



Meeting of
East Sussex County Council
on Tuesday, 18 July 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, 18 July 2023 at 10.00 am** to transact the following business

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2023** (Pages 5 - 18)
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Chairman's business**
4. **Questions from members of the public**
5. **Report of the Cabinet** (Pages 19 - 32)
6. **Cabinet priorities for the forthcoming year**
7. **Report of the Governance Committee** (Pages 33 - 34)
8. **Report of the Lead Member for Transport and Environment** (Pages 35 - 44)
9. **Questions from County Councillors**
 - (a) Oral questions to Cabinet Members
 - (b) Written Questions of which notice has been given pursuant to Standing Order 44
10. **Report of the East Sussex Fire Authority** (Pages 45 - 48)

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 the Reverend Ben Brown of St Annes Church, Lewes. 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



10 July 2023

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MINUTES

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 9 MAY 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, Gerard Fox, Roy Galley (Vice Chairman), Nuala Geary, Keith Glazier, Alan Hay, 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, Phil Scott, Daniel Shing, Stephen Shing, Alan Shuttleworth, Bob Standley, Colin Swansborough, Barry Taylor, David Tutt, John Ungar and Trevor Webb

1. To elect a Chairman of the County Council

Councillor Galley (Vice Chairman of the County Council) in the Chair

1.1 The following motion was moved by Councillor Glazier and seconded –

‘To elect Councillor Pragnell to serve as Chairman of the County Council for the ensuing year’.

1.2 There being no other nominations, the Vice-Chairman put the motion to the vote and declared Councillor Pragnell elected as Chairman for the ensuing year. Councillor Pagnell made a declaration of acceptance of office and took the Chair.

Councillor Pragnell in the Chair

1.3 The Chairman thanked the Council for the honour it had bestowed on him in re-electing him as Chairman for a further year.

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2. To appoint a Vice Chairman of the County Council

2.1 The following motion was moved by Councillor Glazier and seconded –

'To appoint Councillor Galley to serve as Vice Chairman of the County Council for the ensuing year'.

2.2 The following motion was moved by Councillor Robinson and seconded –

'To appoint Councillor Daniel to serve as Vice Chairman of the County Council for the ensuing year'.

2.3 The Council agreed to vote by a show of hands. Following the vote, the Chairman declared Councillor Galley appointed as Vice Chairman of the County Council for the ensuing year. Councillor Galley made a declaration of acceptance of office and took his seat as Vice Chairman.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2023

3.1 RESOLVED – to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the County Council meeting held on 21 March 2023.

4. Apologies for absence

4.1 Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Kathryn Field, Julia Hilton, and Georgia Taylor.

5. Chairman's business

COUNCILLOR RUPERT SIMMONS

5.1 The Chairman began with the sad news of the death of Councillor Rupert Simmons. Councillor Simmons served his community for a quarter of a century, having been elected to Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council in 1997, Wealden District Council in 1999, and East Sussex County Council in 2001. As an East Sussex County Councillor, Councillor Simmons was a long-standing member of the Cabinet, and served as Chairman of the County Council in the years 2009-2011. The Chairman noted that Councillor Simmons' knowledge and commitment would be greatly missed, and offered his condolences to Councillor Simmons' family and friends. The Leader of the Council and the other group leaders offered condolences and shared memories of Councillor Simmons. The Council stood for a moment's silence as a mark of respect to Councillor Simmons.

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CHAIRMAN'S ACTIVITIES

5.2 The Chairman reported that he had attended a number of engagements since the last County Council meeting including: the meeting of a Tractor Club at the Five Bells in Chailey, the High Sheriff's Lunch at Westfield House, meeting the nominees for the King's Award for Voluntary Service at Victoria Baptist Church in Eastbourne, the installation of the Reverend Canon Simon Holland as the interim Dean of Chichester Cathedral, and coronation celebration services at St. Anne's Church in Lewes and Chichester Cathedral.

5.3 The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman for his support in previous years and stated that he looked forward to working with him in the ensuing year.

PETITIONS

5.4 The Chairman announced that no petitions had been presented before the meeting.

PRAYERS

5.5 The Chairman thanked Father David Hill, Rector of St. John's the Evangelist Upper St. Leonards and the Rural Dean, for leading prayers before the meeting.

6. Record of delegation of Executive Functions

6.1 In accordance with the Constitution, the Leader of the Council presented his written record to the Council of the appointment of Deputy Leader and appointments to the Cabinet, their portfolios and his delegation of executive functions. A copy of the Leader's report is attached to these minutes.

7. Declarations of Interest

7.1 The following members declared personal interests in items on the agenda as follows:

Member	Position giving rise to interest	Agenda item	Whether interest was prejudicial
Councillor David Tutt	Member of the Pension Committee	Item 13	No
Councillor Paul Redstone	Member of the Pension Committee	Item 13	No

8. Reports

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

Governance Committee report – paragraph 1 (Appointment of Members to Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Other Bodies)

Cabinet report – paragraph 1 (Scrutiny Review of Procurement, Social Value and Buying Local)

Place Scrutiny report – paragraph 1 (Scrutiny Review of Procurement, Social Value and Buying Local)

Standards Committee report – paragraph 1 (Annual Report of the Standards Committee)

NON-RESERVED PARAGRAPHS

8.2 There were none.

9. Report of the Governance Committee

Paragraph 1 (Appointment of Members to Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Other Bodies)

9.1 Councillor Glazier moved the reserved paragraph in the Governance Committee's report.

9.2 The motion was CARRIED after debate.

10. Appointments to Committees and Sub-Committees

10.1 Councillor Bennett moved, and it was seconded, that the appointments be made to the Committees and Sub-Committees listed in item 8 of the agenda, in accordance with the list of nominations from the political and independent groups, which had been circulated.

10.2 The motion was CARRIED.

11. Appointment of Members to other Committees and Panels

11.1 Councillor Bennett moved, and it was seconded, that the appointments be made to the Committees and Panels listed in item 9 of the agenda, in accordance with the list of nominations from the political and independent groups, which had been circulated.

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11.2 The motion was CARRIED.

12. Confirmation to the continuation of other bodies

12.1 Councillor Bennett moved, and it was seconded, that the bodies listed in agenda item 10 be continued, that the political balance provisions shall not apply to these Panels and that members be appointed by the Chief Executive as the need arises.

12.2 The motion was CARRIED with no member voting against.

13. Appointment to the Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel

13.1 Councillor Bennett moved, and it was seconded, that the political balance provisions would not apply to the membership of the Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel and that members be appointed in accordance with the list of nominations from political groups that had been circulated.

13.2 The motion was CARRIED with no member voting against.

14. Appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs

14.1 The following motion, moved by Councillor Bennett and seconded, was CARRIED:

To appoint the following members to positions listed below:

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Regulatory	Chris Dowling	
Audit Committee	Swansborough	Fox
People Scrutiny Committee	Howell	Ungar
Place Scrutiny Committee	Beaver	Hilton
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Belsey	Robinson
Governance Committee	Glazier	
Planning Committee	Liddiard	Barry Taylor
Pension Committee	Fox	
Standards Committee	Belsey	

15. Petition

15.1 Sarah Hazlehurst (a representative of the petitioners) addressed the County Council prior to the debate. The Council agreed to vary procedure to enable all councillors who wished to speak to do so.

15.2 The following motion was moved by Councillor Fox and seconded:

This Council:

- 1. Notes the Petition.*
- 2. Notes that the Pension Fund is not the property of the Admin Authority, any employer in the Fund, or East Sussex residents, but is the deferred compensation of scheme members.*
- 3. Believes that tax policy is the preserve of national not local government.*
- 4. Notes that the Fund was awarded LGPS Fund of the year 2021 for its overall performance and highly commended for its approach to climate.*
- 5. Notes that the Pension Committee has already commissioned Fund officers and advisers to produce a report exploring the consequences of fossil fuel divestment.*
- 6. Reaffirms that this Full Council owes a fiduciary duty to the scheme members and has appointed the Pension Committee to act as a non-political body on its behalf under the advice of experts, including that related to the broad range of ESG issues, and that it should not seek to pre-determine the informed consideration of these issues by the Committee.*

15.3 The following amendment was moved by Councillor Denis and seconded:

To delete the motion and replace with –

- 1. This Council believes that the fact that the world's twenty largest oil and gas companies are expected to invest \$932 billion developing new oil & gas fields by 2030 – none of which is compatible with limiting warming to 1.5°C – is clear evidence that the East Sussex Pension Fund's current policy of 'engaging' with fossil fuel companies has failed.*
- 2. This Council believes that a public commitment by the East Sussex Pension Fund to fully divest from these companies would send a powerful signal to policymakers about the need to get serious about tackling the climate emergency, which requires the rapid phasing out of fossil fuels.*
- 3. To further acknowledge the increasing urgency of the climate crisis, the Leader of the Council will write to the Prime Minister, urging him to: (i) close the massive loopholes in the existing windfall tax on companies that extract and sell oil and gas; and (ii)*

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permanently require these companies to pass on excessive profits from the sale of dirty energy in the UK to the UK tax payer.

15.4 A recorded vote on Councillor Denis' amendment was requested and taken. The amendment was LOST, the votes being cast as follows:

FOR THE AMENDMENT

Councillors Collier, Daniel, Denis, Holt, Lambert, MacCleary, Maples, Murphy, Osborne, Robinson, Rodohan, Scott, Daniel Shing, Stephen Shing, Shuttleworth, Swansborough, 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, Standley, and Barry Taylor.

ABSTENTIONS

Councillor Tutt.

15.5 A recorded vote was requested and taken on the motion moved by Councillor Fox as follows:

This Council:

- 1. Notes the Petition.*
- 2. Notes that the Pension Fund is not the property of the Admin Authority, any employer in the Fund, or East Sussex residents, but is the deferred compensation of scheme members.*
- 3. Believes that tax policy is the preserve of national not local government.*
- 4. Notes that the Fund was awarded LGPS Fund of the year 2021 for its overall performance and highly commended for its approach to climate.*
- 5. Notes that the Pension Committee has already commissioned Fund officers and advisers to produce a report exploring the consequences of fossil fuel divestment.*
- 6. Reaffirms that this Full Council owes a fiduciary duty to the scheme members and has appointed the Pension Committee to act as a non-political body on its behalf under the advice of experts, including that related to the broad range of ESG issues, and that it should not seek to pre-determine the informed consideration of these issues by the Committee.*

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FOR THE MOTION

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, Standley and Barry Taylor.

AGAINST THE MOTION

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

ABSTENTIONS

Councillors Daniel, Scott, and Tutt.

16. Questions from members of the public

16.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

17. Report of the Cabinet

Paragraph 1 (Scrutiny Review of Procurement: Social Value and Buying Local)

17.1 The Chairman reminded Council that this paragraph would be taken with the report of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

18. Report of the Place Scrutiny Committee

Paragraph 1 (Scrutiny Review of Procurement: Social Value and Buying Local)

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

18.2 Councillor Beaver moved the adoption of paragraph 1 of the Scrutiny Committee report.

18.3 Councillor Glazier moved the adoption of paragraph 1 of the Cabinet's report. The motion, including the recommendations, was CARRIED after debate.

