSIP and the Enhanced Partnership (Appendix 5).

1.14 Plans were developed in quarter 3 to improve the temporary bus stops at the bottom of School Hill in Lewes, which were necessitated by the owners of Lewes Bus Station stopping buses using the town's bus station earlier in the year. Works to widen the footways and install bus shelters started on 9 January 2023 and are expected to be completed in quarter 4 (Appendix 5).

1.15 73% of Looked After Children at academic age 16 were participating in education, training or employment with training in quarter 3, against a target of 80%. At academic age 17, 58% of children were participating against a target for 70%. The Virtual School and through care teams are continuing to work together to support young people into education, employment and training. Post 16 pupil premium funding is being used to support providers and prevent the breakdown of educational placements. We will also fund a small number of bespoke packages for young people who are unable to engage with existing providers (Appendix 4).

1.16 Attainment results for Key Stage 2 have been published for the first time since the start of the pandemic. 37.6% of disadvantaged pupils in East Sussex achieved at least the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 in academic year 2021/22, compared to 42.8% nationally. The target for this measure is 45.8% based on our 2018/19 results. Education Improvement Partnerships have focussed on the needs of individual schools, looking at where schools can work together to support improvement (Appendix 4).

1.17 Provisional results are also available for Key Stage 4. The average Progress 8 score for state funded schools in East Sussex for academic year 2021/22 was -0.11. This is below the target set of ≥ -0.06 and the national average which was -0.03. The average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils for academic year 2021/22 was 33.2. This was just below the target of ≥ 33.6 , and below the national average of 37.6. Council maintained schools are being given support to improve their outcomes. Four academies, which are attended by a fifth of all pupils in Year 11, significantly underperformed which has impacted on the overall outturn for East Sussex (Appendix 4).

1.18 69% of pupils achieved a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage compared to a national average of 65%. 98% of early years providers in East Sussex are rated as good or outstanding, compared to 96% nationally (Appendix 4).

Keeping vulnerable people safe

1.19 Trading Standards made 274 positive interventions to protect vulnerable people in quarter 3. This total has increased significantly on previous quarters due to engagement with the financial inclusion group and talks to various groups. Work to protect vulnerable people included installing call blockers and CCTV at their homes. Trading Standards have obtained Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) confiscation orders against convicted individuals this year totalling nearly £100,000. The POCA ensures that criminals do not profit from their crimes (Appendix 5).

1.20 Funding has been secured to deliver projects for children and young people experiencing mild to moderate emotional difficulties and other health inequalities. The projects will offer the children support and pay for the activities they will be encouraged to participate in, according to their interests and wishes. One project will target specific groups of children including those who are receiving free school meals, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, those known to early help and social care, those with higher rates of absence in schools, or children demonstrating other signs of emotional difficulties, in four primary schools in the High Weald area. The second project will be targeted at children and young people fleeing the war in Ukraine (Appendix 4).

1.21 The rate of Looked After Children (LAC) at quarter 3 is 61.6 per 10,000 children, which equates to 656 children. 72 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). This is above the target set of 59.8 per 10,000 children. Higher numbers of children are staying as LAC for longer due to significant delays in the court system, which impacts on our ability to move children,

for example, from a Special Guardianship Order or for very young children to adoptive families (Appendix 4).

1.22 A new Connected Families Service was launched in quarter 3 for families with children aged 11-17 who are on the edge of care. The service aims to enable children to live safely at home or, where care is necessary, to maintain relationships and work to support children to return home when appropriate. Connected Coaches provide proactive, tailored support for families at their point of need. 43 young people engaged with the service in quarter 3 (Appendix 4).

1.23 The Percentage of Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC) referrals triaged and progressed to required services within 24 hours is 87%, which is lower than the target for the year of 95%. HSCC saw a 22% increase in referrals in 2021/22 and this has continued in 2022/23. Alongside the increased demand there has also been a 25% vacancy rate in the service. The service has also been impacted by sickness absences. Staffing levels are improving, and sickness absence is being managed, with some phased returns to work in recent months (Appendix 2).

1.24 The latest available figures, as of 11 January, show that 1,170 guests are currently in East Sussex under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The guests are at 503 different properties across the county, and more than 400 school places have been allocated to Ukrainian children. During quarter 3 the Third Sector support team has continued to work with the Voluntary Actions (3VA, HVA and RVA) and local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations in East Sussex to support Homes for Ukraine guests and hosts across the county (Appendix 2).