18.4 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.

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19. Report of the Standards Committee

Paragraph 1 (Annual Report of the Standards Committee)

19.1 Councillor Belsey moved the reserved paragraph in the Standards Committee's report.

19.2 The motion was CARRIED after debate.

20. Questions from County Councillors

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

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
Councillor Murphy	Councillor Claire Dowling	Quality of materials and workmanship on highways and supervision of works
Councillor Swansborough	Councillor Claire Dowling	Works on highways and infrastructure
Councillor Lambert	Councillor Claire Dowling	Budget details of the Council's Emergency Travel Fund
Councillor Robinson	Councillor Claire Dowling	Contacts regarding outstanding March queries
Councillor Daniel	Councillor Glazier	Central Government funding to local authorities since 2010 and effect on East Sussex residents
Councillor Stephen Shing	Councillor Claire Dowling	Standards of roads in the county
Councillor Tutt	Councillor Claire Dowling	Pothole repairs and time taken to complete repairs
Councillor Scott	Councillor Claire Dowling	Review of the criteria used for highway repairs and success of repairs
Councillor Maples	Councillor Claire Dowling	Briefing notes from previous Highways contractor
Councillor Denis	Councillor Glazier	Europe Day 2023
Councillor Stephen Shing	Councillor Bennett	Site formerly known as Hindsland playing fields in Polegate, and surrounding land.

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WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44

20.2 There were no written questions from Councillors.

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 11.47 am

The reports referred to are included in the minute book

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Delegations approved by the Leader of the Council – 9 May 2023

(a) names of the County Councillors appointed to the Cabinet

The Cabinet comprises the following members

Portfolio	Appointment
Strategic Management and Economic Development	Councillor Keith Glazier
Resources and Climate Change	Councillor Nick Bennett
Economy	Vacancy
Transport and Environment	Councillor Claire Dowling
Adult Social Care and Health	Councillor Carl Maynard
Children and Families (designated statutory Lead Member for Children's Services)	Councillor Bob Bowdler
Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	Councillor Bob Standley

(b) the extent of any authority delegated to cabinet members individually as portfolio holders will remain as set out in the Constitution of the County Council eastsussex.gov.uk/constitution or alternatively hard copies are available at County Hall, Lewes (please contact Georgina Seligmann – 01273 482355) and below.

In overall terms the areas of responsibility for each portfolio holder includes the following (subject to any subsequent amendment by the Leader at his discretion) principal services to be interpreted broadly. In accordance with the wishes of the Leader, principal services are not to be construed restrictively. In the event of any doubt in connection to a decision made by a Lead Member, the Leader confirms that he has delegated full executive authority to that decision maker:

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Portfolio	Scope
Strategic Management and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairing and managing the executive and its work • Any executive function including overall strategy and policy for the Council • Principal service area responsibilities: Communications Local Enterprise Partnership Policy and Performance Health and Social Care Integration/Health and Wellbeing Board Equalities South East Seven Partnership Transport for South East (SNTB) Democratic Services <p>all ancillary activities</p>
Resources and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any executive function including strategy and policy for all corporate resources matters • Principal service area responsibilities: Financial Management Property asset management Risk management Procurement Internal audit ICT Personnel and Training Legal Orbis Coroner services Council lead on Climate Change <p>all ancillary activities</p>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any executive function including strategy and policy for all economic development and regeneration and all ancillary activities • Principal service area responsibilities Economic Development Culture Skills (shared with Education) all ancillary activities Trading Standards

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<p>Transport and Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any executive function including strategy and policy for all Transport and Environmental matters • Principal service area responsibilities: Operational services Planning and developmental control Transport strategy Archives and records Customer Services Emergency Planning Gypsies and travellers Libraries Registration Services Road Safety Environmental and waste strategy all ancillary activities
<p>Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any executive function including strategy and policy for all Adult Social Care and Public Health matters • Principal service area responsibilities: Services for vulnerable adults including older people, learning disability, physical disability, mental health, public health and all ancillary activities Community Safety Voluntary Sector
<p>Children and Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any executive function including overall strategy and policy for all Children's Services (social care) matters • Principal service area responsibilities: Child protection and family support Fostering and adoption for children Residential care for children Other aspects of social care for children Youth justice Youth service all ancillary activities

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Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any executive function including strategy and policy for all Children’s Services (education) matters• Principal service area responsibilities: Quality and standards in educational establishments Special educational needs School admissions and transport Early years and childcare School organisation and place planning Skills (shared with Economy) all ancillary activities
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(c) *appointment to the position of Deputy Leader*

Councillor Bennett to be appointed Deputy Leader of the County Council

(d) *the terms of reference and constitution of the Cabinet and any executive committees together with the names of cabinet members appointed to them*

The terms of reference and constitution of the Cabinet and any executive committees will remain as currently set out in the Constitution of the Council

(e) *the nature and extent of any delegation of executive functions to local committees*

There is no delegation of executive functions to local committees

(f) *the nature and extent of any delegation to officers*

The delegations of executive functions to Officers will be as set out in the Constitution. The delegations to Officers can be viewed via the following link:

[Constitution - Delegations to Officers](#)

or alternatively hard copies are available at County Hall, Lewes (please contact Georgina Seligmann – 01273 482355)

Urgent Executive Decisions

There were no executive decisions taken during 2022/23 where the making of the decision was agreed in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Councillor Keith Glazier
Leader of the Council

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 27 June 2023. Attendees: -

Councillor Glazier (Chair)

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

1. Council Monitoring Q4 2022/23 Year End

1.1 The Cabinet has considered a report on the Council's position and year-end projections for the Council Plan targets, Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, and Savings Plan, together with Risks at the end of March 2023.

1.2 Broad progress against the Council's four strategic priority outcomes is summarised in paragraph 1.11 and an overview of finance and performance data is provided in the Corporate Summary at Appendix 1. Strategic risks are reported at Appendix 7.

1.3 The Council has faced a number of external challenges over the past year. The increase in rates of inflation have affected our residents, local businesses and our supply chain. We have also continued to see increased demand for support as part of the longer-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Departmental Appendices (2-6) provide examples of how we have responded to these challenges.

Overview of Council Plan outturns 2022/23

1.4 35 (65%) of the 54 Council Plan targets were achieved and 15 (28%) were not achieved. 4 (7%) are carried over for reporting in quarter 1 2023/24. The carry overs are measures, where action has been completed, but the year-end outturn data is not yet available to report against the target.

1.5 Of the 54 targets, the outturns for 10 (18%) are not comparable with the outturns from 2021/22. Of the remaining 44 measures which can be compared, 25 (46%) improved or were at the maximum (i.e. the most that can be achieved); 3 (6%) remained the same; 13 (24%) had a lower outturn; and 3 (6%) are carried over for reporting in quarter 1 2023/24. Although 13 measures are showing a lower outturn compared with 2021/22, 7 of these met their target for 2022/23.

1.6 The Strategic Risk Register, Appendix 7, was reviewed and updated to reflect the Council's risk profile. The 'Placements for Children and Young People in our Care' risk has been escalated to the Strategic Risk Register. The risk was previously included in the Children's Services Departmental Risk Register. Risk 4 (Health), Risk 5 (Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources), Risk 6 (Local Economic Growth), Risk 9 (Workforce), and Risk 15 (Climate) have updated risk controls. Risk 17 (Safeguarding of Children and Young People) covered the risks of failing to recruit and retain an effective children's social care workforce. It has been removed as a standalone strategic risk and incorporated into the existing Workforce strategic risk.

Budget Outturn

1.7 The details of revenue over and underspends in each department are set out in the relevant appendices, and show a total overspend of £10.7m (£10.8m at quarter 3). The main headlines are:

- The outturn in Children's Services (CSD) is an overspend of £11.5m, a decrease of £0.1m since quarter 3.

The outturn comprises an overspend against the budget relating to Early Help and Social Care of £10.328m and a further overspend of £2.422m in Communication, Planning and Performance, mainly within Home to School Transport. This is offset by an underspend of £1.217m in Central Resources, where the department records any efficiencies and staff vacancies from across a number of areas in the department.

The department is continuing to look for further mitigations, with senior managers leading in taking every opportunity to save costs where possible. However, containing costs in Children's Services continues to be a significant challenge across the country, against the background of increased demand and complexity of needs emerging from the pandemic and acute supply side shortages in both care and education provision.

The department has continued looking at any longer-term impact from the 2022/23 outturn on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The MTFP includes significant investments totalling some £8.9m for Home to School Transport, Looked After Children, Locality social work, new school attendance duties and support for care leavers from 2023/24.

- The Adult Social Care (ASC) outturn is an overspend of £0.1m (£0.2m at quarter 3). This comprises an overspend of £1.7m in the Independent Sector, offset by an underspend of £1.6m in Directly Provided Services, the latter due mainly to staffing vacancies.
- The outturn in Communities, Economy & Transport (CET) is an underspend of £0.7m (no change from quarter 3). The main underspend arising primarily within Waste Services, due to increased income from recycling, electricity sales, and reduced disposal costs. As agreed, £2.4m of this windfall Waste income has been transferred to the Waste Reserve to cover future budget pressures, and a further £1.4m will be used to cover the cost of the Record Service move from Ropemaker Park. There is a net overspend of £0.6m on the Highways budget due to streetlighting electricity, the cost of correcting safety defects, additional gritting and drainage works, and additional tree work due to Ash Die Back.
- The Business Services (BSD) outturn is an underspend of £0.2m (£0.3m at quarter 3). This resulted from minor underspends across services due mainly to vacancies.

1.8 Within Treasury Management (TM), Corporate Funding and other centrally held budgets (CHB) there is an underspend of £8.9m including the general contingency (£11.0m at quarter 3):

- Corporate Funding budgets have overspent by £0.7m, because of a £0.6m error by Rother District Council in their precept returns to the Council at budget setting, and a £0.7m reduction in the income from Business Rate Pooling arrangements compared with the district and borough forecasting used for budget setting. This is offset by a £0.6m grant from government for the Council's share of an accumulated surplus in the national business rates levy account that was announced as part of the final local government settlement.
- Within CHB an accounting adjustment of £1.0m is required to reflect the potential risk that increasing outstanding debt levels will not be settled. This is a book entry required by accounting standards, based on a prudent judgement of future risk. This has resulted in a reduction in the underspend. The General Contingency of £4.3m will be required in full to offset part of the Service and Corporate Funding overspend.
- There is a £6.2m 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. This underspend has reduced by £0.5m since quarter 3 because interest accrued on S106 contributions was higher than forecast due to increased interest rates. The entire £6.2m will be required to offset part of the Service and Corporate Funding overspend.

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- The remaining £1.763m of the Service and Corporate Funding comprises an operational overspend of £0.748m, compared with £0.743m at quarter 3, and the £1.015m accounting adjustment for increased levels of debt.