Helping people help themselves

1.25 In quarter 2 (reported a quarter in arrears) 30.7% of eligible people from the 20% most deprived areas in East Sussex took up a health check for the five-year period 2018/19 – 2022/23. The target is 35% uptake. Health checks are due to start being delivered by Hastings & St Leonards Primary Care Network by the end of 2022/23, they will be targeting invitations at those living in the most deprived areas. Discussions with Bexhill Primary Care Network about setting up a similar partnership specifically targeting those experiencing worse health inequalities are ongoing (Appendix 2).

1.26 Work to support health and social care integration has continued in quarter 3. Schemes to support people who were medically fit to leave hospital into appropriate onward care settings were mobilised early in quarter 3, to help alleviate pressures on the NHS. Our teams also worked with urgent community response healthcare services to support people and their carers to remain within their own homes. The Sussex Health and Care Assembly's Sussex Integrated Care Strategy was developed and approved in quarter 3. The next step will be to develop a draft Joint Forward Plan which will support delivery of shared priorities, this is expected to be complete in quarter 4 (Appendix 2).

1.27 There were 331 members registered with Support With Confidence at the end of quarter 3 against a target for the year of 360. There have been 46 new approvals made since April 2022, and there are currently 70 live applications in progress. There has been a higher turnover of membership in 2022/23 than in previous years, which has impacted on the outturn (Appendix 2).

1.28 Five infrastructure schemes to improve road safety in the county were completed in quarter 3. These schemes were in Duddleswell, Bexhill, St Leonards, Eastbourne and Hadlow Down. 142 'Bikeability' courses were delivered to 1,131 individuals at participating schools and the Cycle Centre at Eastbourne Sports Park in quarter 3. We also delivered 47 'Wheels for All' sessions to 704 attendees at the Sports Park (Appendix 5).

Making best use of resources now and for the future

1.29 Lobbying continued in quarter 3, including the Leader writing to the new Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak MP, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities and East Sussex MPs to call for action to enable remote council meetings to take place. We have also corresponded with Government on actions needed to improve the current approach to the

placement of asylum seekers in the county. We also contributed to the County Councils Network's research on the impact of inflation and other pressures on county authorities' budgets, which fed into the County Councils Network's national lobbying ahead of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (Appendix 6).

1.30 There was a 29% reduction in carbon emissions at the end of quarter 2 (reported a quarter in arrears) compared to the baseline year of 2019/20, below our target for the year of 34%. The need to provide ventilation in our building as part of COVID-19 safety measures continues to have an impact on our reported performance. Several energy efficiency projects continued in quarter 3. Nine LED lighting projects have been completed, with the final project due to be complete in quarter 4. Three Solar Photovoltaic (PV) projects have been completed, with six more due to complete in quarter 4. One Solar Photovoltaic project has been delayed due to supply chain issues and is now expected to be completed in 2023/24. The Ninfield Primary School decarbonisation project was completed in quarter 3 and it is estimated this will save the equivalent of 18 tonnes of CO2 per year. The second decarbonisation project at Hertsmonceux Primary School has had all of the equipment installed and is expected to be complete in quarter 4 (Appendix 3).

1.31 The Council has continued to work with a range of partners to develop and deliver carbon reduction and climate change adaptation work in quarter 3. Climate change needs assessments were carried out at 30 local business, while 15 businesses were provided with grants, totalling £75,000 to cut their carbon emissions and energy bills. An online engagement event was held with over 200 Council staff, and feedback from this is being used to guide future communications with staff and Members (Appendix 5).

1.32 The Council achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation in quarter 3. Cyber Essentials Plus is the industry standard for the private and public sectors, underpinning safe sharing with partners and helping assure sufficient controls are in place to minimise the risk of a cyber incident. Delivery of business continuity preparedness exercises has continued in quarter 3, and an enhanced network detection and response solution has been purchased. This system will use artificial intelligence, machine learning and data analytics, in near real-time, to detect threats before they become destructive or damaging (Appendix 3).

7 March 2023

KEITH GLAZIER
(Chair)

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee met on 7 March 2023. Attendances:

Councillor Glazier (Chair)
Councillors Bennett, Collier, Simmons and Tutt

1. Pay Policy Statement

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to formulate and publish a pay policy statement on the pay of its Chief Officers and the relationship between these pay levels and the rest of the workforce, excluding schools. This policy statement must be approved annually by full Council by 31 March.