1.9 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 use of this funding in 2022/23:

COVID-19 Grants 2022/23 (£m)	Carried forward	Use in-year (including payback*)	Specific set-aside for LAC in future yrs	Estimated balance remaining
COVID-19 General Funding	14.1	(5.0)	(3.1)	6.0
COVID-19 Specific Funding	9.0	(4.7)	-	4.3
Total funding	23.1	(9.7)	(3.1)	10.3

*To date the Council has repaid £2.1m of unused grant

1.10 Capital Programme expenditure for the year totalled £75.4m against an approved budget of £84.1m, a net variation of £8.7m. Of the net variation position, £1.4m relates to Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funded projects being delivered by, or in partnership with, others, where the timing of expenditure and delivery is largely outside of the Council's control.

Main variations include:

- Bexhill and Hastings Link Road – Project costs remain for post excavation archaeology, landscaping, and remaining compensation claims. There is a projected overall overspend on the scheme in the region of £2.3m, of which £1.0m has materialised during 2022/23.
- Westfield Lane – Underspend of £0.6m due to budget provisionally held for potential land charge not being required.
- Emergency Active Travel Fund – Underspend of £0.6m where the grant was larger than expected and a number of schemes bid for turned out to not be feasible.
- Managing Back Office System (MBOS) Programme – slippage of £1.8m which reflects delays in build and testing.
- IT&D Digital Strategy – Slippage of £0.7m largely due to staff resource limitations. None of the delayed projects or programmes affects the Council's existing systems or security but may delay new capabilities being introduced.
- Bus Service Improvement Programme – Slippage of £0.7m as awaiting outcome of consultant's reports before commencement of bus priority infrastructure work.
- Visibly Better Roads – Slippage of £0.5m due to the need to redirect footway gangs to repair potholes.
- Other Integrated Transport Schemes – slippage of £0.7m due to delays on a number of Integrated Transport schemes including the Casualty Reduction Programme, Battle Hill, Dropped Kerbs and Uckfield Bus Station.
- Climate Emergency Works – £1.2m profiled to 2023/24 to cover retention payments not yet due and underspends now being allocated to other 2023/24 projects.
- Hastings Bexhill Movement and Access Programme (LEP funded project) – slippage of £1.2m mainly due to elements of the project being delayed until commencement of new highways contract.

There are several other schemes that have smaller variances.

Progress against Council Priorities

Driving sustainable economic growth

1.11 The Council has spent £299m with 898 local suppliers over the past 12 months, 66% of our total spend, exceeding our target of 60%. We continued throughout the year to work with suppliers to maximise the social value delivered by our contracts. Our target for the year was to secure commitments for economic, social and environmental benefits that were of equivalent value of at least 10% of our spend with suppliers. At the end of 2022/23 we had managed to secure commitments that were equal to 57% of our spend with suppliers (Appendix 3).

1.12 As part of our work on supporting our local economy we helped create or safeguard the equivalent of nearly 200 full-time jobs last year. In addition our Trading Standards team provided advice or training to 379 businesses and individuals. We also continued to work with partners to develop ways to attract visitors to the county as well as supporting our local cultural sector to attract funding (Appendix 5).

1.13 The road condition outturns (where a lower figure indicates better road condition), have been published, these figures are only available at one point each year and are based on specialist laser surveys undertaken in Summer 2022. Both the percentage of Principal roads requiring maintenance and the percentage of Non-Principal roads requiring maintenance were slightly above target but in line with the outturn from 2021/22 (5% and 6% compared to targets of 4%). The percentage of Unclassified roads requiring maintenance was 13%, below the target of 14%, and the same outturn as 2021/22. These targets were set as part of a ten-year programme of investment to improve the condition of roads in East Sussex. The winter saw challenging weather for the condition of the roads, with two periods of very wet and cold weather in November/December 2022 and March 2023. By the end of January 2023, we had more than doubled the number of pothole repair gangs from 10 to 23 and extended working hours. Overall, 93.7% of the repairs to potholes were completed within the required timescales in 2022/23. 30,000 potholes were repaired, with 21,600 of these potholes in the road. This is a significant increase on the 24,000 potholes completed in 2021/22. (Appendix 5). At the same meeting that received the Council Monitoring report, a report updating Cabinet on [the condition of the highways](#) was also considered. Cabinet agreed that investment in highways maintenance in 2023/24 be increased by £15.7m. £5m of this additional investment was agreed subject to the County Council agreeing to increase the Capital Programme to provide early improvements and resilience. Such additional provision will be funded by borrowing which will have a revenue implication of £375k per annum.

1.14 A number of highway improvements were completed in 2022/23 using the one-off investment funding agreed by Cabinet in November 2021. Using the extra investment, we have completed an extra 1,117 patch repairs over 735 sites. We have also completed 367 small patch repairs to footways. We installed 1,193 new signs, costing £0.5m, to replace worn out signs. We also completed £0.2m worth of refreshed road marking works (Appendix 5).

1.15 A new highways contract was awarded to Balfour Beatty Living Places in October 2022. The new contract is worth £297m and started in May 2023. Balfour Beatty Living Places will be responsible for maintaining the county's highways network and infrastructure, including roads, pavements, drainage, streetlights, traffic lights and bridges. As part of the procurement process Balfour Beatty Living Places demonstrated how they would help reduce the Council's carbon footprint, provide value for money, and improve social wellbeing in East Sussex (Appendix 5).

1.16 The Government confirmed in quarter 2 that the Council would receive £41m towards our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This allocation was the third highest for shire/rural authorities, and the highest per capita amongst these authorities. The Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes were agreed in quarter 3, and the first tranche of funding has now been received from the Department for Transport. The new Bus Team are analysing the tenders

from bus operators for the enhanced bus services, with the additional services expected to start running in quarter 1 2023/24 (Appendix 5).

1.17 The proportion of young people participating in education, training or employment with training improved in quarter 4, achieving the targets set for the year. The percentage of Looked After Children participating in education, training or employment with training at academic age 17 remained slightly below target, Virtual School, Through Care Team and Youth Employability Service are continuing to provide support to those not participating in education to re-engage (Appendix 4).

1.18 We exceeded our targets for adult education this year. We had 1,166 enrolments across our Family Learning programmes, over twice as many as our target of 500. The refurbishment of our library buildings continued in 2022/23, with works completed at Rye and Newhaven libraries.

Keeping vulnerable people safe

1.19 The increase in demand for Children's Social Care continued throughout 2022/23. There was an 37% increase in the number of referrals to the Single Point of Advice compared with 2020/21. We continue to ensure that there is pace and purpose in our work with Children in Need and that plans are ended where it is safe to do so. The number of open Children in Need (CIN) cases fell from a high of 980 at the end of quarter 2, to 897 by the end of quarter 4. The rate of children with a Child Protection Plan was 64.8 per 10,000 children (691 children) at the end of quarter 4, above the target of 50.3 (536 children). There continues to be robust management oversight of plans, with additional scrutiny of plans being provided by mid-way reviews by the Children Protection Advisor (Appendix 4).

1.20 The rate of LAC at quarter 4 was 62.3 per 10,000 children (664 children). Of the 664 children, 73 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC), and this cohort represented 25% of our new entrants to care in 2022/23. A change in the National Transfer Scheme for UASC means that the authority is now required to look after up to 106 UASC. We are also experiencing an increase in asylum seeking young people, placed in adult hotels in the area requiring age assessment and placements. There are also still delays in the court system which is continuing to impact on how quickly we are able to secure Special Guardianship Orders and adoptions (Appendix 4).

1.21 The percentage of Health and Social Care Connect referrals that were triaged and progressed to required services within 24 hours was 87.3% at year end, below the target of 95.0%. Performance was affected by a combination of an increase in referrals and workforce challenges. A number of vacant posts have now been recruited to and sickness absence has reduced. The percentage of Health and Social Care Connect contacts that were appropriate and effective remained above target (Appendix 2).

1.22 Trading Standards made 530 positive interventions to protect vulnerable people in 2022/23, 418 of which were support sessions and training and 112 were direct interventions. Trading Standards also obtained Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) confiscation orders against convicted individuals totalling nearly £100,000. The POCA ensures that criminals do not profit from their crimes. Trading Standards also received civil compensation of over £160,000 in quarter 4, which is being distributed to nine victims of fraud (Appendix 5).

Helping people help themselves

1.23 The winter period and final quarter of 2022/23 was one of extreme pressure across the country for NHS and care services. Locally our staff worked hard to rapidly use our share of the extra national £500m Social Care Discharge Fund to best effect, helping patients be discharged from hospital and into onward care as fast as possible. This, and other winter rapid improvement work meant that the Council was part of a successful Sussex Integrated Care System bid to be one of six national 'Discharge Frontrunners'. This will trial innovative long-term solutions in 2023/24, to free up hospital beds and make sure patients get the right care at

the right time, which could be rolled out more widely across the NHS and care system if successful (Appendix 2).

1.24 The take up of NHS Health Checks by eligible residents living in the top 20% most deprived areas in the county continues to be below target. The Hastings and St Leonards Primary Care Network started delivering health checks in February and are specifically targeting those living in the most deprived areas (Appendix 2).

1.25 We continued to provide support to Ukrainian guests living in East Sussex as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme and their hosts. Over 400 school places have been allocated to Ukrainian children. We have also provided support with accommodation to over 100 families (Appendix 2).

1.26 We completed four infrastructure schemes to improve road safety in quarter 4. Two of these schemes were in Eastbourne, one in Bodiam and one in Hastings. In total during 2022/23, the highways contractor completed 17 road safety schemes. Several other schemes have been designed, however it was not possible to schedule these within the final works programme before the end of the existing highways contract. These schemes will be carried over for the new highways contractor to implement. As part of our wider work on road safety we delivered 555 'Bikeability' courses to 4,354 individuals at participating schools and the Cycle Centre at Eastbourne Sports Park in 2022/23. We also delivered 252 'Wheels for All' sessions to 3,649 attendees at the Sports Park (Appendix 5).

Making best use of resources now and for the future

1.27 We developed a range of initiatives to help address our significant recruitment and retention challenges as a result of the current labour market conditions and cost of living pressures during 2022/23, most notably the development and launch of our new employer recruitment brand and campaign: 'We Choose East Sussex'. This has resulted in increases in people visiting our online jobs pages and in the proportion of Council vacancies filled. As well as attracting external candidates to the Council, in line with our commitment to supporting and developing our existing managers, two new leadership development initiatives were launched: the 'Ladder to Leadership' programme and Heads of Service masterclass programme (Appendix 3).

1.28 We set a more challenging target for sickness absence for 2022/23 compared to previous years. This target of 9.10 days lost per full-time equivalent employee has not been met, mainly due to an increase in COVID-19 related absences at the beginning of the year. We have seen an increase in mental health absences, a trend also seen in other local authorities. We have developed a range of initiatives to support staff in response (Appendix 3).

1.29 We experienced a number of challenges in our delivery of energy efficiency projects during 2022/23, including delays within supply chains. We completed 21 projects against a target of 22. The data on carbon emissions from Council buildings for 2022/23 will be available in quarter 1 of 2023/24 as carbon data is reported a quarter in arrears. However, data from quarter 3 forecasts a 33% reduction in carbon emissions for year end against the baseline year of 2019/20. This is very close to the target of a 34% reduction from the baseline year and represents an improvement on the previous quarter (Appendix 3).

1.30 The Council has continued to work with a range of partners to develop and deliver carbon reduction and climate change adaptation work in 2022/23. We have assisted 149 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to measure their carbon footprint and awarded energy grants, totalling £250,000, to 49 SMEs to implement carbon reduction measures. We also delivered carbon literacy training to 259 staff and Members and have shared an e-learning climate change module with district and borough councils (Appendix 5).

1.31 Throughout 2022/23 corporate lobbying work has focussed on using our partnerships and networks at the local, regional, and national level to influence policy development in a range of areas, including adult social care charging reforms, the future of children's social care and local authority funding. In quarter 4, we also supported councils across the south east

region to escalate questions and concerns regarding migration and contributed to the development of the new Office for Local Government (Appendix 6).

1.32 The Cabinet, in welcoming the report, recommends the County Council to –

✧ agree, for the reasons set out in the Cabinet report referenced in para 1.13 above, to £5m additional provision being made to the Capital Programme in relation to Highways Maintenance for 2023/24.

2. Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) - State of the County

2.1 The State of the County report is a key part of the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process, our integrated business and financial planning cycle. The report sets out an overview of the current context in preparation for more detailed planning for 2024/25 and beyond. In conjunction with our 2022/23 year end monitoring report, it reflects on our achievements over the last year, the challenges in the year ahead arising from both local and national factors and, in light of this, begins to refine our plans to guide our business planning and budget setting processes.

2.2 This report contains the normal elements included in the State of the County report: the demographic evidence base; the national and local policy outlook; and updates on the Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme. It provides our latest understanding of how we will need to continue to respond to the wide range of policy, demographic and financial drivers which influence the outlook for the Council in the short and longer term.

2.3 Uncertainty continues to define the context within which we are working. The challenging national economic environment, including the increased cost of living, continues to affect our residents, and to generate ongoing cost and resource pressures on the Council itself. The financial outlook for the Council remains unclear, with a further one year financial settlement anticipated for 2024/25 and any significant national reforms to local government funding unlikely before the next general election, which is expected in 2024. Many of our major, demand-led, services are subject to significant national reforms, with associated service and financial risks, and there is a continuing pressing need to work towards addressing the impacts of climate change.

2.4 Within this uncertain national environment, we continue to experience increased demand for services locally, arising from demographic changes, increased need and the longer term impacts of Covid. There are also challenges securing the skilled workforce we need to respond to the pressures we face and to develop our services for the future. Taken together, these national and local factors make future service and financial planning very challenging. In this context, we will need to continue to take action proactively to prepare for the time ahead, to maximise our resilience as an organisation and to best manage growing demand for our services.

2.5 It therefore remains essential that we focus our resources, in partnership with others, in the most effective way to support our priorities and core service provision. The Council spends over £1bn gross each year (in the region of £500m net) on services for the county's residents and businesses. RPPR is the process through which we ensure our financial and other resources are aligned to delivery of our priority outcomes and that we are informed by a clear understanding of our effectiveness. This approach, additional short-term Government support, and many years of careful financial management have enabled us to maintain a secure financial position in recent years, providing service stability during a difficult time for the county. However, the financial outlook in the medium term remains very challenging, with a number of key risks which cannot yet be fully defined, creating an imperative to use the

current window of opportunity to equip the council as best we can to meet the challenges ahead.

2.6 As well as our continued work locally on strategies to manage demand and maximise efficiency, the report sets out the ongoing need for proactive lobbying and communications to help ensure that the Government is aware of the needs of our county and the ongoing and urgent need for a sustainable funding regime that appropriately reflects local need. In particular we will highlight the need for service reforms, particularly those in children's services and adult social care, to be fully and sustainably funded if we are to maintain core services in the future in light of growing demand and stretched resources.

Current Position

2.7 The key role the County Council plays for the residents, communities and businesses of East Sussex continued to be evident over the past year as the county was impacted by a range of national and international factors. The need for our support has been intensified by the pressures on the cost of living, which disproportionately impact on the most vulnerable, and we have continued to work with partners and communities across the county to support those seeking refuge from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and on the wider response to migration. Through our services, employment, purchasing and how we work in partnership with others the Council makes a significant contribution to quality of life for people across our county. Our assessments of the ongoing levels of need arising from recent developments continue to be refined and will influence our plans as we better understand the longer-term implications.

2.8 In developing our medium and longer term plans we will need to have regard to the broader context in which we will be working. The national policy environment continues to develop rapidly, with significant reforms brought forward by Government across a wide range of services. The national and local context includes:

- The challenging and uncertain national economic situation, current high levels of inflation and the increased cost of living, particularly high energy, fuel and food prices. This environment is likely to continue to impact on the demand for our services as well as directly on the costs of providing services.
- The Government's economic and policy agenda, in particular the priorities outlined by the Prime Minister on the NHS, migration, economic growth and stabilising the economy, as well as the ongoing Levelling Up agenda and changes to arrangements for driving economic growth locally.
- Specific uncertainty over the future of local government funding. A planned funding review, covering the formula on which funding allocations to individual local authorities are based, now appears to be deferred beyond the next general election, and a further one year financial settlement is expected for 2024/25. In addition, major national reforms to Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Services (see below) carry considerable financial risks for local authorities.
- Challenges in the labour market, including the impact of significant workforce shortages in key sectors on our ability to recruit and retain staff, ongoing pay negotiations and the potential for industrial action, coupled with the need for our workforce to adapt to service reforms. Alongside this, rapidly developing advances in technology present potential new opportunities to support capacity and efficiency.
- The impact of Government reviews and reforms of public services – whilst major reforms to ASC charging (reported at State of the County 2022) have been postponed until 2025, other national reforms are being progressed, particularly in Children's Services. We are also continuing to respond to a range of significant national and local

developments and pressures in health and social care and taking forward a range of work to manage demand and improve outcomes.

- The growing impact of climate change, the national and local commitments to achieve carbon neutrality, the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, and the introduction of a range of new measures through the Environment Act including new duties in relation to food waste.
- Significant national policy developments related to planning, infrastructure, and transport and, locally, the mobilisation of our new highways contract and additional investment in highways, and taking forward our Bus Services Improvement Plan and refresh of our Local Transport Plan.
- The increasing need to respond to migration in light of global conflicts, increased numbers of people seeking asylum, including unaccompanied children, and new Government policy on immigration.
- Further development of positive work with our public and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) partners on financial inclusion and building community wellbeing and resilience, in response to the increased need in our communities and as part of our ongoing work to help people help themselves.
- The evolving nature and importance of our partnerships in harnessing the collective resources and assets available within the county for the benefit of our communities.

2.9 The local and national policy outlook at Appendix 9 sets out the latest thinking on these and other current issues, although plans will continue to develop over the summer as more information emerges.

2.4 Our relatively stable financial position for 2023/24 presents an opportunity to intensify our ongoing work to maximise organisational resilience, make best use of our resources, and to equip our services for future demands, given the significant challenges ahead. As part of this we will seek out further opportunities to benefit from advances in new technology, building on work already undertaken to introduce new digital and artificial intelligence approaches and systems which benefit both service delivery and capacity. For example, our 'digital by default' approach in Adult Social Care and the development of our universal digital offer in Children's Services. We will continue to assess our future workforce requirements and orient our recruitment, retention and organisational development strategies towards ensuring we have the diverse and skilled staff we will need. Work to rationalise and adapt our office estate in line with post-Covid needs will run alongside this. Our long-standing focus on demand management and preventative approaches will continue, supporting people and communities to be independent wherever possible, including through the introduction of Family Safeguarding, the further integration of community health and care services, and the development of community networks to bolster and link up existing local support. Proposed additional investment in the resilience of the roads which support the local economy and our communities is set out elsewhere on this agenda.

2.5 As part of our RPPR planning we will systematically consider any further actions which may reduce the need for support in the future or improve our ability to respond to new challenges. As always, our approach will be evidence-based, draw on best practice and use data and benchmarking to identify where we can improve and to ensure value for money.

2.6 This ongoing discipline will ensure the council is as resilient as possible for the future. However, fundamentally there remains a significant gap between the income we currently expect to receive in the coming years and the costs of providing core services, with significant additional risk arising from service reforms. Without further Government support or sustainable

reform of local government finances we will not have the funding we need for the future. Further detail on the financial outlook is provided at paragraph 2.14.

2.7 In all our activities, and in planning for the future, the County Council continues to work to our guiding principles that:

- We are effective stewards of public money and deliver good value for money through strong integrated business planning;
- Our activities are transparent and we can be held to account;
- We operate as One Council and focus on agreed priority outcomes;
- We prioritise the investment available for front line service delivery and maximise the resources available, including work to secure sustainable national funding and partnerships with other organisations;
- We carry out all we do professionally and competently;
- We remain ambitious, optimistic and realistic about what can be achieved; and
- We strive to be a good employer and partner.

Demographic and Demand Changes and Financial Background

2.8 Appendix 8 sets out the key factors affecting the county in relation to demography, housing, deprivation, health, the environment and economy, and the impact these are having on demand for our services. Some challenges are shared by many of our residents, whilst some areas and communities are more impacted than others by particular issues. The main issues driving demand are:

- **Older People** - East Sussex remains ahead of the national ageing population trend. Proportionately we have high numbers of over 65s and over 85s which has an impact on the demand for services and the Council's finances. Rother has the second highest percentage of the population aged 65 years and over in the country.
- **Children and Young People** – we continue to see higher levels of demand for children's social care and more complex cases which together have resulted in a higher number of child protection cases. The number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continues to increase.
- **Asylum seekers and refugees** – there has been a recent increase in the rate of people receiving asylum support within the county, particularly in our coastal communities. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children made up a quarter of those children who began to be looked after last year. The county also has a high number of Ukrainians who continue to be supported through our Homes for Ukraine programme, many of whom are living in Wealden.
- **Economy** - employment rates have increased over the last year as the economy recovers from the pandemic. However, the challenges that existed pre-pandemic relating to productivity and average wages for those employed within the county remain. The increases in utilities costs over the last year and the continued increased cost of living is expected to continue to impact on the growth of our economy.
- **Climate change** – CO2 emissions were falling in all sectors in East Sussex except transport before the pandemic. Although we had the lowest emissions of carbon dioxide per person of all the county council areas in England, further reductions will be needed.

Council Priority Outcomes

2.9 The Council's business and financial planning is underpinned by our four priority outcomes, which provide a clear focus for decisions about spending and savings and direct activity across the Council.

2.10 The current four priority outcomes are:

- Driving sustainable economic growth;
- Keeping vulnerable people safe;
- Helping people help themselves; and
- Making best use of resources now and for the future.