1.2 At its meeting on 27 March 2012, County Council agreed that the Governance Committee should have formal responsibility for the approval of posts at Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer and Assistant Director level with a remuneration package of £100,000 or more, provided the existing grade bands and terms and conditions are applied and any proposed exceptions to these are reported to full County Council. The actual appointment decision will continue to be made using existing delegations. Any proposed exceptions to this would require the approval of the full County Council.

1.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to prepare an annual pay policy statement relating to the remuneration (total pay package) of its Chief Officers, as defined by statute, Deputy Chief Officers (and, by definition, Assistant Directors), the Monitoring Officer and its lowest-paid employees, excluding schools. The pay policy also has to state the relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers.

1.4 The Hutton report on Fair Pay in the Public Sector recommended the publication of an organisation's pay multiple as a means of illustrating the relationship between the remuneration arrangements for Chief Officers in comparison with the rest of the non-schools workforce. This is a calculation in the form of a ratio between the median average earnings across the organisation and the highest paid employee. The ratio is currently (March 2022) 6.77:1, compared with 6.89:1 in March 2021. The pay multiple is published on our website with the Pay Policy Statement and will be updated in March 2023.

1.5 It is necessary to include definitions and the authorities' policies relating to levels and elements of remuneration including all additional payments and benefits in kind. The statement must also indicate the approach to the payment of Chief Officers on ceasing employment, including eligibility for the award of additional pensionable service and on the engagement or re-engagement of Chief Officers previously made redundant or accessing a local government pension.

1.6 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 placed a new requirement on all employers with 250 or more employees to publish gender pay data on the gov.uk website by 30 March each year. The median gender pay gap for 2021/22 is 13.9%; the gender pay report for East Sussex County Council is published on our website, along with the Pay Policy Statement.

1.7 The Committee recommends the County Council to:

- ✧ approve the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 1

2. Remote attendance at Council meetings

2.1 As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, temporary Regulations (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020) were introduced to allow Councils to hold meetings virtually that would otherwise be legally required to be held at a specific location and for members to attend these meetings remotely where they would ordinarily be legally required to attend in person. The County Council agreed in July 2020 supplementary Standing Orders which set out procedures to ensure the effectiveness of meetings undertaken in this format.

2.2 The arrangements were put in place as a temporary measure to continue until the expiry of the Regulations on 7 May 2021. However, the experience of holding virtual meetings with remote attendance during the pandemic identified a range of benefits including a reduction in carbon emissions and cost, greater flexibility in organising meetings and reduced time spent travelling enabling councillors to have more time for their other duties.

2.3 In light of these benefits, many Councils, including ESCC, called on Government to make permanent legislative provision for local authorities to be able to hold virtual meetings, or allow remote attendance at meetings, at their discretion. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) issued a call for evidence on remote meetings in March 2021. The County Council's response called for local authorities to be given the option of holding virtual meetings on a permanent basis in line with a motion agreed unanimously by full Council in October 2020. A Government response to the call for evidence is still awaited.

2.4 Locally, in July 2021, the County Council considered whether there were elements of remote working that could be retained permanently under existing legislation, to enable the benefits of remote attendance identified by members during the pandemic to be retained. The County Council approved Lead Member decisions (which are covered by separate legislation to the majority of Council and committee meetings) being made virtually.

2.5 Council also agreed that remote attendance at meetings would be permitted in the following instances:

- Cabinet – all members of the Cabinet must attend in person. Officers and other councillors (including opposition spokespersons and local members), petitioners etc to be allowed to attend and speak (with the agreement of the Chair) remotely.
- Full Council – All County Council members must attend in person.
- Planning Committee – All members of the committee must attend in person. Officers and members of the public or local members making representations to be allowed to attend remotely.
- At the Council's panels and committees (including Governance Committee, Pension Committee, Scrutiny Committees, Audit Committee and Health and Wellbeing Board) – committee and panel members must be present in person (unless legally permitted to attend remotely). Other participants, including officers and advisors, may attend remotely.
- Pension Board – may be wholly virtual or a hybrid meeting with some members present physically and others attending remotely, at the Chair's discretion.