The priority outcome that the Council makes the “best use of resources now and for the future” is a test that is applied to all activities to ensure sustainability of our resources, both in terms of money and environmental assets. It ensures that the future impact of the choices we make about using resources is actively considered across all that we do, as well as the here and now.

2.11 The priority outcomes, and their subsidiary delivery outcomes, were reviewed and updated during 2022/23 with some amendments made to delivery outcomes to ensure they reflected the post-Covid environment. Recognising our continually evolving operating context, some specific further amendments to delivery outcomes are now proposed to ensure the priorities we are working to deliver, and the way we measure the performance of our activities and services, remain appropriate.

2.12 The current priority and delivery outcomes are attached at Appendix 10 (section a) and the following changes are proposed to delivery outcomes:

Helping people help themselves

Two changes are proposed to reflect the increasing importance of mutual support in people's networks and communities and work the Council is undertaking with partners to facilitate this:

- The most vulnerable get the support they need to maintain their independence, **supported by their social networks**, and this is provided at or as close to home as possible
- Through working well with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, individuals, families and communities are supported ~~to be independent and~~ to thrive.

Making best use of resources now and for the future

One change is proposed to reflect the increasing importance of planning for future workforce needs:

Delete:

- We are an employer of choice and support our staff to achieve and develop

To be replaced with:

- **We are an employer of choice and our staff are supported to achieve and develop, ensuring we have the workforce we need to deliver services both now and in the future.**

The proposed updated delivery outcomes, including the above amendments, are also shown at Appendix 10 (section b).

2.13 Cabinet reviewed the current priority and delivery outcomes and agreed them as the basis for future business and financial planning, subject to the amendments outlined in paragraph 2.12 above.

Medium Term Financial Plan

2.14 When the 2023/24 balanced budget was approved by Full Council on 7 February 2023, the deficit on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2025/26 was £40.672m. Updating the MTFP for normal factors (such as the latest inflation rates and an additional year), the position would have been a deficit budget position by 2026/27 of £55.499m. The MTFP position does not account for the impact of Adult Social Care reform, and if grant funding for social care, currently announced for two years, continues at the same level after 2024/25, the deficit would reduce by £28.2m:

Medium Term Financial Plan	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m
Annual Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	4.024	41.811	9.664
Total Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	4.024	45.835	55.499

2.15 The current economic climate has meant the rate of inflation remains at levels not seen for several decades, which has led to an unprecedented level of financial uncertainty. At a national level, the Government funding that ESCC will receive between 2024/25 – 2026/27 is yet to be confirmed. While the provisional local government settlement in December 2022 included some indicative figures for two years of funding – notably for social care – the Local Government Financial Settlement was only a one-year settlement for 2023/24. We therefore await the provisional settlement for 2024/25, which will be in the late autumn of 2023.

2.16 To address pressures in the social care system, the Government announced grant funding as part of the Autumn Statement 2022 to support social care and hospital discharge, together with the continuation of the Services Grant and the delayed rollout of Adult Social Care charging reform from October 2023 to October 2025. While this will enable us to maintain a degree of financial stability for 2023/24, demand and costs will continue to grow, and there will be additional expectations arising from national reforms, bringing new and sustained financial and service pressures which will impact on our MTFP and ability to meet needs.

2.17 In 2022/23 Children's Services overspent against budget by £11.477m, with the largest pressures seen in Early Help and Social Care and Home to School Transport. Containing costs in Children's Services continues to be a significant challenge across the country, against the background of increased demand and complexity of needs emerging from the pandemic and acute supply side shortages. The department has developed a sustainability plan to improve outcomes for children, while reducing costs to the council. The MTFP contains significant increased investment in support of this plan, while the Senior Leadership Team continues to explore further mitigations and opportunities to save costs where possible.

2.18 The delay to the Fairer Funding Review has meant greater uncertainty about the shape of any long-term sustainable settlement for local authorities.

2.19 With all this uncertainty, it is not possible to present a draft MTFP to 2026/27. It is planned to work through the details required over the summer as more information becomes available and factor in the budget requirements for services. After this work, modelling will provide a set of balanced budget scenarios considering the local and national position that presents itself.

Capital Programme

2.20 The approved programme has now been updated to reflect the 2022/23 outturn and other approved variations, revising the gross programme down to £651.6m to 2032/33. The details are set out in Appendix 11, together with the revised programme.

2.21 The 10 year capital programme to 2032/33 and 20 year Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2043/44 will be updated as part of the RPPR process over the autumn to add a year and to include consideration of the impact and management of inflation and supply chain issues, alongside any updates relating to Government funding and the risk metrics being developed as well as the procurement of the highways contract and other investment basic need.

Lobbying and Communications

2.22 Our strong local foundation of efficient and effective service delivery and careful financial management, coupled with additional short-term Government funding, has enabled us to provide another year of relative stability. We will continue to use this opportunity to develop our resilience and preparedness for challenges ahead and to ensure we are taking all possible steps to mitigate the increases in demand we expect to see in future years.

2.23 However, the medium term outlook remains highly challenging. We face a significant financial gap, the undefined impact of national reforms in major service areas and a lack of clarity on long-term funding arrangements. There are significant risks and uncertainties arising particularly from social care and SEND reforms, which makes planning for the future difficult. In the context of this ongoing uncertainty in our position, coupled with wider challenges in the economy and their impacts on our residents, our lobbying will continue to call for certainty of future funding for local government, and funding that is appropriately reflective of local need and that fully reflects the impact of reforms. This will be paramount to ensuring we secure adequate resource to deliver what will be required to support East Sussex residents, communities and businesses with the core services they need, including opportunities to continue positive preventative work that could most effectively manage future demand for services.

2.24 We will continue to work with local MPs and local, regional and national partners to make this case.

Next Steps

2.25 Work will continue over the summer to refine our understanding of the medium term impacts on our services of national reforms, the evolving economic context, changing demand for services and the financial resources that will be available to us in the coming years. We will also consider any further steps we can take to support our future capacity. We will use our RPPR process to plan for the future as best we can in the context of a likely one year financial settlement once again.

2.26 We will report back to Members in the autumn with an updated assessment of our service demand and funding expectations to inform more detailed business and budget planning for 2024/25 and beyond.

2.27 Members will continue to be consulted on plans as they are developed through Cabinet, County Council, Scrutiny Committees, Whole Council Forums and specific engagement sessions throughout the 2023/24 Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process.

27 June 2023

KEITH GLAZIER
(Chair)

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REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee met on 27 June 2023. Attendances:

Councillor Glazier (Chair)
Councillors Bennett, Bowdler, Collier, Tutt and Webb

1. Change in Committee Membership: Corporate Parenting Panel

1.1 In May 2023, Councillor Adeniji was appointed to the Corporate Parenting Panel. Councillor Adeniji has indicated that he wishes to stand down from the Panel and the Conservative Group has indicated that they wish Cllr Di Cara to take his place.

1.2 The Corporate Parenting Panel monitors and ensures the well-being of children who are looked after by the Council (in children's homes or as fostered children).

1.3 The Committee recommends the County Council to:

- ☆ appoint Councillor di Cara to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

2. Appointments to Committees: Standards Committee and Planning Committee

2.1 In May 2023, the County Council agreed the allocation to political and independent groups places on and membership of committees and panels.

2.2 Councillor Barry Taylor was appointed to places allocated to the Conservatives on the Planning Committee and Standards Committee and was also appointed to be the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.

2.3 Following the sad news of Councillor Taylor's death, it is necessary to appoint to the vacant seats on those Committees in accordance with the wishes of the political group to which they have been allocated.

2.4 Separate to this, Council is also asked to agree the appointment to the role of Vice Chair on the Planning Committee.

2.5 The Committee recommends the County Council to:

- ☆ appoint Councillor Lunn to the vacant seats on the Planning and Standards Committees and to be the Vice Chair of Planning Committee.

27 June 2023

KEITH GLAZIER
(Chair)

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REPORT OF THE LEAD MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

The Lead Member for Transport and Environment met on 5 and 26 June 2023. Attendances:-

Councillor Claire Dowling (Lead Member)

Councillors Abul Azad (1), Godfrey Daniel (1), Johnny Denis (2), Ian Hollidge (2), Carolyn Lambert (1), James MacCleary (1), Wendy Maples (2), Stephen Shing (1) and Georgia Taylor (2).

1. Notice of Motion – Bishopstone Junction, Seaford

1.1 The following Notice of Motion has been submitted by Councillor Lambert and Councillor MacCleary:

On 15 February 2021, Cllr Darren Grover and Cllr Carolyn Lambert submitted a Notice of Motion (NOM) to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment. The NOM called attention to two accidents in two days that closed the A259 in Seaford, the biggest town in Lewes District.

The NOM requested the Cabinet to undertake a proper survey of the whole town, not just the Buckle by-pass, with particular focus on all the junctions with the A259, to identify the areas of greatest risk to both car users, cyclists and pedestrians, and to come up with some concrete proposals to enhance road safety. The NOM recognised that the County Council was already undertaking a review of the A259 from Seaford to Brighton in terms of congestion and argued that the safety of both car users, pedestrians and cyclists should form part of that study. The Cabinet was asked to:

- impose lower speed limits on the approaches to Seaford and to work with partners to ensure these are enforced;*
- provide safe pedestrian crossings at key points of the A259 including at the Bishopstone junctions.*

These requests were refused on the grounds that:

- a study was already being carried out;*
- reducing the speed limit would require a significant level of engineering work;*
- the request for a pedestrian crossing at Bishopstone needed to be considered holistically as part of the study and in any event, funding was not available.*

At the County Council meeting of 7 February 2023, Cllr Carolyn Lambert submitted a further written question to the Lead Member, pointing out that the situation with the A259 was now critical and that Seaford, in particular, was suffering. The A259 continues to be regularly gridlocked and there have been further serious accidents. The outcome of the study has been delayed and any practical proposals are still awaited leaving residents still regularly facing dangers and delays on this difficult road.

Given the further delay to the study, and the length of time residents have been waiting for improvements, this NOM calls on Cabinet to:

- Provide temporary traffic lights at the Bishopstone junction to assess the effectiveness of this as a traffic management solution. The County Council is reminded that, despite initial resistance from the local authority, temporary traffic lights have worked well at Exceat and have been well received by residents;*

- *Seek to provide a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists over the A259 at Bishopstone by bidding for funding for a footbridge using the £750k still in the County Council's Active Travel Fund.*

1.2 In line with County Council practice, the matter was referred by the Chairman to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment for consideration to provide information and inform debate on the Motion.

1.3 The A259 is a primary coastal route that runs between the County boundary at Telscombe Cliffs and Pevensey Roundabout where it becomes trunk road and part of the Strategic Road Network. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) flow on the section between Newhaven and Seaford is approximately 25,950 vehicles per day (2019 figures).

1.4 The road is multi-functional and accommodates local intra-urban journeys along the sections in Eastbourne and through the coastal towns of Seaford, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe Cliffs as well as longer distance inter urban journeys between these settlements. The inconsistent quality of the A27 corridor, particularly between Lewes and Polegate, means that traffic uses the A259 coastal corridor as an alternative route.

1.5 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) works closely with partners and stakeholders to improve road safety across East Sussex. In addition, each year the County Council develops and implements numerous local transport improvements funded through its capital programme of local transport improvements. In 2022/23 total funding of £11,776m was allocated (a combination of funding from the County Council, Local Growth Fund secured via the South East Enterprise Partnership and development contributions) which delivered over 50 schemes and studies across the county which include a number of road safety and active travel improvements.

1.6 In December 2018, the A259 was identified as part of the Government's Major Road Network (MRN) of economically important local authority maintained A class roads. The MRN sits between the Strategic Road Network, managed by National Highways (formerly Highways England), and the local network managed by the County Council as highway authority.

1.7 In establishing the MRN, Government made funding of between £20m and £50m available for MRN schemes through the National Roads Fund, with an expectation of a minimum 15% local contribution. Department for Transport (DfT) guidance identifies the types of schemes that are eligible for MRN funding include packages of improvements which may include elements of reducing congestion, supporting economic growth and rebalancing, supporting housing delivery, supporting all road users and supporting the Strategic Road Network.

1.8 In 2019, Transport for the South East (TfSE) was asked to coordinate with its constituent local transport authorities on potential MRN schemes across their geography. TfSE assessed all the schemes put forward against the MRN criteria as set out by DfT, as well as TfSE's strategic objectives for the region which focus on sustainable economic growth, improved quality of life and the environment. Following this assessment TfSE identified the A259 South Coast Road Corridor between Pevensey and Brighton & Hove as one of their ten priority MRN schemes for submission to Government.

1.9 Following the adoption of their Transport Strategy in July 2020, TfSE undertook their Outer Orbital Corridor Study which included the A259. The study considered strategic and regional significant interventions that could be delivered to support the delivery of the Transport Strategy vision and objectives by 2050. The outcomes of the Outer Orbital Study informed the content of TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan which was endorsed by the County Council at its Cabinet meeting on 7 March 2023.

1.10 In addition, the County Council commissioned an A259 MRN South Coast Road corridor study in 2021 focussed on the corridor between Eastbourne and Brighton. Complementing the work undertaken by TfSE, the A259 corridor study is multi-modal and uses an appropriate evidence base to seek to identify localised interventions for public transport, improvements to enable people to cycle or walk for all or part of their journeys, alongside localised road and junction capacity

improvements and the potential use of smart technology along and around the hinterland of this corridor. The outcomes arising from the study have already been used to help inform and support the successful bid for Government funding through the County Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to deliver bus priority measures on the A259 corridor.

1.11 The outcomes of the A259 corridor study and the TfSE SIP are informing the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to Government to make the case for MRN funding. Work on the study and the SOBC is expected to be completed in Summer 2023.

1.12 Subject to the approval of the SOBC by Government, further work will be required to progress to the Outline Business Case and then Final Business Case stages which can take up to a further two to three years to complete. Therefore, it is expected it will be 2025/26 at the earliest before any MRN funding would be available for delivering the preferred package of interventions. In addition, a local contribution of at least 15% would need to be provided as part of any funding submission to Government.

1.13 The County Council has a finite amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and needs to ensure that resources are targeted towards schemes which will be of greatest benefit to local communities. All requested road safety and local transport improvements, including requests to change the speed limits are assessed against the established Local Transport Plan (LTP). The content of the capital programme is considered by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment on an annual basis.

1.14 Local authorities have a statutory duty to assess and review crashes involving vehicles on the roads within their area and take such measures as appropriate to prevent such crashes. This informs an annual road safety assessment programme of identified areas of concern and where further investigation may be required. Sites are then treated on a priority basis within the funding available.

1.15 Each year the Road Safety Team identify sites that have the most crashes that result in injury and put in place a programme of works to reduce the number of casualties on these roads. East Sussex define a crash site as one where there have been four or more crashes in a three-year period. In 2022 (looking at the period between 01/01/2020 and 31/12/2022) 49 sites were identified. The A259 at its junctions with Marine Parade and Bishopstone Road were not identified and are therefore not a priority for the Road Safety Team. The A259 junction with Hill Rise has been identified and is ranked as number 47 of the 49 sites. An assessment of this site and the identified crashes will be carried out in the 2023/24 financial year.

1.16 In response to previous concerns raised about road safety and community severance at the Bishopstone Road, Marine Parade and Hill Rise junctions with the A259, a feasibility study was commissioned in 2018/19 to consider potential improvements. These options included the introduction of traffic signals and standard roundabouts at the Bishopstone Road, Marine Parade and Hill Rise junctions as well as a gyratory incorporating the Marine Parade and Hill Rise junctions.

1.17 The findings of the junction study showed that, apart from the introduction of a gyratory, it would not be possible to formalise the current situation without creating significant and potentially unacceptable delays on the A259. However, the introduction of a gyratory would potentially require land acquisition and be prohibitively expensive to implement. Consequently, the outcomes of the Bishopstone junction study have been fed into the wider A259 South Coast Road corridor study for further consideration.

1.18 As part of the current A259 MRN study, the A259/Hill Rise junction to A259/Bishopstone Road junction area have been considered as part of the potential package of schemes to be put forward for funding as part of the SOBC. To support this work, fixed signalisation of the A259/Hill Rise/Marine Parade junction was initially tested using local junction modelling software. The modelling demonstrated that the addition of traffic signals at the junction, whilst assisting the side road movements, resulted in significant and a likely unacceptable length of vehicle queues occurring along the A259. This reaffirms the modelling outcomes from the previous Bishopstone junction study.

1.19 The A259 MRN corridor study and the County Council's BSIP are looking at alternative options to encourage active travel and reduce congestion on the A259. As the A259 is a high priority bus corridor, the impact on bus operators and passenger journeys are being taken into account in relation to any transport interventions taking place on this corridor. Delays on the A259, as a result of introducing traffic signals at this junction, would have a detrimental impact on bus journey times where significant BSIP investment is planned on bus priority measures to improve overall reliability on journeys using the high frequency bus service serving Telscombe, Peacehaven, Newhaven, Seaford and Eastbourne.

1.20 As the Notice of Motion highlights, temporary traffic lights have been implemented at Exceat Bridge. However, the operation at this site is predominantly two-way traffic but also allows for exit movements out of The Cuckmere Inn access/egress at the western end of Exceat Bridge.

1.21 The simple systems that temporary traffic signals run on with set run time for traffic movements on each arm mean that they are not able to operate in the same, more dynamic and complex way that permanent traffic signal systems can. As highlighted above, the modelling assessment undertaken both as part of the Bishopstone junction study and more recently as part of the A259 study has identified that the introduction of permanent traffic signals at this junction would create significant delay and likely unacceptable queues on the A259 corridor.

1.22 Given that temporary traffic signals would run more slowly and be less efficient than permanent signal systems, their introduction at this location would result even greater delay and queuing on the A259 corridor. In addition, running temporary traffic signals at all three junctions (Bishopstone Road, Marine Parade and Hill Rise Junction) on the A259, would be difficult to implement, and add further to the inefficiency of movements on the network particularly on the A259 arms where the efficient and expedient movement of traffic is a priority.

1.23 It is recognised that the A259 creates a barrier for pedestrian and cycle movements. However, the available data on pedestrian and cycle numbers and road safety data suggests that there is currently low demand and priority for pedestrian and cycle crossing in the area.

1.24 The Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP) incorporates the A259 as part of the East West corridor route between Seaford and Newhaven. The plan includes recommendations for crossing points along the route and improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in the Bishopstone Area. However, the recommendations are not prioritised in the LCWIP, are at concept level and are unfunded.

1.25 When considering the practicalities of providing a footbridge as a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists, there are a number of factors to take into consideration. In order for the footbridge to be usable for both pedestrians and cyclists, it would need to be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. This would mean that ramps would need to be provided at the required gradients and, depending on the design, potential return areas at the end of each ramp in order to achieve appropriate height over the road. Because of the potential scale of the structure over the A259, there may be a need to purchase third party land outside the highway boundary to accommodate a footbridge and its footings. In addition, any bridge would be on the edge of South Downs National Park, and the Park Authority would need to be consulted to ensure that any design and its visual impact was in keeping with the adjacent landscape and setting. Finally, the A259 is an abnormal load route given its proximity to Newhaven Port therefore any bridge would also need to be high enough to accommodate any abnormal vehicles.

1.26 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been conducted and is found at Appendix 1.

1.27 In relation to the costs of providing a footbridge, based on estimates taken from similar bridges, this would be between £3-6 million.

1.28 The Notice of Motion also asks that the £750,000 underspend from the Active Travel Fund be allocated to deliver the footbridge over the A259. The County Council submitted a project change request to Active Travel England, who are now administering active travel funding on behalf of the Department for Transport, in December 2021 requesting the reallocation of this funding to

develop and deliver the three school streets schemes in Lewes, Sidley and Eastbourne. ESCC has received an in-principle approval from Active Travel England to use this underspend on developing and delivery the school streets projects and therefore it is not available to be reallocated to fund a footbridge at Bishopstone.

Conclusion

1.29 The Notice of Motion requests that temporary traffic signals are introduced at the Bishopstone junction to assess their effectiveness as a traffic management solution, and that a bid be submitted for the introduction of a footbridge over the A259 for pedestrians and cyclists near the Bishopstone junction, which is part-funded using the £750,000 Active Travel Fund underspend. Previous traffic modelling to assess the benefits and impacts of introducing traffic signals at the junctions in Bishopstone demonstrates that whilst signalisation would benefit movements from side roads, it would generate extensive queuing and potentially unacceptable delays on the A259. The introduction of a footbridge in this location is seen as not affordable or practicable, but that signalised surface crossing options, being considered as part of the A259 MRN study are more likely to demonstrate value for money. Moreover the £750,000 Active Travel Fund underspend as highlighted in section 1.25 of this report has subsequently been reallocated to develop and deliver three school street schemes in the county. It is therefore recommended that both elements of the Notice of Motion are not supported.

1.30 The Lead Member for Transport and Environment recommends the County Council to:

✧ (1) reject the Motion for the reasons set out in the report.

2. Notice of Motion to review and update policy PS05/02 Local Speed Limits

2.1 The following Notice of Motion has been submitted by Councillor Denis and Councillor Georgia Taylor:

Policy PS05/02 sets out the Council's policy on local speed limits. It claims to be in line with Government best practice guidance and legislation on road safety. (Road Traffic Regulation Act, and more recently the Department of Transport Circular Roads 01/2013.)

The Policy sets out speed limits in section 5 of this policy with average speed limits and it states that if average speeds are above that level then, subject to "available resources", where injury or crashes at a site justify the necessary expenditure, engineering measures will be implemented first and, if this is not possible, then a lowering of the speed limit may be introduced.