Virtual working – update

2.6 Over the past 18 months, the use of virtual meetings or remote attendance at meetings, where permitted by legislation and as agreed by County Council as set out above, has been implemented successfully. The majority of Lead Member meetings have been held entirely virtually, unless otherwise agreed by the Lead Member, and the remote attendance of non-committee members and other participants at Cabinet and a range of other committees and panels has provided additional flexibility and maintained the benefits of reduced travel and its associated time, cost and carbon emissions as far as possible within current legislative constraints. In addition, fully virtual working has been successfully maintained for a range of non-statutory meetings which do not legally require in person attendance such as many scrutiny boards, Whole Council Forums and member training events. Virtual working / remote attendance in these instances often provides increased flexibility in date setting, and increased ability for members and other participants, such as external scrutiny witnesses, to attend, in addition to the benefits of reduced travel.

2.7 The framework agreed by Council allows for discretion to hold in person meetings where this is deemed more appropriate. For example, the Pension Board has agreed to hold its meetings as hybrid with Board members attending in person and supporting officers and advisers having the option to join remotely. Some Lead Member meetings have been held as hybrid meetings where requested by Lead Members and, on occasion, informal meetings such as scrutiny boards or training events have been held in person where considered beneficial.

2.8 Given the ongoing benefits of virtual working, and lack of Government response to the call for evidence on remote meetings, ESCC and other local authorities have continued to call for national provision to be made which would allow Councils to make their own decisions on remote attendance covering all meetings. This Council has made further representations as follows:

- April 2022 – the Leader signed a letter from all South East 7 Partnership Leaders to the Secretary of State for LUHC expressing ongoing support for permanent legislative provision for remote meetings.
- November 2022 – the Leader wrote to the Prime Minister, copied to the Secretary of State for LUHC and Leader of the House of Commons, to renew this Council's request that the Government takes action to enable remote attendance at all council meetings. In response, the Secretary of State for LUHC indicated, in January 2023, that Government expected to be able to set out its response to the call for evidence shortly.

2.9 Unless and until a national position on remote attendance / virtual meetings is brought forward by Government, there will remain limitations on the extent to which virtual working can be adopted by ESCC under current legislation. In the meantime, the current approach agreed by Council in July 2021 would benefit from further clarity on how virtual working arrangements apply in specific circumstances, building on the experience to date.

Remote attendance considerations

2.10 Experience of remote attendance over the past 18 months has identified that additional clarity would be beneficial in some specific circumstances:

2.11 **Remote attendance by committee members:** On occasion, specific circumstances (such as weather conditions, health concerns or travel disruption) have prevented members of committees or panels attending a meeting in person, and the option to attend remotely has been requested, either in place of a substitution or as well as. Whilst it is clear that remote attendance by a committee member cannot be regarded as them being 'present' according

to current legislation, there is a need to clarify the position in these circumstances. For the avoidance of doubt it is therefore recommended that:

- Where a substitute member attends the meeting, the relevant substantive committee or panel member will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting as having given apologies. Should they choose to attend remotely they will be doing so on the same basis as a non-committee member.
- Where a substitute member is not appointed, a committee member may, at the discretion of the Chair, participate in the meeting remotely. However, the member may not vote on any matter on the agenda, will not count towards the quorum for the meeting, and will be recorded in the minutes as 'in remote attendance' rather than 'present'. In reaching a view on whether remote attendance can be accommodated the Chair may consider factors including the format and content of the meeting and the potential impact of remote participation by a committee member on the effectiveness of the meeting.

2.12 Format of non-statutory meetings: Whilst a range of non-statutory meetings such as scrutiny boards may be held entirely virtually and this often works well, there can be occasions where an in-person meeting is considered more appropriate. It is recommended that the Chair of relevant boards or informal meetings be granted the discretion to determine the appropriate format. Where the preferred format is in-person, any requests for remote attendance may be considered by the Chair by exception, taking account of the availability of necessary technology and the effectiveness of the meeting.

Member Attendance Requirements

2.13 The opportunities for members to attend certain meetings remotely, as previously agreed by Council, and set out in paragraph 2.5 above, may result in reduced physical attendance at committee, Lead Member and Cabinet meetings as many members, where permissible, take advantage of the increased flexibility to participate remotely.