This policy oversimplifies an approach to road safety and speed limits that is not consistent with the guidance outlined in the Department of Transport Circular Road 01/2013.

The above Circular sets out that "Local traffic authorities are responsible for determining speed limits on the local road network".

It continues: "The underlying aim should be to achieve a 'safe' distribution of speeds. The key factors that should be taken into account in any decisions on local speed limits are:

- *history of collisions*
- *road geometry and engineering*
- *road function*
- *composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users)*
- *existing traffic speeds*
- *road environment*

While these factors need to be considered for all road types, they may be weighted differently in urban or rural areas. The impact on community and environmental outcomes should also be considered” [my emphasis].

The following parts of the policy PS05/02 are not consistent with national Circular 01/2013: specifically:

- *Paragraph 5. Speed limit table is an over simplification of a complex assessment and as such is only one part of the overall process. Using this table in this way means that the views and experiences of residents are not being taken into account when assessing speed limits as set out in the Circular. (ref 23 Circular 01/2013)*
- *Paragraph 6. Refers to speed limits being investigated will be subject to “available resources”. The Circular outlines a cost benefit analysis that includes a wide range of non monetary benefits that have to be considered including quality of life factors and fear of speeds [my emphasis]. (ref: 31 Circular 01/2013)*
- *Paragraph 7a: casualty reduction: The Circular further sets out that the assessment is not simply about casualties on a road or killed or seriously injured, but is a more complex process of assessment that has to include the experience of other road users, pedestrians, cyclists, horses and riders [my emphasis] (ref 32 Circular 01/2013)*
- *Paragraph 7c: The self enforcing requirements of PS05/02 is not a defacto requirement. It is a factor to consider and as such the danger is that policy is used to uphold existing speed limits rather than consider why compliance might be an issue and how to address compliance. (ref 26 Circular 01/2013).*
- *Appendix A outlines an approach to speed limit criteria that is equally outwith of the national guidance, which requires local traffic authorities to perform an assessment that includes listening to local residents, and introduce 20mph speed limits in towns AND villages, “particularly where the streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles, there is community support and the characteristics of the street are suitable” (ref 84 Circular 01/2013).*

Such priorities are given further emphasis in the January 2022 revisions to the Highway Code, in particular, the clear notation on the ‘Hierarchy of Road Users’, which “places those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy. ... [These are] pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists, with children, older adults and disabled people being more at risk.”

This Council agrees:

- a) To request the Lead Member for Transport to demonstrate that PS05/02 and its operational implementation is fully in line with the Circular 01/2013 with a full audit of speed limit assessments completed in the last 2 years.*
- b) To request that the Lead Member shares the results of this audit with Full Council within two months.*
- c) That PS05/02 be reviewed within the next two months and be presented to Full Council to ensure it is fully in line with all aspects of Circular 01/2013*
- d) That community and resident experience, quality of life and fear of speeds are included as explicit criteria in PS05/02 as clearly indicated in Circular 01/2013.*

2.2 In line with County Council practice, the matter was referred by the Chairman to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment for consideration to provide information and inform debate on the Motion. A copy of the Notice of Motion is included as Appendix 2 to this report.

2.3 Adopted Policy PS05/02 Local Speed Limits (included as Appendix 3 to this report) was approved by the Lead Member for Communities and Safety on 16 March 2018. It is based on a range of national guidance issued by The Department for Transport (including Circular 01/2013 that provides guidance to local authorities for assessing and setting speed limits), best practice, and is informed by the Council’s experience of achieving effective speed limits. Circular 01/2013 is government guidance and whilst it provides high level advice about what should be considered when setting effective speed limits, it is not definitive.

2.4 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is committed to working with all stakeholders to improve road safety across East Sussex, including our partners on the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.

Setting effective speed limits

2.5 The principal aim in determining appropriate speed limits is to provide a consistent message between the speed limit and what the road looks like, and for changes in the limit to be reflective of changes in the road layout and characteristics.

2.6 The use of average speeds to help define the level of a new speed limit recognises that most road users drive at a speed that they consider to be safe and appropriate for the road characteristics. A limit should therefore seek to reinforce what an average driver sees as the safest speed for the environment, thereby achieving the highest level of compliance and a 'safe distribution' of vehicle speeds.

2.7 The 'Key points' section to Circular 01/2013 includes that 'speed limits should be evidenced, self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should encourage self-compliance'.

2.8 It also states that the guidance should also 'be used as the basis for assessments of local speed limits, for developing route management strategies and for developing the speed management strategies which can be included in Local Transport Plans'.

2.9 National and international studies have indicated that reducing a speed limit with traffic signs and road markings alone only reduces the average speed of traffic by about one or two mph at most, and only then when a driver can readily see the reason for the lower limit. This replicates the Council's own findings from before and after studies when lower speed limits have been introduced.

2.10 This is reflected in the guidance which states 'unless a speed limit is set with support from the local community, the police and other local services, with supporting education, and with consideration of whether engineering measures are necessary to reduce speeds; or if it is set unrealistically low for the particular road function and condition, it may be ineffective and drivers may not comply with the speed limit'. In addition, evidence indicates that where signed only speed limits are introduced which do not match the average speed of traffic, there can be increased overtaking and conflict between drivers, which increases the likelihood of collisions.

2.11 Sussex Police have confirmed that they will not support any lower speed limits that cannot demonstrate that they will be self-enforcing and that they will not provide any additional enforcement over that which would have been provided prior to the introduction of any lower limit.

2.12 It is therefore important that any consideration relating to a lower speed limit must consider the prevailing conditions and existing average speed of traffic, as this will demonstrate what is likely to be an effective speed limit. If a lower speed limit is deemed desirable but is not reflected in the road's characteristics or average speeds, then traffic management or engineering measures will be required to ensure that the imposed limit is effective.

Review of relevant national guidance

2.13 Following receipt of the Notice of Motion, a review was undertaken of the relevant national guidance issued by The Department for Transport (including Circular 01/2013 and the January 2022 revisions to the Highway Code) and this concluded that adopted Policy PS05/02 continues to reflect national guidance and best practice.

Wider policy and operational context

2.14 It is important to clarify that the purpose of Local Speed Limit Policy PS05/02 is to clearly set out the key criteria required to ensure that speed limits are effective and should not be considered in isolation when considering how ESCC assesses and prioritises road safety concerns

including requests for lower speed limits. It is important to consider the wider policy and operational context, including the County Council's Local Transport Plan, and the processes and criteria followed when setting the annual Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements, the Annual Road Safety, Community Focused Road Safety and the Speed Management Programmes.

Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements

2.15 Each year the County Council develops and implements numerous local transport improvements funded through its capital programme of local transport improvements. In 2022/23 total funding of £11,776m was allocated (a combination of funding from the County Council, Local Growth Fund secured via the South East Enterprise Partnership and development contributions) which delivered over 50 schemes and studies across the county which include a number of road safety and active travel improvements.

2.16 All requested road safety and local transport improvements, including requests to change the speed limits are assessed against the established Local Transport Plan (LTP). The content of the capital programme is considered by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment on an annual basis. Key objectives against which requests are assessed include the extent to which it will:

- Improve the economy
- Improve public safety and health
- Tackle climate change
- Improve accessibility to employment, education, health facilities and other services
- Improve quality of life

2.17 A review of ESCC's Local Transport Plan commenced in Summer 2022. The Government's guidance on developing Local Transport Plans is due imminently and it is expected to indicate the need to focus on decarbonising transport as well as integrating the Government Levelling Up, Bus Back Better and Gear Change strategies into the Council's transport strategy for the county. A key element of the development of the new LTP has been to engage with members, stakeholders, local communities and businesses early and throughout the process to actively seek their views and comments. This was initially through public and stakeholder consultation on issues, opportunities and priorities in autumn 2022 and at present via a series of workshops on the vision, objectives, preferred strategy and potential interventions to deliver the strategy. A LTP Reference Group comprising members of the Place Scrutiny Committee and chaired by Councillor Redstone has been established to provide Member input and challenge throughout the LTP's development.

2.18 Consultation on the draft LTP strategy, which will include an updated scheme assessment process, will be undertaken in autumn 2023 with final adoption of the strategy programmed for early 2024.

Annual Road Safety Programme

2.19 All road safety concerns that are raised by Members and residents are assessed by a member of the Road Safety Team and where appropriate improvements introduced. In addition, annually the Road Safety Team identifies sites that have the most personal injury crashes (PIC's) and put in place a programme of works to help reduce the number of casualties on these roads. As part of this year's Road Safety Programme, 49 locations have been identified where four or more PIC's have occurred in the three-year assessment period of 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2022.

Community Focused Road Safety Schemes

2.20 The Council receive many requests for small scale road safety improvements to be made, including changes to speed limits, which do not meet the requirements to be considered as part of the Annual Road Safety Programme. To address these concerns £750,000 has been allocated from the Community Match underspend to deliver community focused road safety interventions. Selected schemes address identified road safety concerns and are identified by considering a range of issues and specific site characteristics, weighted to define their relative priority. Current funding will enable a three-year programme of works to be delivered. Approval has also been given for any future underspends from the Community Match allocation to be allocated to support further Community Focused Schemes to be delivered.

Community Match Initiative

2.21 Where requests from Members or residents do not meet the criteria for inclusion in the above Programmes, the Community Match Initiative provides residents with the opportunity to take forward schemes to lower the speed limit where appropriate when these are funded locally. Where possible, the Council will support and assist local communities and town/parish councils to implement such schemes, if they are funded externally, or match funded through Community Match.

Notice of Motion

2.22 The Notice of Motion highlights extracts from Circular 01/2013. The Road Safety Team have regard to and consider the guidance as a whole during their assessment of sites for potential inclusion within the annual Road Safety Programme, the Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements, the Community Focused Road Safety Programme and will do so when considering schemes for the Speed Management Programme. Appendix 4 sets out the sections of guidance referred to in the Notice of Motion and provides further clarification on when the Road Safety team consider these.

2.23 In order to undertake the assessment and analysis requested it would be necessary to divert officer resource away from delivering the annual road safety programmes as detailed above in this report.

Review of Speed Limits

2.24 Following the release of updated national guidance by the Department for Transport in 2006 the Road Safety Team completed a review of rural speed limits. As a result of this review, and in line with the guidance, several lower speed limits were introduced on rural roads. The speed limits met the guidance in terms of visual characteristics. The opportunity was taken to undertake some 'before and after' studies to help understand the effect that introducing lower speed limits had on driver behaviour. The results of this study are included as Appendix 5 to this report.

2.25 The results demonstrate that producing lower vehicle speeds is more complex than solely relying on the introduction of a new speed limit and associated signing.

2.26 The Council is aware that neighbouring authorities have, or are considering, amendments to their adopted policies relating to the introduction of local speed limits and will assess the effectiveness and impact of these policy changes when outcomes are known.

2.27 A £500,000 budget has been allocated to undertake a new Speed Management Programme with additional on-going funding identified within future Capital Programmes.