2.14 Section 85 of the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 provides that if a member fails throughout a period of six consecutive months to attend a meeting of the authority then they cease to be a member of the authority, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Authority before the expiration of the period.

2.15 When a member ceases to hold office, the Monitoring Officer is required by law to declare the office vacant under Section 86 of the LGA 1972. This is in all cases apart from where a failure to attend meetings was for a reason approved before the expiration of the six month period (a dispensation).

2.16 As set out above, under Section 85(1) of the LGA, a councillor will not be disqualified for non-attendance if the County Council has agreed the reason for the councillor's non-attendance before the period of six months has elapsed. In practice, where it has been necessary to consider a councillor's non-attendance, the Council has recorded the approval of such a reason by granting a dispensation from the requirement for councillors to attend at meetings, thereby allowing the councillor to remain qualified until such time as they are able to attend a meeting of the Council.

2.17 In light of the advantages demonstrated by allowing remote attendance, and in the context of the arrangements set out in paragraph 2.5, it is proposed that the County Council agrees the reason for absence in relation to, and grants a dispensation for, any member who does not attend a meeting of the authority in person over a period of six consecutive months

GOVERNANCE

provided they have attended one or more meetings of the authority remotely during that period.

2.18 The Committee recommends the County Council to:

- ☆ 1. agree the reason for absence of any member who does not attend a meeting of the authority in person over a period of six consecutive months, and to grant a dispensation for such non-attendance, provided the member has attended one or more meetings of the authority remotely during that period;
2. agree the arrangements set out in paragraphs 2.11 and 2.12 with regard to remote attendance by members and the format of non-statutory meetings; and
3. the Constitution be amended to give effect to 1 and 2 above

7 March 2023

KEITH GLAZIER
(Chair)

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EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Report of a meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at County Hall, St. Anne's Crescent, Lewes BN7 1UE at 10:30 hours on Thursday, 9 February 2023.

Present: Councillors Galley (Chairman), Lambert (Vice-Chair), Azad, Dowling, Evans, Geary, Hamilton, Maples, Marlow-Eastwood, Nemeth, Osborne, Powell, Redstone, Scott, Taylor, Theobald, Ungar and West

The agenda and non-confidential reports can be read on the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's website at <http://www.esfrs.org/about-us/east-sussex-fire-authority/fire-authority-meetings/> A brief synopsis and the decisions relating to key items is set out below.

1 URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- 1.1 The Fire Authority recorded their congratulations to the Chief Fire Officer on her being awarded the King's Fire Service Medal in the New Year's Honours list. Members thanked the Chief Fire Officer for her dedicated service to East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service as well as her work nationally on water safety.

2 TO CONSIDER ANY PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 2.1 A question was received from a Member of the Public. The questioner received a written response from the Chairman. The question and response were presented to those present at the meeting and would be published with the minutes as a matter of public record.

3 FIRE AUTHORITY SERVICE PLANNING PROCESSES FOR 2023/24 AND BEYOND - REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24 AND CAPITAL ASSET STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2027/28

- 3.1 The Fire Authority considered a report presenting the draft Revenue Budget 2023/24, Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28 and Medium Term Finance Plan for 2023/24 – 2027/28 for approval. The changes made since the initial proposals presented to the Policy & Resources Panel at its meeting in January 2023 and since the publication of the agenda for this meeting were outlined. These included minimal changes as a result of the publication of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement and additional one-off funding of £65,000 from the distribution of the Business Rate Levy Account surplus (which was not reflected in the papers). The reported Collection Fund position had been revised to a zero balance from the £0.4m deficit previously forecast. Further updates had been made to the Capital Asset Strategy reflecting the latest forecasts for delivery in 2022/23 and inflation impacts on fleet schemes, these together increased the total value of the programme by £1.089m between 2023/24 and 2027/28.
- 3.2 Final information on funding from business rates had not yet been analysed and these remained as estimates. Confirmation was still awaited from the Home Office on specific grants, including those relating to Pensions and Protection Uplift.