2.28 As part of the Speed Management Programme a review will identify lengths of the main road network that would benefit from a reduced speed limit. It will also check that existing speed limits are effective and producing the desired reductions in vehicle speeds using available speed

data and new in-vehicle telematics. The review will also identify sites of greatest need and local concern where proven traffic management measures would have a positive effect and enhance the effectiveness of the speed limit. Over the next three years, more than 25 stretches of road will benefit from speed limit reductions or measures that will increase the effectiveness of existing speed limits.

Conclusion

2.29 ESCC is committed to working with all stakeholders to improve road safety across East Sussex, including our partners on the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.

2.30 Speed limit policy PS05/02 is based on national guidance issued by the Department for Transport, best practice, local experience, the views of Sussex Police as the appropriate enforcement authority, and is reflective of what is required to produce an effective speed limit. The policy will continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure that it complies with the latest national guidance available.

2.31 The policy is not prescriptive and allows for lower speed limits to be considered for those locations deemed appropriate if the necessary traffic management or engineering measures are implemented to ensure compliance.

2.32 The policy has been found to be fit for purpose. It does not commit the Council to fund speed limits that are not an identified priority or linked to an approved scheme funded from alternative sources.

2.33 Following receipt of the Notice of Motion, a review was undertaken of the relevant national guidance issued by The Department for Transport (including Circular 01/2013 and the January 2022 revisions to the Highway Code) and this concluded that adopted Policy PS05/02 continues to reflect national guidance and best practice. Therefore, it is not recommended that valuable resources are diverted to undertake the review requested by the Notice of Motion.

2.34 The new Speed Limit Programme will assess the potential for lower speed limits across all A and B class roads within the County and identify a programme for improvements. Over the next three years, more than 25 stretches of road will benefit from speed limit reductions or measures that will increase the effectiveness of existing speed limits.

2.35 The Lead Member for Transport and Environment recommends the County Council to:

✧ (1) reject the Motion for the reasons set out in the report.

26 June 2023

COUNCILLOR CLAIRE DOWLING
(Lead Member)

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, 15 June 2023.

Present: Galley (Chairman), Lambert (Vice-Chair), Asaduzzaman, Azad, Dowling, Evans, Geary, Hollidge, Maples, Marlow-Eastwood, McNair, Muten, Osborne, Redstone, Scott, 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 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

- 1.1 Members resolved to appoint Councillor Roy Galley as Chairman of the Fire Authority for the year 2023-24.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- 2.1 Members resolved to appoint Councillor Carolyn Lambert as Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority for the year 2023-24.

3 URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- 3.1 Following the Brighton & Hove City Council elections the Chairman welcomed the newly appointed Members of the Fire Authority, namely Cllr Mohammed Asaduzzaman, Cllr Ty Goddard and Cllr Trevor Muten. The Chairman also welcomed back Cllr Amanda Evans, Cllr Carol Theobald and Cllr Pete West who have been reappointed by Brighton & Hove City Council.
- 3.2 The Fire Authority recorded its condolences following the sudden and sad death of Councillor Barry Taylor, a well-respected Councillor who had been a dedicated Fire Authority Member for ten years. All those present stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.
- 3.3 The Chairman formally recorded the thanks of the Fire Authority to former colleagues from Brighton & Hove City Council, namely Cllr Les Hamilton, Robert Nemeth and Steph Powell. The Authority thanked them for their dedicated service during their time as Members of the Fire Authority. We are grateful for their contributions to the Fire Authority's work and wish them well in the future.

4 POLITICAL REPRESENTATION ON THE PANELS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY

- 4.1 The Authority received a report seeking to secure political balance on its Panels in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and agree to the resultant Membership to the Panels of the Fire Authority.

- 4.2 The Fire Authority was required to keep under review the allocations of seats on Committees and other bodies to ensure, so far as practicable, that they reflected the political groups on the Authority. The rules governing this representation were outlined in the report. Following the Brighton and Hove City Council elections there continued to be four political groups on the Fire Authority but there had been a change in size:

Conservatives	8
Labour	5
Liberal Democrat	3
Green	2

- 4.3 The Panels are the Authority's committees set up in accordance with Standing Order 41 and their terms of reference are shown in the Constitution. The size of each Panel is not constituted and could be agreed by the Fire Authority. To ensure each Panel was properly representative of the overall membership of the Fire Authority it was agreed that the size of each Panel be increased to 7 Members from the current 6, to allow for representative membership.

- 4.4 The Authority agreed appointments to each Lead Member Role.

- 4.5 The Authority confirmed the Panel arrangements, political representation and membership of each panel at the meeting. They agreed that the political balance provisions shall not apply to the membership of the Principal Officer Appointments Panel. The Authority agreed the appointment of Cllr Amanda Evans as Chairperson of the Policy & Resources Panel, Cllr Phil Scott as Chairperson of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel and Cllr Paul Redstone as Chairperson of the Pensions Board in accordance with Standing Order 41.13. The Authority agreed the remaining Panels would appoint a Chairperson at their first meeting under Standing Order 41.14.

5 FIRE AUTHORITY AND PANEL MEETINGS 2023/24

- 5.1 The Fire Authority received and noted the dates of meetings of the Fire Authority and Panels for the remainder of 2023 and 2024.

6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT – STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2022/23

- 6.1 The Fire Authority received the Annual Treasury Management Stewardship Report, a requirement of the Fire Authority's reporting procedures, informing Members of Treasury Management performance and compliance with Prudential Indicators for 2022/23. The Authority had complied with its approved Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators for the year.

- 6.2 The Authority were reminded that the Bank of England (BoE) Base Rate had increased on eight consecutive occasions, rising from 0.75% in April 2022 to a closing rate of 4.25% by March 2023. The average rate of interest received in 2022/23 through Treasury Management activity was 2.19% reflecting the Fire Authority's continued prioritisation of security and liquidity over yield. Decisions on investment had been taken in the context of the prevailing economic climate, the current approved capital programme and the requirement to fund it over the medium term. The economic climate was evolving rapidly, and opportunities were being explored to secure investment returns within the accepted risk parameters set out in the Authority's agreed strategy.

- 6.3 Members asked for context on the global supply chain disruption and whether this considered Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the climate crisis. It did and these were also reflected on the Corporate Risk Register, the impacts being wider than those of a Treasury Management nature. They had all had a significant impact on the international supply chains and the Service had undertaken analysis of them. There had been noticeable impacts on the cost of fleet, utilities, fuel, catering and wood for Live Fire Training. The Estates elements of the Capital Programme had been affected with regards to the cost of both labour and supplies. The Finance team were undertaking budget forecasting, including the impact of supply chain and inflation for both 2023/24 and 2024/25 and would continue to monitor supply chain issues on both business as usual and investments. This was also being monitored nationally, the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) were coordinating a survey on supply chain risk to the fire sector and were feeding back to the Home Office.
- 6.4 Members asked whether inflationary pressures on the cost of materials would mean a review of Capital Projects. There were challenges to the Fire Authority's Estates Strategy and the team were reviewing the remaining estates capital projects to reflect both increased costs and an SLT request to develop options to reduce the overall cost of the Estates Strategy. Key drivers included management of contaminants, provision of gender appropriate facilities, sleeping facilities and reduction in running costs/CO2. At individual project level inflationary pressures were picked up when progressing through RIBA Gateways.
- 6.5 When the 2024/25 budget had been set the funding gap was £721,000 but had the potential to increase to between £1m and £1.5m following pay awards and other emerging pressures. The Service remained committed to addressing the key objectives of the Estates Strategy to ensure that Fire Stations were fit for purpose. Members asked about reviewing the use of reserves and were reminded that they review the use of reserves on an annual basis as part of setting the budget and they had committed the majority to be used for Estates, Fleet and IT projects. The Authority's reserves were reducing significantly and were expected to be below £5m in the next year and the Authority had decided to use £633,000 of reserves to balance this year's budget. The Fire Authority agreed to note the Treasury Management performance for 2022/23.

7 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN TRANCHE 4 UPDATE REPORT

- 7.1 The Fire Authority received a report providing a brief initial overview of the options analysis that had been carried out through the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Tranche 4 and to inform them that a wider list of potential savings would need to be considered in relation to the forecast potential shortfall in funding for 2024/25. The financial environment remained both uncertain and challenging, with the current settlement for one year only and with limited policy guidance available for 2024/25 it was expected a further one-year settlement for 2024/25 would be announced in December.
- 7.2 When the MTFP was agreed by the Authority the potential funding gap for 2024/25 was forecast at £721,000. Since then, a two year Grey Book pay offer of 12% (over 2023/24 and 2024/25) had been agreed and a Green Book pay offer of £1,925 had been rejected, both were above the Authority's budgeted figure. Further work to assess the future financial position continued but the current assessment was that the Fire Authority should plan to identify savings options of between £1m - £1.5m for delivery by April 2023. Tranches 1-3 were targeted to deliver savings of £923,000, there was high confidence that Tranches 1 and 2 would deliver £293,000 but it was too early to say if Tranche 3 would be able to deliver targeted savings of £630,000.

- 7.3 The Authority had agreed that to bridge any funding gap it would consider a wider set of options for Tranche 4, these were set out at para. 3.7 of the report. They were high level at this stage and more information would be provided to a future meeting of the Policy & Resources Panel, with the Fire Authority being asked to make decisions later in the year. The list of options would not require public consultation and the East options were the least preferred at this stage but until the final funding for 2024/25 was determined could not be ruled out.
- 7.4 Members asked how confident Officers were that savings would be achieved and that they would meet the deadlines. The normal budget setting process was being followed and a provisional outturn report for 2022/23 and a budget monitoring report setting out the position at Month 2 would be presented to the Policy & Resources Panel in July. Whilst there was no further information on Government funding provisions, officers were working with other local authorities to improve forecasting and continued to lobby MPs. The financial risks remained the same as they had for the past couple of years with a reliance on a one-year settlement and one off specific grants.
- 7.5 The CFO echoed the update particularly how difficult it was to run an emergency service when reliant on one-year settlements and one-off grants. It was hoped Members would support continued lobbying of MPs, impressing on Government and the Home Office how much the sector needed longer-term settlements. Members agreed one-year settlements were not sustainable, and that the sector needed to be adequately funded on a national level. There were concerns about the ongoing and increasing impact of global warming on the Fire sector, the risks faced by the Service were not just greater, they were changing. The Authority were reminded that of the Revenue Budget around 80% was spent on salaries and therefore pay, pensions and absence management must also be focused on.
- 7.6 The Fire Authority noted the increase in estimated savings that may be required to balance the 2024/25 budget, from £721,000 forecast last year to up to £1,500,000; and that the progress under the Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 4 on the wider options analysis will be presented to a future meeting of the Policy & Resources Panel and to future meeting of the Fire Authority once further work on updating the MTFP for 2024/25 has been carried out.

COUNCILLOR ROY GALLEY
CHAIRMAN OF EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

15 June 2023