- 3.3 The funding settlement was still only for 1 year and there was no certainty on funding for 2024/25 and beyond, but the settlement was better than expected, this increase had been helped by comprehensive lobbying across the sector, locally and nationally, to Central Government. This improved position was largely due to the Government's guarantee of a 3% increase in Comprehensive Spending Power and an increase in the council tax referendum threshold to 3% and, for 2023/24 only, an additional flexibility for all fire authorities of up to £5. This was welcomed, although the Authority would still need to make challenging decisions to balance the budget. The Authority had continued to make progress in identifying and agreeing efficiencies and savings proposals over the last 12 months, the latest Medium Term Financial Plan showed that savings of £1.295m had been identified already in 2023/24.
- 3.4 The report outlined proposals for setting a balanced revenue budget for 2023/24, in line with the Fire Authority's statutory duty, including commitments, growth bids and new savings. Additional savings proposals, which would, based on current forecasts, be necessary to balance the budget in 2024/25 were also set out as the Authority had requested in order to determine which tranches should be developed further and implemented, subject to appropriate public consultation. The budget proposals had been modelled on a £5 council tax increase. The budget gap for 2023/24 was £0.636m. It was proposed this be funded using reserves in 2023/24, the amount required to balance the budget for 2024/25 was £0.721m. The use of one-off measures in 2023/24 would allow time for the additional savings proposals, set out in section 7 of the report, to be developed, consulted upon (where required) and implemented by 1 April 2024. Using reserves to balance the budget was legitimate where it assisted in smoothing the impact/delivery of planned savings, but the approach was not financially sustainable and could not form an ongoing part of budget setting. This would be the second year that the Fire Authority had used its reserves to balance its budget.
- 3.5 The report set out a range of risks (para.4.8) that had the potential to impact on the Authority's ability to deliver its budget plans over the medium term which Members needed to consider. Additionally, there would be the future impact of grey book pay negotiations, but these were ongoing and could not be dealt with by this meeting. It was estimated that if the latest pay offer were accepted it would result in an additional cost pressure of £0.3m in this year, £0.5m in 23/24 and £0.6m in 24/25. At paragraph 11.1, the Chief Finance Officer's Statement confirmed that the estimates used for the purposes of calculating the budget, revenue and capital had been produced in a robust and transparent way and the proposed financial reserves were consistent with Fire Authority policy and were both prudent and necessary. Furthermore, it is essential that the Authority focuses on delivering the additional savings proposals that will enable it to balance its revenue budget from 2024/25 onwards without recourse to the use of reserves. The Authority must implement the proposals made in this report to rebuild its reserves and maintain its financial sustainability over the next five years.
- 3.6 A full and lengthy debate followed. Members, referring to the revised list of Fees and Charges (Appendix C), asked whether the increases proposed were sufficient, they did not appear to be as large as they could be. It was explained that in terms of income derived it was minimal, the Authority were only permitted to recover costs, not to make a profit, therefore the increases had been modelled in line with increases in pay. It was also important to note that some of these were set externally. The most common of these charges were for Fire Investigation Reports, the fee for these would be monitored as the compilation of these reports could be lengthy. It was important to anticipate the impact of these on other work that was required, Fire Investigations were not a Statutory function, but the Service undertook them as it was a good way to learn lessons.

- 3.7 Members discussed their concerns about the success of the lobbying for additional funding from Central Government. The Authority was grateful for the work that was done to draw attention to concerns about the funding of the Fire Sector, both locally and nationally, but some Members felt that this was not as successful as it could have been. They were keen that lobbying should continue but should focus on requiring Government to increase core funding rather than the ability to raise council tax. Lobbying had been broadly successful, but the future remained extremely difficult, the request to the Fire Minister for the ability to increase Council Tax by the same level next year had been made because Government had already set its spending limits for 2024/25, so Council Tax was the only avenue available. The Service would continue to lobby for increases to grants, and longer term financial settlements. Aside from funding, there were growing demands for the Service to respond to a wider range of incidents, climate change was increasing and driving our responses. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) was lobbying hard on the issue of flooding, fires in the open and other incidents that should be but are not currently statutory duties of the Fire Sector. There was for example no statutory responsibility for the Service to respond to water rescues, but it is driven by the Civil Contingencies Act, because of this it is entirely unfunded by Government. The Fire & Rescue Service's Act is 20 years old and out of date, these issues were being taken up with the Fire Minister and the Sector was trying to ensure that its argument was clear and supported by good data.
- 3.8 The Fire Authority collectively expressed concern about the difficult decisions that were before them, no Member was taking their responsibilities lightly and felt that the situation the Service and the wider public sector found itself in was concerning. It was agreed that setting a balanced budget was challenging, particularly with the outcome of the pay offer still unknown. There was support for continued lobbying and the need for adequate funding to enable the Authority to do its job properly, rather than being asked to deliver more with less, but Members were adamant that this must be for central funding and not just for increased income from council tax. A lengthy discussion followed with Members expressing their concerns for the future and gratitude to the staff and volunteers for all their work. The general feeling amongst those present was that this budget was necessary and would be supported but not a decision that anyone would be taking lightly.
- 3.9 The Chairman read each recommendation in full, and the Authority voted as follows:
For - 15
Abstain - 3
With no Member voting against the recommendations the Fire Authority approved the recommendations contained within the Report in full.

4 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2023/24

- 4.1 The Fire Authority considered a report presenting the Treasury Management Strategy, policy statement and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2023/24 for approval. The report contained recommendations regarding borrowing limits, prudential indicators and limits, the investment strategy and policy as required by Section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance 2017. The emphasis continued to be on security (protection of the capital sum invested) and liquidity (keeping money readily available for expenditure when needed). The Strategy and limits were consistent with the proposed capital programme and revenue budget previously approved at this meeting.

- 4.2 The Authority were recommended to approve borrowing limits to give flexibility for any future consideration in undertaking new external long-term/replacement borrowing should the need arise, or market conditions prove favourable. The Authority had always adopted a prudent approach on its investment strategy and no changes were proposed for 2023/24. The Authority was recommended to approve the 2023/24 investment strategy, noting that any introduction of longer term investments would result in an increased, but appropriate, level of risk to the investment portfolio. The Authority to the 31 December 2022 had earned £276,000 in investment interest at an average rate of 1.79%. This level of return was broadly consistent with recent available Investment benchmarking.
- 4.3 CIPFA had published revised Treasury and Prudential codes in December 2021, full adoption of the new codes was incorporated into this Strategy and were set out in the report. Members were grateful for the timetabling of Treasury Management Training in Spring 2023. There was a query as to whether the projected borrowing for 2027/28 took into account the potential increase in need for specialist vehicles. It was confirmed that the Revenue Budget and Capital programme reflected the Fire Authority's decisions regarding the current IRMP and Fleet assets, the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) would revisit issues including the impact of climate change. It was added that the Statute had been changed in Wales and Scotland and now included Water Rescue and therefore attracted additional and specific funding. It was hoped that lobbying by the NFCC on this matter would be successful and that the statute in England would be changed accordingly. The Fire Authority approved the recommendations contained within the Report in full.

5 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/24

- 5.1 The Fire Authority considered a report which presented the Fire Authority's Pay Policy Statement for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act 2011 imposed a duty on relevant local authorities to prepare pay policy statements for each financial year, this year's must be approved by 31 March 2023. There were no proposed changes to the Authority's existing policies on pay or its pay scales, it reflected the previous Pay Policy updated with the outcomes of national pay settlements, decisions of the Principal Officer Appointments Panel in relation to Principal Officer pay and changes to the Firefighters and Local Government Pension Schemes. The Fire Authority agreed to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

6 INTEGRATED TRANSPORT FUNCTION - FORT ROAD, NEWHAVEN

- 6.1 The Fire Authority considered a report which provided an updated timeline for a full business case regarding Fort Road, Newhaven to be returned to the Authority and sought delegated authority to cease the sale of the property. In December 2022, the Urgency Panel had approved a pause in the sale of the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) owned site in Fort Road, Newhaven to Lewes District Council (LDC) in order to build a business case to develop the South East Engineering spoke of the broader Integrated Transport Function, involving ESFRS, West and Surrey Fire & Rescue Services, Surrey Police and Sussex Police.

- 6.2 It was anticipated that the full business case would be presented to the Senior Leadership Team in February and to the Policy & Resources Panel in April 2023 to seek approval for adjustments to be made to the capital programme. In view of this timeline, it was necessary for the Authority to delegate authority to the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Treasurer, to formally stop the sale of the Fort Road, Newhaven site and to notify LDC. An initial conversation had already been held with LDC and they were aware of the proposal, the timeline and that it was being explored. The Chairman confirmed he would be speaking directly with the Leader of LDC to explain the position and the process that would be taken. The Fire Authority approved the recommendations contained within the Report in full.

COUNCILLOR ROY GALLEY
CHAIRMAN OF EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

9 February 2022

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